

COMMUNITY ACTION: MK

promote·support·engage·involve

Child Protection and Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

1. Statement of intent on safeguarding children and young people

Community Action: MK is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every person in our community, regardless of age and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of every member of our community perpetrated either face to face or via the use of digital technology, and particularly the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children and young people under the age of 18. The welfare of the child and young person is paramount. All children/young people without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or belief.

All staff (including agency staff, students and volunteers) who work or volunteer with Community Action: MK will be made aware of this policy and of what to do if they have any concerns for the safeguarding or welfare of a child or young person. There are written procedures and guidance for those responding to concerns so that they are properly dealt with, including

- dealing with a child/young person who is in need of early need of help services,
- or says that s/he is being abused or neglected, or is showing signs of suffering harm,
- dealing with allegations of abuse made against an adult or a child/young person working for Community Action:MK.
- sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and
- involving children, young people and families appropriately,

It is our policy that no-one shall work with children and young people within Community Action: MK who:

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- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young People's Act 1933; or
- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people.
- Is registered on either of the two new DBS barred lists for children & vulnerable adults. (previously known as the protection of Children Act list, protection of Vulnerable Adults Act list and List 99)

This means that:

- All staff (including agency staff, students and volunteers) who are involved in regular caring for, training, supervising with children & young people under the auspices of Community Action: MK will be required to have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check (in accordance with the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006), and are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work; and undertake regular safeguarding & child protection courses and training as identified by the MK Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Those responsible for the appointment of such workers must take all reasonable steps, including:
 - working in reference with Community Action:MK recruitment policy and MK Safeguarding Board Safer recruitment guidance, obtaining verification of individuals identity and details of the individuals enhanced Disclosure and Barring check, to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work with children and young people under the auspices of Community Action: MK.

If you have any questions about our policies and procedures please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Josan Race on tel: 01908 661623 or 07738 405371.

2. What is Child Abuse?

A basic definition of abuse is that it is abuse of power by a person who is developmentally and/or stronger than another, resulting in some distress, harm or neglect of necessary attention for the victim.

Child abuse is a term which describes a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

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It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (DoH, HO, DfEE, 2018). Below the definitions are listed signs and symptoms which *may* indicate abuse, but do not jump to conclusions as there may be other explanations:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs of physical abuse *may* include:

Unexplained or hidden injuries, (It is important to consider whether the explanation given fits the injury and the child's age, developmental level and range of activities) lack of medical attention, Children may appear wary of adults, flinch away from them or actively try to be too helpful.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs of emotional abuse *may* include:

Reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, sudden underachievement, attention-seeking, running away from home, stealing, lying, emotional unavailability, unresponsiveness, and neglect.

Sexual Abuse

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Sexual Abuse Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs of sexual abuse may include:

Recurrent genital discharge and urinary infections, discomfort in the genital or anal region, discomfort when walking or constant masturbation, complaints of stomach pains, sexually overt drawings or behaviour whilst playing, pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. In older children this may manifest in self harm, attempts at suicide or running away from home.

Fears of specific situations

- Marked fear of Men (or Women)
- Lack of trust of familiar adults
- Fear of bathrooms, showers, going to bed, nappy changes or the dark (common times when abuse is perpetrated)
- Fear of medicals or reluctance to participate in physical activities and changing clothes for such.

Relationships

- Inappropriate display of affection between adult and child: acting like lovers
- Changes in child following time alone with specific carer e.g. child appears restless, listless, clingy, has upset stomach etc.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

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Signs of neglect *may* include:

Looking ill-cared for and unhappy, being withdrawn or aggressive, lingering injuries or health problems.

3. Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to define, it can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. The three types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racism or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from activities).

Bullying *will* include:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim.

Bullying *may* include:

- Other forms of violence
- Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a sexual nature.

Emotional and verbal bullying is more common than physical violence, it can also be difficult to cope with or prove.

Bullying can result in children or young people becoming vulnerable and isolated. These particular children or young people could then become an easy target for adult abusers. Concerns about bullying should be dealt with in the same way as concerns about child abuse.

