

WND*i*S Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Principles;
- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Section 8 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is 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. Section 8 defines neglect in more detail.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Introduction and purpose

1.1. WNDiS aims to ensure that: Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare;

1.2. All staff are aware of, and understand fully their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding; Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.

2. Responsibility for Safeguarding

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and Trustees and is consistent with the procedures of the local safeguarding board,

Legislation and regulation

3. This policy is based on the following legislation:

The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, faith and belief or
- no faith, age, gender identification; sexuality;
- Pregnancy/paternity,
- Marriage/civil partnership;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;

4. Recognising abuse and taking action

4.1. Staff,volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

If a child is in immediate danger:

4.2. Make a referral to children’s socialcare: **0344 800 8020** and/or the police: **999** immediately if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. Anyone can make a referral.

You can also contact NSPCC to report a safeguarding issue: 0808 800 5000

Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Referrals should be made by the DSL to the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) : Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker. The request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager. LADO is the abbreviation for Local Authority Designated Officer (for safeguarding).

If a child makes a disclosure to you:

4.3. If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

Listen to and believe them.

- Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions;
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset; tell the child they
 - have done the right thing in telling you.
 - Do not tell them they should have told you sooner;
 - Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on.
- **Do not** promise to keep it a secret;
- Speak directly to the DSL/deputy DSL immediately. Please contact a member;
- of the leadership if you are unable to find a member of the safeguarding team;
- Record the conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it. The record must include dates and times to ensure there is an accurate record; alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger)

4.4. Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. Alternatively, make a referral to local authority children's social care directly (see 'Referral' below).

4.5. You can also contact the charity **NSPCC on 0808 800 5000** if you need advice on the appropriate action.

4.6. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Referral

4.7. If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

4.8. If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

4.9. The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

4.10. If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must contact the local authority and make sure the case is reconsidered to ensure the concerns have been addressed and the child's situation improves.

5. Allegations and/or Complaints against staff

Procedure for making a complaint against another staff member relating to child protection

See grievance policy

6. Training

6.1. All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training as a part of their induction to ensure they understand the charity's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be annually updated and will be in line with advice from our local safeguarding children board.

6.2. Training for the DSL and CEO will be updated every two years.

7. Recruitment - interview/appointment panels

7.1. At least one person on any interview/appointment panel for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will, as a minimum, be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

8. Types of Abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

8.1. Physical abuse 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.

8.2. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- 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
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in
- danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

8.3. 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
- 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.

8.4. Neglect is 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);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, and
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 1: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out copies of these checks will be held in individuals' personnel files.

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, (basic as there will not be any opportunities for any staff to spend time alone with a child as they are always accompanied by a parent).
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK.
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

Appendix 2: allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children

It applies regardless of where the alleged abuse took place. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/ are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Procedure for dealing with allegations:

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the CEO will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day.
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation. This may sometimes result in further action being taken if there are concerns regarding the conduct of the member of staff.

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate.