



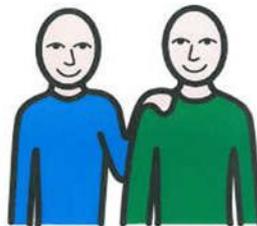
Children's Service
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



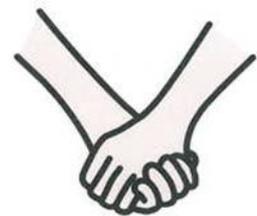
To live



and learn



as friends



together



- To share



and give



and love



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Introduction

St. Elizabeth's Children's service aims to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults and safeguard them from maltreatment. We believe that all children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm, abuse and maltreatment.

The residents at St. Elizabeth's Children's Service are particularly vulnerable. Their health, disability, conditions and individual needs are complex and profound. Many of our residents have learning, physical, health and associated co-morbid disabilities. This makes them very vulnerable and at risk.

We take every possible measure to ensure that our staff, volunteers, agency partners, and associates do everything within their power to promote safe environments for children and vulnerable adults.

This Safeguarding Policy provides a framework of principles, standards and guidelines upon which we base individual and organisational practice in relation to:

- Creating a safe and friendly service and home environments;
- Preventing maltreatment, abuse and neglect;
- Providing guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- Recognising, reporting and responding to allegations of maltreatment;
- Putting in place guidelines for communications regarding children and vulnerable adults.

This policy aims to encompass all aspects of safeguarding including: definitions of safeguarding issues, expectations, reporting procedures, working with external partners and roles and responsibilities.

Guiding Principles

The Policy sets out the minimum that needs to be in place to keep children and vulnerable adults safe in our care and interactions with them. St. Elizabeth's Children's Service is committed to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe and ensuring the highest standards of practice. We intend to place the best interest of the child as the primary consideration in all of our services.

Principles underpinning St. Elizabeth's Children's Service Safeguarding Policy are as follows:

- No child or vulnerable adult should experience abuse of any kind.
- All children and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. We are committed to practise in ways that protects every individual from harm.



- Every adult working within St Elizabeth's Children's Service has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe.
- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989 (England)

This Safeguarding Policy draws on:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children's Home (England) Regulations, 2015
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Mandatory Reporting of female genitalia Mutilation (Home Office 2016)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education 2015)
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years - Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in education
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Guidance Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees October 2019
- Human Rights Act, 1998

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service will meet its commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults through the following means:

1. Awareness

Ensuring that all staff members, volunteers and agency workers have a solid awareness of safeguarding, maltreatment and risks to children and vulnerable adults.

2. Prevention



Ensuring, through awareness and good practice, that staff members, volunteers and agency workers prioritise children's safety and wellbeing and minimise risk to children and vulnerable adults. Ensuring, through promoting identity, life skills and participation, that children and vulnerable adults, wherever possible, are active agents in their own protection.

3. Reporting

Ensuring that staff members, volunteers and agency workers take seriously any concerns raised and that they are clear on the steps to take regarding the safety of children and vulnerable adults. Ensuring that we create a positive safeguarding culture where people feel and are safe to report concerns.

4. Responding

Ensuring that appropriate and effective action is taken to support and protect children and vulnerable adults when concerns arise regarding possible maltreatment. Ensuring that this action is documented and monitored. St. Elizabeth's Children's Services will also ensure that safeguarding will be identified as a specific goal in all programme designs, including through promoting children's participation in programme design, implementation and evaluation.

Terminology

Child: a young person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday

Vulnerable adult: an individual age 18 or older who has the functional, mental, or physical inability to care for themselves

Child safeguarding: The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Staff member: an adult who is employed and paid by St. Elizabeth's

Volunteer: a person who works for but is not paid by St. Elizabeth's

Agency workers: an adult working within the service with a contract with an agency but working temporarily for an agreed shift or period.

Scope



This policy applies to all leaders, managers, support workers, care bank and agency members of staff, the Council of Trustees, volunteers, students and anyone working on behalf of St Elizabeth's.

Related St Elizabeth's policies, procedures and documents:

- Safer recruitment and selection Policy
- Speaking Out (Whistle Blowing) Policy
- Missing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Prevention of Bullying Policy
- Reportable Incident's Policy
- Complaints and Compliments Policy
- Supervision of Children and Young People, Physical Contact and One to One Time
- Guide to Notifying Ofsted of a Serious Event
- Guide to Informing LADO of an Allegation Against Staff
- Guide to Making a Safeguarding Notification
- Health and Safety Policy

Defining Abuse

In dealing with actual, suspected, or risk of abuse, staff need to understand what constitutes abuse and the categories used to define it. Abuse and neglect are generic terms encompassing all ill treatment of children and vulnerable adults including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child/ vulnerable adult's health or development.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child/ vulnerable adult. Somebody may cause or neglect a child/ vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children/ vulnerable adult's may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

'Working together to safeguard children' (July 2018) sets out definitions and examples of the broad categories of abuse which are used for the purpose of recognition;

Neglect

Includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a carer to provide for the development and wellbeing of the child/ vulnerable adult'- where the carer is in a position to do so-in one or more of the following areas: health; education; emotional development, nutrition; shelter and safe living conditions.