Safeguarding & Promoting the Welfare of Children

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010* as:

Protecting Children from maltreatment

Preventing impairment of children’s health or development

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

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4. What the Law Says

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, which are designed to ensure that children are protected from harm. This includes:

United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991

Data Protection Act 1998

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Children Act 2004

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

The Children Act 1989 (England & Wales) and s.31 (9 and 10) as amended by the Adoption & Children Act 2002

The intention of the Children Act 1989 is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm.

Children's Act 1989 Section 17

The Children's Act places a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area and, subject to that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families. The new emphasis in Section 17 is for local authorities to work with the child and family in the family home and for local authorities to work with or facilitate the work of others.

Section 17 requires local authorities to:

- Ascertain the extent of need
- Work with other agencies
- Establish priorities for services
- Provide services

Section 17 states that a child is in need if:

- S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority.
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired without the provision for him/her of such services.
- S/he is disabled

Significant Harm

Under s.31 (9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002 The Act defines harm as ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development Health includes physical and mental health

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Ill treatment includes sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment, which are not physical.

As for 'significant', s.31 (10) of the Act says that, where the harm refers to the child's health or development, the question as to whether it is significant harm should not be answered by comparing this child's health or development with what 'could be reasonably be expected by a similar child'.

Section 47

This outlines the circumstances in which a local authority has a duty to investigate. These circumstances include:

- Where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives or is found in their area is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.
- Where they have obtained emergency protection order in respect of a child.
- Where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area is subject to an emergency protection order or is in police protection.
- Where a court in family proceeding directs them to investigate a child's circumstances
- Where a local education authority notifies them that a child is persistently failing to comply with directions given under an education supervision order.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

Part II of this Act related to "Public Bodies" responsibilities within child protection and is integral to child protection systems in the UK designed to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

This links to other laws including the **Protection of Children Act 1999** and **The Police Act 1997** that, together build a system that makes it a criminal offence if an employer does not take sufficient steps to check an employee working with children and/or knowingly gives someone a job who is inappropriate to work with children.

Protection of Children Act 1999 and The Police Act 1997

These Acts change the routes by which employers can check whether a potential or actual employee has criminal offences against children or whether there has been reason for that person to be considered inappropriate to work with children.

The Police Act 1997 contains the provision to set up the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for England and Wales to improve access to criminal record checks for employment related purposes. It is aimed at providing protection for children and other vulnerable people against those who might wish to harm them.

Rehabilitation of offenders Act (NI order) 1974 (UK wide)

People who are involved in situations where they have prolonged or sustained access to children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation

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Sexual offences Amendment Act 2000

This Act reduces the age at which, or certain circumstances in which, sexual acts are lawful. It introduces a new offence of abuse of trust, which covers ostensibly consensual behaviour within certain relationships of trust. It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual intercourse or other sexual activity with someone under that age where they are in a 'position of trust' in relation to the younger person.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

Voluntary Sector Organisations should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB);
- a designated professional lead (or, for health provider organisations, named professionals) for safeguarding. Their role is to support other professionals in their agencies to recognise the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. Designated professional roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Professionals should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively;
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check;
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training:
 - employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
 - staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare; and
 - all professionals should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.
- clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who have:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;

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- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

In addition:

- County level and unitary local authorities should have a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases. The LADO should provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process;
- any allegation should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation. The LADO should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police; and
- if an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Working together sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children's Act 1989 and the Children's Act 2004. It is important that all practitioners working to safeguard children and young people fully understand their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.

This guidance covers:

the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and

a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services. This document replaces Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013); The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000); and Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (2007).

This guidance is issued under:

Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities in their social services functions to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State;

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Section 11 (4) of the Children Act 2004 which requires each person or body to which the section 11 duty applies to have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State; and

Section 16 of the Children Act 2004, which states that local authorities and each of the statutory partners must, in exercising their functions relating to Local Safeguarding Children Boards, have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State.

5. What to do if a child or adult discloses harm to you

Receive

- Listen to the child
- If you are shocked by what they are saying, try not to show it
- Take what they say seriously
- Accept what the child says
- DO NOT ask for (other) information

Reassure

- Stay Calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Be honest with the child so do not make promises you can't keep
- Do not promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer the child who is at risk
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened

React

- React to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate them for details
- Do not ask leading questions
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk
- Explain and if possible seek agreement that you will have to discuss the situation with someone else and will do so on a 'need to know' basis.

