



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Last reviewed and updated: April 2025

(This policy will be renewed annually or as required by any organisational, statutory, legal or best practice changes).

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KEY CONTACTS

	Appointed designated Child Protection /Safeguarding Person	Second Named Person
Name	Sara Hardeland	Chris Patton
Contact Info: -	0191 264 7566 sara@dycp.org.uk	07976129610 Cpatton@keoghs.co.uk

Policy Statement

The term “Safeguarding” is used in the United Kingdom and Ireland to refer to the joint responsibility of us all to ensure measures are in place to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, that allow people—especially children, young people and vulnerable adults—to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

The Board of Directors of Denton Youth & Community Project; are committed to practice which protects children/young people and their families and all other service users from harm. Staff/volunteers and directors of the company accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause/potentially cause children/young people harm, ‘The Children Act 1989’.

This Policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount;
- All children/young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All staff/volunteers and directors have a responsibility to report concerns to the Designated Person with responsibility for Child Protection/Safeguarding (see page 5).

The Board of Trustees will aim to safeguard young people by:

- Adopting Child Protection/Safeguarding guidelines through Procedures and ‘Code of Good Practice’ for staff/volunteers, management committee and user groups.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents/carers and children/young people appropriately.
- Carefully following the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective support, supervision and training to staff/volunteers and management committee.
- Commitment to reviewing our Policies and Good Practice regularly, in line with government guidance and legislation regarding Safeguarding children/young people.
- Children/young people should be informed of our Policy before they subscribe so they can make choices about what they tell us.

1. Definitions of abuse

The Trustees and staff recognise the definitions of abuse based from “Working Together to Safeguard Children”:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

(Full definitions attached as document Appendix 1)

2. Recognising & responding to signs and symptoms of abuse:

The Board of Trustees are aware of the numerous signs and symptoms related to abuse and have put in place appropriate procedures to respond to both suspected abuse and direct disclosures, refer to section 6.

3. Accountability:

The designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person is **Sara Hardeland** and he should be contacted regarding Child Protection/Safeguarding concerns.

In the event that the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person is unavailable the second contact person is **Chris Patton**

The designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person/s are appropriately trained and are committed to operating safe working practices and have been nominated by the Trustees to refer any allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the appropriate Local Safeguarding authorities. *(Role and responsibilities of the designated Child Protection/ Safeguarding person/s is attached as document Appendix 2).* In the absence of the designated person the matter should be brought to the attention of the second named person (*above*).

4. It is staff/volunteers responsibility to take action if:

- A young person tells you that another worker has hurt them.
- You see an incident or conduct by a colleague that concerns you.
- You hear about an incident or conduct that concerns a young person in or outside you setting/workplace/remit.

If the concerns are not about the designated person/s – In the first instance you should share your information with the designated person/s.

If your concerns are about the designated person/s - It is the right of any individual to seek advice and/or make direct referrals to the necessary Local Safeguarding Agencies (i.e. Social Services and/or Police). If for any reason you believe that the designated person/s has not responded appropriately to your concerns or if you believe the designated person/s are implicated in any way then it is your responsibility to contact the Child Protection Agencies directly.

(Please also refer to Appendix 3 – Staff/volunteers Responsibilities)

5. What to do if you have cause for concern or suspect that abuse may have occurred:

- You must report your concerns immediately to the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person; using the form “Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse” *(Attached as supporting documents, Appendix 4).*

- Inform the Project Manager as soon as possible and discuss a plan to continue to support the young person.
- You should continue to monitor the situation through regular contact with the young person concerned.
- If the contact with the young person stops you should inform the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person and keep him/her updated with any changes in the situation.

Staff/volunteers are all trained (to at least an introductory level) in Child Protection/Safeguarding issues and normally their only role is to **report** and **pass** on suspicions and allegations to the designated Person and/or the Local Safeguarding Authorities.