Physical abuse



The intentional use of physical force against a child/ vulnerable adult that results in-or has a high likelihood of resulting in- harm on the child/ vulnerable adult's health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating. Much physical violence against children/ vulnerable adult's in the home is inflicted with the object of punishing.

Sexual abuse

The involvement of a child/ vulnerable adult in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child/ vulnerable adult is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children/ vulnerable adults can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are- by virtue of their age or stage of development- in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.

Emotional and psychological abuse

Includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child/ vulnerable adult's physical or mental health, or their physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Abuse of this type includes: the restriction of movement; patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against or ridiculing; and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

These categories overlap and an abused child or vulnerable adult does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

Prevention

The protection of children and vulnerable adults from harm is addressed through the following:

Safe Recruitment and Selection

St. Elizabeth's Children's Services is committed to applying rigorous staff recruitment and selection processes which emphasise the importance of safeguarding. Particularly rigorous processes are required for any post that involves direct contact with children and vulnerable adults, either as a paid employee or volunteer. This includes UK- appointed and overseas recruits.

Behaviour Protocols and Code of Conduct

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service takes an approach of zero-tolerance towards all forms of bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse or any other form of maltreatment, whether towards children, vulnerable adults, colleagues or anyone else.



St. Elizabeth's Children's Service requires its staff and associates to follow certain rules in order to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults. These are described in the Code of Conduct.

Training

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service aims to provide a safe and open environment to encourage communication and learning on safeguarding.

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service ensures that information on safeguarding is available in the appropriate format to be assessable by staff, children and vulnerable adults in our care.

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service staff receive training on safeguarding as part of their induction programme and thereafter through an annual refresher session.

Staff with particular responsibilities relating to safeguarding are provided with regular professional development opportunities on safeguarding.

Risk Management

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service is committed to ensuring safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all levels:

- For individual children and adults through care planning processes, supported by individual, generic, activity and/or item specific risk assessment tools
- At organisational level through risk assessment of operations, programmes, and project activities. Strategies to minimise risk to children and vulnerable adults are incorporated into design and delivery of projects, programmes, operations and activities.

Children and families are informed of St. Elizabeth's Children's Service commitment to safeguarding and what to do if they have concerns about a child/ vulnerable adult or the conduct of a member of Elizabeth's Children's Service or agency worker. They are informed of the name and contact of the designated safeguarding leads who is responsible for receiving reports of concerns.

Use of Images and Stories

In St. Elizabeth's Children's Services, when using information, stories and images, our overriding principle is to maintain respect for the safety, privacy and dignity of children, vulnerable adults and their families. St. Elizabeth's Children's Service will ensure ethical use of our social media platforms, websites, publications and events in ensuring that any child or vulnerable adult we come into contact with is protected.

We seek written, informed consent from all residents- children and vulnerable adults- before capturing or using any images or stories.

Responding to safeguarding Concerns



Importance of Raising Concerns (Speaking Out)

To ensure that St. Elizabeth's Children's Service's commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is upheld, it is mandatory that anyone connected with St. Elizabeth's Children's Service who suspects or knows of maltreatment both minor and major incidents, raises their concerns **immediately in line with the reporting process detailed within this policy.**

Responding to a Disclosure

Disclosure of maltreatment or abuse may come directly from the child or vulnerable adult. In such circumstances, it is important to respond in a calm, caring and supportive manner. The victim is never to be blamed for the situations of maltreatment or abuse and should be reassured they have done nothing wrong, either in relation to the maltreatment itself or in reporting it.

Children and vulnerable adults need to know that you are listening and taking seriously the information that they divulge and that you will respond positively to ensure their future protection. It is important to record what is said- at the time if appropriate, or as soon as possible following disclosure. It may not be appropriate to enquire into details of maltreatment or abuse at this stage. It is important to listen and respond positively to the child or vulnerable adult and be supportive without asking leading questions. The child or vulnerable adult also needs information and an explanation of what will, or is likely to, happen next using communication accessible to the individual.

Immediately following a disclosure, it is crucial that staff or others report the alleged maltreatment in line with the reporting process detailed within this policy below.