Record

- Make some brief notes at the time and write them up more fully as soon as possible – use the Record of Concerns Template attached
- Take care to record timing, setting and personnel as well as what was said
- Be objective in your recording – include statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions

Act Now

- Discuss the matter with the Child Protection representative immediately – see Section 6 below which sets out the referral flow chart.

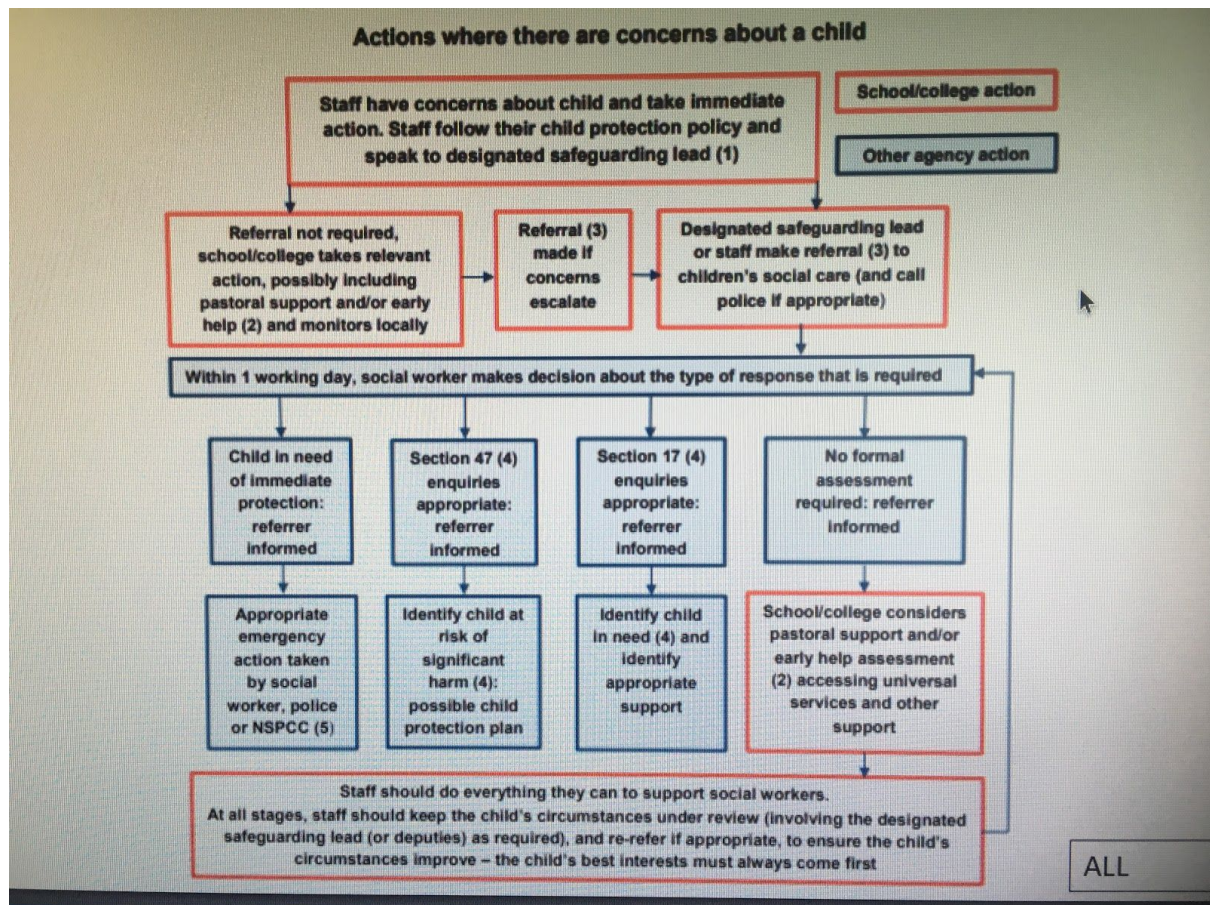
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6. Safeguarding referral Checklist

This checklist is if you have a concern about a child's welfare, have witnessed an incident or if a child or adult has disclosed something to you.