6. What to do if a child/young person makes a disclosure: THE PROCEDURE

DO

- Stay calm and Listen – non-judgementally, without interruption.
- Take seriously what the young person has said and tell them that you are taking it seriously.
- Be aware of your non verbal messages – keep responses simple.
- Ask open questions to clarify – but do not investigate.
- Acknowledge their bravery.
- Reassure the young person that the abuse is not their fault and they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Respect their confidentiality.
- Be honest and clear about who you must tell and why
- Tell them what will happen next.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.

DO NOT

- Make promises you can't keep - **DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.**
- Interrogate a young person with lots of questions.
- Say anything that makes the young person feel responsible for the abuse.
- Communicate panic - over hasty reactions can do more harm than good.
- End the conversation abruptly.
- Cast doubt about what has been said.

There must be no delay in communication once a suspicion arises. The sharing of relevant information at the earliest opportunity within an environment of strict confidentiality is essential.

- Where a young person discloses that they have been or are being abused, staff/volunteers have a professional responsibility to fully explore the potential harm to the young person. Staff/volunteers must take into account the company's "Confidentiality Policy".
- Inform the young person concerned that you must inform the designated Child Protection person.
- Listen to the young person, seeking to understand their interpretation of the situation, identifying and explaining the possible options and explore what the

possible consequences might be. (Experience shows that it is important to progress at the young persons pace and to facilitate their deciding what action should be taken). Ensure that the young person is fully informed of the Procedures and the next course of action.

- RECORD IT - Make notes as soon as possible. You should accurately write down exactly what the young person has said and what you said, do not alter the language used by the young person (as this may discredit evidence in a potential investigation carried out by the Local Safeguarding Authorities). Avoid judgement and opinions. Note time, date and state who was present and any subsequent events. All hand written notes should be signed and kept secure.
- You should use the form "Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse" (*Attached as documents Appendix 4*).
- You should seek advice and report your discussion with the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person as soon as possible. If this person is implicated you would then discuss with the second named person, who would then carry out the further assessment, (which may subsequently lead to a referral of concern to Social Services and/or the Police for further action). If both are implicated a direct referral will need to be made.
- After a young person has disclosed abuse the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person should carefully consider whether or not it is safe for the young person to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

7. Children and Young People with Disabilities

Research suggests children with physical, sensory or learning impairment have an increased risk of neglect, abuse and institutional practices. Children with disabilities are recognised as children in need (s17 Children Act 1989). As such they may be exposed to the full range of risk of abuse experienced by all children.

Children with multiple disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons, which include that they:

- have fewer outside contacts than other children;
- receive intimate personal care, possibly from a number of carers, which may both increase the risk of exposure to abusive behaviour, and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries;
- have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse;
- have communication difficulties which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening;
- be inhibited about complaining because of a fear of losing services;
- be especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation; and/or
- be more vulnerable than other children to abuse by their peers.
-

Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children. Particular attention should be paid to promoting a high level of awareness of the risks of harm and high standards of practice, and strengthening the capacity of children and families to help them.

Measures should include:

- making it common practice to help disabled children make their wishes and feelings known in respect of their care and treatment;
- ensuring that disabled children receive appropriate personal, health, and social education (including sex education);
- making sure that all disabled children know how to raise concerns, and giving them access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate. Those disabled children with communication impairments should have available to them at all times a means of being heard;
- an explicit commitment to, and understanding of disabled children's safety and welfare among providers of services used by disabled children;
- close contact with families, and a culture of openness on the part of services; and
- guidelines and training for staff on good practice in intimate care; working with children of the opposite sex; handling difficult behaviour; consent to treatment; anti-bullying strategies; and sexuality and sexual behaviour among young people, especially those living away from home.

Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted upon in accordance with the guidance in Section 5, in the same way as with any other child.

Expertise in both safeguarding and promoting the welfare of child and disability has to be brought together to ensure that disabled children receive the same levels of protection from harm as other children (see *Safeguarding Disabled Children* on www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/safeguarding).