Reporting Process

Internal Reporting within St. Elizabeth's Children's Services

It is vital that all concerns are raised immediately and discussed locally with either a home manager, designated safeguarding lead, designated safeguarding officer or on-call manager.

It may be in some circumstances no action can or will be taken. However, the main objective is to ensure that clear outcomes result from the reporting process.

DATIX Incident Reporting

St. Elizabeth's Children's Service DATIX incident reporting form is a key part of the reporting process and should be completed with as much information as possible by the relevant member of St. Elizabeth's Children's Service staff whenever a concern or allegation is raised.

The DATIX should include full context around who was involved? How the incident came to happen? Why the incident happened? When the incident happened? Any



witnesses to the incident? What led up to the incident and what happened thereafter? What was the child or vulnerable adult's mood like before, during and after the incident? And all action taken to safeguard all involved in the incident.

External Reporting outside St. Elizabeth's Children's Services

Concerns should be referred to the relevant external agencies wherever possible and appropriate. This will normally follow internal discussion. However, if the case is of an urgent nature, a direct referral may be made in advance of an internal discussion. Refer to:

- St Elizabeth's Children's Service Guide to: Notifying Ofsted of a Serious Event
- St Elizabeth's Children's Service Guide to: Informing Hertfordshire (Host Authority) of an Allegation Against Staff
- St Elizabeth's Children's Service Guide to: Reporting a Safeguarding Incident to Hertfordshire County Council (Children under 18)
- St Elizabeth's Children's Service Guide to: Reporting a Safeguarding Incident for a vulnerable adult within the Children's Service to Hertfordshire County Council (18+ Adult Resident)

Incident Case management

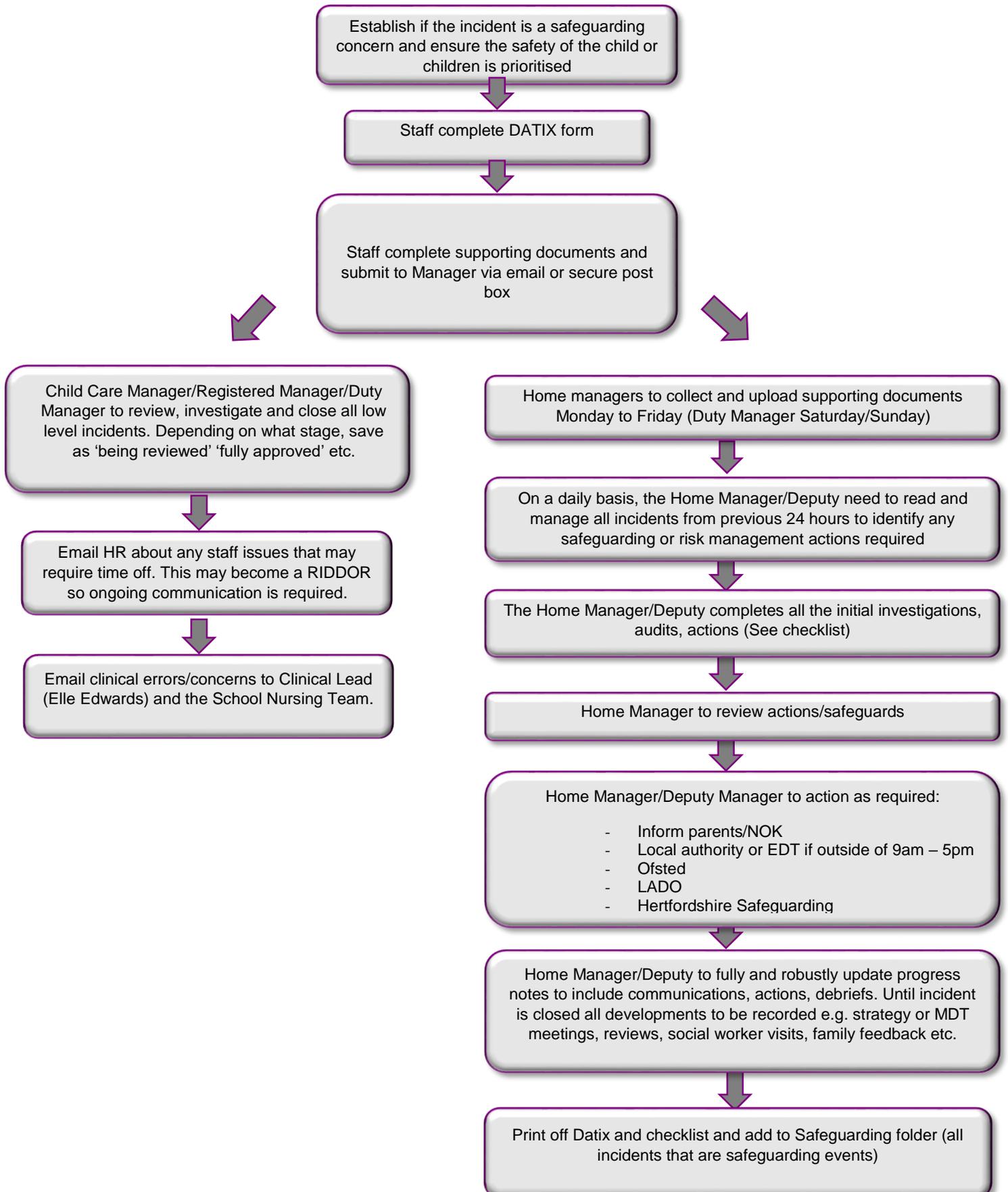
Every safeguarding incident reported will be managed in a person-centred manner. Regular updates regarding the welfare of the victim and the process of investigation will be documented and cases will be closed when resolved.