If a child or other person is at immediate risk of Harm, the first response should always be to call the police on **999**. If there is any doubt about the appropriate service pathway or advice on whether the family are already being dealt with by Children and Families Referral Hub can be contacted on 01908 253169/70 or out of hours 01908 265545



7. Record of Child Protection/ Safeguarding Concern /Incident/ Disclosure

REFERRAL FORM TO THE MARF OR CAF

8. Role of the Child Protection Representatives

The named staff Child Protection Representative for Community Action:MK is: Josan Race.

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These person(s) will take on the responsibility for:

- Ensuring the Child Protection and Safeguarding Children & Young People policy is being put into practice
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues
- Keeping a record of any concern expressed about child protection issues
- Where necessary, taking further steps, such as referring concerns to other agencies
- Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Executive and Board of Trustees.
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate induction and review safeguarding training, support and supervision so the staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, recognising the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child protection representatives.
- Ensuring that information sharing protocol is shared with staff and adhered to.
- Liaising with MK Together on adopted policies and procedures
- Being first point of contact with those from Mk Together and the LADO (In Milton Keynes the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) [NOTIFICATION FORM](#)
He can be contacted on 01908 254300
within one working day for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers within Community Action:MK who work with children who 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; or

behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

come to Community Action:MK's attention or that are made directly to the police;

- If Community Action:MK removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the Child Protection Representative must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

9. Safe Recruitment and Selection

Determined abusers have often managed to gain access to children and young people. We recognise, therefore, that the most effective point at which an organisation can use good

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management to minimise the possibility of abuse is when new paid staff or volunteers are appointed, although it is important to ensure that vigilance is maintained thereafter.

Recruitment

It is our policy that all staff and volunteers, temporary personnel and helpers who have contact with children and young people will be subject to a careful and rigorous selection and vetting process with the elements listed below. We hope these will be understood by good applicants and will put off ill intentioned people off.

- Completion of an application form and checking the person’s identity by their birth certificate or passport, something with a photograph if possible.
- Taking up two references, one of whom has experience of their work or contact with children
- An interview by at least two people
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment or inconsistencies
- Carrying out enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Allowing no unsupervised access to children and young people until this has been completed.
- Advice is sought about recruiting someone with a criminal record
- A supervised probationary period for new people to the project and a comprehensive induction period that includes our child protection policy and procedures.
- Mandatory Induction training on Safeguarding Children & Young People.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks and Vetting: (formerly the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA))

Checks will be carried out via an appropriate local umbrella agency for police checks - on all people applying to work with children and young people, including volunteers.

Disclosure & Barring Service is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children.

It remains a criminal offence for individuals barred by the DBS to work or apply for work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts. Employers also face criminal sanctions for knowingly employing a barred individual across a wider range of work.

Employers, local authorities, professional regulators and other bodies have a duty to refer to the DBS, information about individuals working with children or vulnerable adults where they consider them to have caused harm or pose a risk of harm

- Information on this can be obtained from the DBS at <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check> email customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk or tel: 0870 9090811

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10. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Community Action: MK staff and volunteers should organise all their activities to reduce to a minimum those situations within which it may be possible for children and young people to be abused. Staff and volunteers are required to abide by this Code of Practice to safeguard children and young people.

- DO treat all children and young people with the respect they deserve
- DO make sure any suspicions or allegations are recorded and reported to the Child Protection Representative.
- DO NOT get personally involved – leave it to the professionals.

Physical Contact

Adults should ensure that the touch and physical contact they use is not exploitative and is not open to misunderstanding. Children and young people should be encouraged to say what they find acceptable and unacceptable in the way they are approached by adults or their colleagues in the group.

DO NOT:

- Subject young people to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure
- engage in rough physical games or horse play
- Touch a young person in an intrusive or sexual manner
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even in jest
- Do things of a personal nature that young people can do for themselves
- Restrain a child using physical force

Working with individual CYP

- You should plan never to be alone in a building, car or a closed room with a child / young person.
- In exceptional circumstances where an adult may be alone with a child for a short period, the adults should ensure that other staff or volunteers are aware of the situation and that they support this action and that it takes place in clear view of the rest of the group e.g. designated office or room with a clear glass window. The door must always be left open.

Running Activities

- any group of children should be supervised by at least two responsible adults on all activities.
- for some groups this will mean parents staying with children they have brought to the group activity until named leaders for that activity have arrived.
- It is important to know who the leaders are on all activities.

Outside of work

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- Children should not be expected to make their way to an activity through poorly lit areas.
- Adults/leaders should know the safe arrangements for children to get home after the activity.
- Adults should be discouraged from meeting individually with children outside work related activities and should not take a child or young person to their home.
- If a child or young person is not collected from an activity you should not give lifts home in your car.
- If some of these situations are unavoidable, get parental permission first. If that is not possible make certain that Community Action: MK staff or volunteers and the parents or carers know what you intend to do and inform parents/guardians know what has happened as soon as you can.

Privacy & Photographs/Videos

- If ever the situation were to arise, particular care must be taken to ensure the privacy of CYP is respected in places like swimming pools, showers, toilets and changing rooms.
- Never take photographs of CYP while they are in changing areas or bathing areas.
- Consent must be sought from the CYP and/or their parent guardian to publish photographs

Resources & Equipment

- Minimise the prospect of injury by checking all equipment and playing surfaces
- Do not employ excessive or inappropriate training methods, use only age appropriate language, media products and activities in working with CYP. Sexually explicit materials are never appropriate.
- Under no circumstances give medication, alcohol, tobacco, alcohol or other drugs to CYP.
- Do not lend or borrow personal money or property to or from CYP
- Do not give or receive personal gifts from CYP

Internet use/E Safety

- Always supervise the use of your computer, email and internet by CYP or adults.
- Place the computer where everyone can use it and see it, rather than out of sight in another room
- Suggest sites that could be visited by CYP e.g. those you have already researched and judges to be appropriate and/or those connected to children's TV programmes
- Talk to the CYP about what sort of sites then can and cannot visit
- Ensure that children do not give out personal details over the internet e.g. surname, address, phone number or email address and never arrange a face to face meeting with anyone the come into contact with on the internet.
- Encourage CYP to report anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive.
- Limit the amount of time CYP spend online

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- Explore the use of filters which block access to certain sites (although remember these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace supervision)
- Do not send, seek or store pornographic, explicit, racist, homophobic or other material (such as illegal images of any child under the age of 18 years old including images in photographs, films, negatives, videotape, data stored on digital media that can be converted into a photograph and 'pseudo-photographs' (images made by computers graphics, or other means, which appear to be a photograph). This also covers electronic images used by video phones and texting) which may be considered inappropriate or offensive from your computer. Any received should be deleted immediately and the recycling bin emptied. Any found on your computer should be reported to your line manager.
- Where there is suspected or actual evidence of anyone accessing or creating indecent images of children, this must be referred to the Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) and Children's Social Care (CSC) in accordance with the **Referral and Assessment Procedure**.
- Where there are concerns about a child being groomed, exposed to pornographic material or contacted by someone inappropriately, via the Internet or other ICT tools like a mobile phone, referrals should be made to the CAIU and CSC in accordance with the Referral Process.
- Children, young people and parents are also encouraged to report their concerns directly to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) where trained Child Protection Officers will investigate the incident and take appropriate action.
- **Click here to view the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website.**
- Due to the nature of this type of abuse and the possibility of the destruction of evidence, the referrer should first discuss their concerns with the CAIU and CSC before raising the matter with the family. This will enable a decision to be made about informing the family and ensuring that the child's welfare is safeguarded.
- All such reports should be taken seriously. Most referrals will be followed by an initial assessment and information should be shared between the CAIU and CSC in order to determine whether a strategy meeting should take place.

FGM (Female genital mutilation)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done.

GUIDANCE

Please be aware this is mainly for schools but gives you an idea on the signs to look for.