In responding to issues and concerns regarding possible maltreatment or abuse, staff and others must exercise vigilance in protecting information and only pass on information to those who need to be involved via the specified reporting process.

It is important to ensure that children and vulnerable adults with capability continue to be informed of what is happening and have the opportunity to discuss and, where appropriate influence the process using communication tools assessable to them.

Safe handling, storage and archiving must be ensured. Records must be kept securely locked in a place to which access is restricted. Information held on a computer must be password protected or in allocated and restricted folders. Managers, DSL's and DSO have a particular responsibility in maintaining the confidentiality of these records and must ensure that the records, or any information that they contain, are made available only to relevant parties. The transfer of information should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

Incident Reporting Pathway for Children's Service



Children's Home DSL (Designated safeguarding Leads) are:

Amaka Williams

Matthew Gorvin

All house managers

Managers on bleep 99



Out of hours and in the absence of a children's Home DSL contact bleep 99



Use the phone to bleep:

- **Dial 70**
- **Wait for a long beep**
- **Dial 72 099**
- **It will ring and then stop – you need to speak first**
- **State who you are where you are and request an urgent call back (if a safeguarding concern)**



Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Council of Trustees

Trustees have a legal duty to take reasonable steps within their power to ensure that children, young people and adults that come in contact with the charity are safeguarded from harm. The Council delegates the day-to-day implementation of this responsibility to the senior leadership team in the roles described below. Council has appointed a Designated Trustee to act on its behalf in relation to ensuring the appropriate development, implementation and monitoring of this.

Designated Trustee

The designated trustee is responsible for ensuring the implementation, consistent monitoring and improvements of the Safeguarding Policy and related procedures. The designated Trustee for safeguarding is John Colby.

Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team have direct responsibility for ensuring that this policy and related procedures are adhered to across specific departments and fulfil the overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored and on a minimum annual basis reviewed through the Director of Childcare Services and Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Chief Executive Officer is Jill Rankin.

Director of Childcare Services

The Director of Childcare Services is responsible for line managing and overseeing the work of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and ensuring that these duties are carried out appropriately. The Director of Childcare Services is also responsible for sharing serious safeguarding concerns with SLT and designated trustees via bi-weekly meetings. The Director of Childcare Services is Amaka Williams.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for developing and improving policy, procedure and practice in relation to safeguarding across the service and ensuring that robust systems are in place to monitor practice. The Designated Safeguarding Officer has oversight of all safeguarding reports and processes to ensure that procedures have been followed in accordance with the legal frameworks that underpin this policy. Designated Safeguarding Officer will be updated on all safeguarding issues across the Children's Services by Designated Safeguarding Leads. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is Matthew Gorvin.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

All safeguarding leads are responsible for ensuring that employees, volunteers, agency workers and care bank staff follow this policy and its related procedures and receive the mandatory safeguarding training and support they need, in line with their responsibilities and level of direct contact with children and young people.



The Safeguarding Leads, senior managers and the on-call managers are responsible for dealing with initial reports or concerns about the protection of children and vulnerable adults at risk appropriately and in accordance with the procedures that underpin this policy. Every children's home manager is a designated safeguarding lead: Rachel Groves, Emma Blackmore, Craig Joshua, Esther Graham, Paige Butt, Erin Cook, Tracey marsh (as of November, 2022)

All trustees, employees, agency staff and volunteers

All trustees, employees, agency staff and volunteers are responsible for carrying out their duties in a way that actively safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and young people. They must also act in a way that protects them from wrongful allegations of abuse as far as possible. They must bring safeguarding concerns to the attention of one of the organisations Safeguarding Leads immediately and within 24 hours.

External Agencies

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 50

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

www.ceop.police.uk

Charity Commission Guidance for Trustees. (Updated October 2018).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>