Helpline: 0800 028 3550

(CSE) Child Sexual Exploitation

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Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them
[SCREENING TOOL](#)

Prevent

Prevent is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. Prevent is 1 of the 4 elements of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The local authority have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

- MK – Mark Wolski mark.wolski@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk • 01908 254533
- MK – Police – Rachel Mahon 101

[WEBSITE WITH CONTACT DETAILS](#)

[Essential helplines and info](#)

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim.

Research suggests that girls and young women are more at risk of abusive behaviours perpetrated by their peers; however it can also affect boys and young men, those with learning difficulties or disabilities, LGBTQ Children and young people (CYP) and those who are from different communities.

Situations where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers or associates can be related with gang / serious youth violence activity but that is not always the case. Peer influence or peer pressure is a major factor in the decisions made by young people to join groups. Many young people see it as a "way out" from their day to day life and feel a strong bond with their peers, one which they may be lacking at home.

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Definition

There is no clear definition of what peer on peer abuse entails. However it can be captured in a range of different definitions:

- **Domestic Abuse:** relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships;
- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** captures young people aged under-18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age - including another young person;
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour:** refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who demonstrates behaviour outside of their normative parameters of development (this includes, but is not exclusive to abusive behaviours);
- **Serious Youth Crime / Violence:** reference to offences (as opposed to relationships / contexts) and captures all those of the most serious in nature including murder, rape and GBH between young people under-18.

11. Whistleblowing Procedure – (The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) Allegations against Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

Community Action: MK's Assurances to Employees

The Chief Executive Officer and Trustees of Community Action: MK are committed to maintaining the highest standards of honesty, openness and accountability and recognise that you, the employee, have an important role to play in achieving this goal.

Employees will usually be the first to know when someone inside or connected with an organisation is doing something illegal or improper, but often they feel apprehensive about voicing their concerns. This may be because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the organisation itself. Or it may be because they do not think that their concerns will be taken seriously, because they are afraid that they will be bullied or dismissed. However, Community Action: MK does not believe that it is in anyone's interests for employees with knowledge of wrongdoing to remain silent.

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Community Action: MK takes all malpractice very seriously, whether it is committed by senior managers, staff, volunteers, members, suppliers or contractors; this document sets out the Procedure by which you can report your concerns to us.

What should I report under this Procedure?

It is impossible to give an exhaustive list of the activities that constitute misconduct or malpractice but, broadly speaking, Community Action: MK would expect you to report the following: -

- Any activity undertaken by CA:MK
- Any service provided by CA:MK
- The conduct of any trustee, senior manager, staff, volunteers, members, supplier or contractor on behalf of CA:MK
- Criminal offences;
- Failure to comply with legal obligations;
- Miscarriages of justice;
- Actions which endanger the health or safety of staff, volunteers or public;
- Actions towards a child or children; young person or young people; adult or vulnerable adults in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults.
- Actions in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child; young person or vulnerable adult,
- Actions which cause damage to the environment;
- Any other matters regarding CA:MK
- Actions which are intended to conceal any of the above.

It will not always be clear that a particular action falls within one of these categories and you will need to use your own judgement. However Community Action: MK would prefer you to report your concerns rather than keep them to yourself. If you make a report in good faith then, even if it is not confirmed by an investigation, your concern will be valued and appreciated and you will not be liable to disciplinary action. However, if you make a false report, maliciously or for personal gain, then you may face disciplinary action.

How do I make a Report?

You can make a report orally or in writing. Standard report forms (attached) are available from the office. Community Action: MK would normally expect you to raise your concerns internally to either:

- your line manager, or
- the Chief Executive

Which of these individuals is the more appropriate will depend on the seriousness of the malpractice and who you think is involved in it. If, under the circumstances, you do not feel comfortable about making a report directly to management, then you can report instead to:

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- the Chairperson of the Trustees

Please say if you wish to raise the matter in confidence so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Independent Advice

If you are unsure whether to use this Procedure, or you want independent advice at any stage, you may contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work on Telephone 020 7404 6609.

External Contacts

While we hope that this policy will give you reassurance you need to raise such matters internally, Community Action: MK recognises that there may be circumstances (for example, where the wrongdoing is extremely serious) where it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an outside body, such as the police, Public Concern at Work will be able to advise you on such an opinion and the circumstances in which you may be able to contact an outside body safely.

Do I need proof of wrongdoing to make my Report?

Community Action: MK does not expect you to have absolute proof of any misconduct or malpractice that you report. However, you will need to be able to show the reasons for your concern.

Will Community Action: MK protect my identity if I make a Report?

Community Action: MK will do everything possible to keep your identity secret, if you so wish. However, there may be circumstances (for example, if your report becomes the subject of criminal investigation) wherein you may be needed as a witness. Should this be the case we will discuss the matter with you at the earliest opportunity.

How will my report be investigated?

Once you have made a report, Community Action: MK will acknowledge receipt of it within five working days.

There are, of course, two sides to every story and Community Action: MK will need to make preliminary enquiries to decide whether a full investigation is necessary. If such an investigation is necessary then, depending on the nature of the misconduct, your concerns will be either:

- investigated internally (by management) or
- referred to the appropriate external person (for example the police) for investigation.

Subject to any legal constraints, Community Action: MK will inform you of the outcome of the preliminary enquiries, full investigation and any further action that has been taken.

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What if I am unhappy with the way Community Action:MK has dealt with my Report?

If you are unhappy with the outcome of an investigation Community Action: MK would prefer that you submit another report explaining why this is the case. Your concern will be investigated again if there is good reason to do so.

However, it may be that you do not think that this is appropriate and wish to raise your concern with an external organisation, such as a regulator. It is, of course, open to you to do so provided you have sufficient evidence to support your concern.

Community Action: MK strongly advises that before reporting your concerns externally, you seek advice from:

- Public Concern at Work, 3rd Floor, Bank Chambers, 6-10 Borough High Street, London, SE19QQ Tel 020 7404 6609 email whistle@pcaw.co.uk

While Community Action: MK cannot guarantee that we will respond to your report in the way that you might wish, we will try to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using this Procedure, you will help us to achieve this.

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Whistleblowing Standard Report Form

Please complete this form, sign and date at the bottom.

All information is treated in the Strictest Confidence.

For the Attention of (staff name or role):

Your Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email address:

Preferred method of contact:

Please write your complaint below and continue on a separate sheet if you need to.

Please include:

- The nature and circumstances of the complaint
- When and where did the incident(s) happen
- Was anyone else involved
- What immediate action has been taken
- Do you have any suggestions as to what you would like to happen as a result of the complaint?

Comments:

--

Complainant Signature:

Dated:

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Date received:

Signed:

(Initial member of CA:MK Staff)

Signed:

(Chief Executive of CA:MK)

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12. Information Sharing between Organisations

There is an increased need to share information appropriately, to ensure that Children & young people get the correct support, services and referrals where necessary. The net result of legislation and professional guidance as summarised above is that professionals may share information for a child protection purpose without the consent of the subject:

- To protect the vital interests of the person;
- Where seeking permission might place the child or another person at serious risk of **Significant Harm**;
- Where such action might reasonably assist in the prevention or detection of serious crime.

There are seven golden rules of information sharing:

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. Be open and Honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom the 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 judgement 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 reasons 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. If information was provided without consent, reason/s for so doing must be made clear and the record indicate whether the person in question was subsequently informed of the information transfer.

Dealing with requests from other agencies for Information

- Unless s/he is already known, a phone call received from a professional seeking information must be verified before information is divulged, by calling her/his agency back.
- A record of any information relayed by phone or in person must be made.
- The person requesting information from another agency and the person in that agency who provides it must record the event in accordance with her/his own agency

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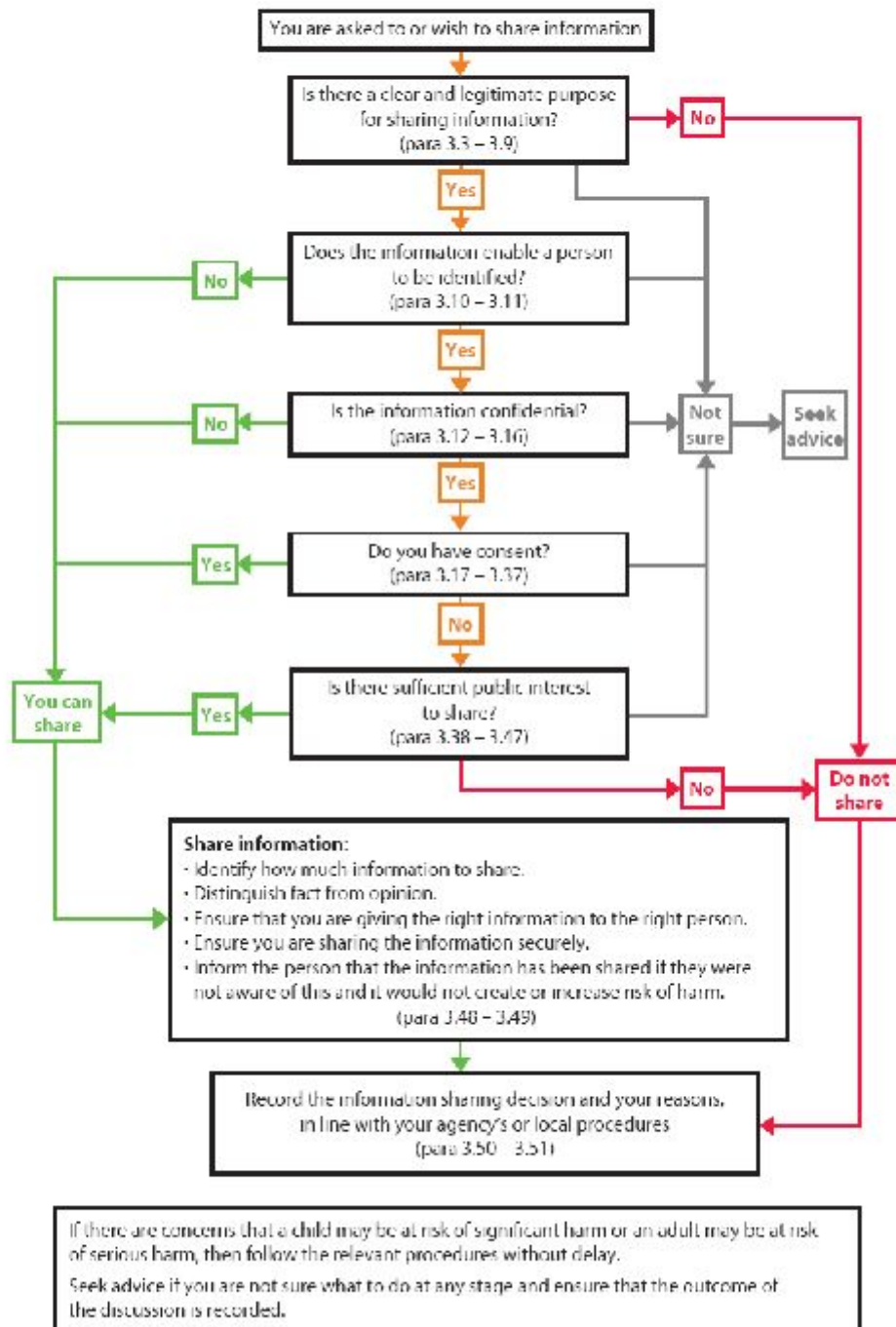
procedures. The recording must indicate if the consent of the relevant person was sought and obtained, sought and refused or not sought.

- When sending out emails containing confidential information, a confidentiality warning should be used. Wherever possible confidential information should only be sent by secure electronic systems and not by internet e-mail.

It is important that each professional accept responsibility for her/his own referrals and should not seek to provide information to another agency anonymously.

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Flowchart of key questions for information sharing



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For further information on this subject please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-sharing-for-practitioners-and-managers>

13. Outside contact for advice and information

ACPC
NSPCC
TVP
MKC - Social Services
DBS
ACAS
MKSCB

Reviewing the policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims by the Child Protection Representative. They will consult on any amendments with the Chief Executive and the Executive Sub Committee.

This is a current copy of this policy

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date _____

NB: If there is a 'serious incident' within your charity we advise you let the charity commission know:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

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