Where a disabled child has communication impairments or learning disabilities, special attention should be paid to communication needs, and to ascertain the child's perception of events, and his or her wishes and feelings. In every area, NCYP staff should be aware of nonverbal communication systems, when they might be useful and how to access them, and should know how to contact suitable interpreters or facilitators. Staff should not make assumptions about the inability of a disabled child to give credible evidence, or to withstand the rigours of the court process. Each child should be assessed carefully, and helped and supported to participate in the criminal justice process when this is in the child's best interest and the interests of justice.

8. Exceptional Circumstances

Only in exceptional circumstances should action be taken without agreement from the young person concerned. This said, there are some situations that stretch the boundaries of any policies and guidelines. There may be times when you may feel it necessary to break a young person's confidentiality, even if they have asked us not to, however, wherever possible, keep the young person informed of actions. The times when you may consider breaking confidentiality are:

- If a young person is not able to understand the implications of the decision they are making. This may be due to their level of maturity and/or ability, or where the abuse or violation is so much the norm they cannot appreciate the reality of other choices, or where they are unable to make a clear decision because of alcohol/drugs/solvent use.
- If a young person is in a life threatening situation. This includes self-harm, or the need for urgent medical attention.
- When a young person is being terrorised by the abuser. This includes where a young person is subject to so much, or significant, pressure from the abuser that their ability to choose is seriously impaired.
- Where a situation could lead to staff/volunteers of the project being harmed.

Where a situation falls into an “Exceptional Circumstances” and/or the need to break confidentiality is indicated the member of staff should:

- Respond to the immediate safety of the young person
- Consult and implement The Procedure (above).

9. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Purpose

This policy is written to ensure the utmost safety for both volunteers and members whilst involved with DYCP.

The aim of this policy is to clarify the procedures and rules regarding the care of vulnerable adults at DYCP by staff and volunteers.

9.2 Scope

This policy applies to all DYCP volunteers, staff and trustees who will be involved with vulnerable adults.

The policy is made available to all volunteers, staff and trustees at DYCP.

The staff member currently responsible for vulnerable adult's welfare is The Project Manager, who reports directly The Management Committee/Trustees.

9.3 Policy

DYCP understands that there are many elements to working with vulnerable adults and understands its duty of care to both the project users and volunteers and staff working with them.

This policy is broken into the following sections:

- 9.3.1. Screening of volunteers
- 9.3.2. Practice and guidelines
- 9.3.3. Reporting concerns and confidentiality

9.3.1. Screening and Training of Volunteers

- 1.1 All staff and volunteers receive an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check/DBS and complete a declaration form and ISA.
- 1.2 All volunteers and staff are encouraged to take part in additional training on an ongoing basis.

- 1.3 If the Project Manager has a concern about a volunteer or worker they will meet with them to discuss their concerns. If the issue is not fully resolved at this stage it will be referred to the Management Committee.
- 1.4 If a project user makes an allegation of abuse against a worker or volunteer the worker or volunteer will be asked not to work until the allegation is investigated.
- 1.5 It is essential that staff and volunteers report concern or incidents or fellow workers to the Project Manager. The person involved may be suspended from work until a suitable investigation has been conducted in line with grievance and disciplinary procedures policy.

9.3.2. Practice and Guidelines

- 2.1 Volunteers and staff must never drive any vulnerable person home alone.
- 2.2 Volunteers and staff must never take a vulnerable person to their own home.
- 2.3 Volunteers and staff must not accept, nor seek gifts of any kind from a vulnerable person (for example, financial, loan). From time to time vulnerable adults may make donations to DYPP (for example raffle prizes). These are accepted provided it is clear that they are for the project and not for staff or volunteer's own use.
- 2.4 Volunteers and staff must not seek personal legacy from a vulnerable person involved with DYCP.
- 2.5 Volunteers should only use physical contact when it is appropriate to do so, in a caring and professional manner.
- 2.6 Volunteers and staff must be aware of individuals and their personalities and physical abilities and must never make derogatory comments or discouraging remarks and avoid generalisations and inflammatory conversations.
- 2.7 Volunteers and staff must treat all vulnerable adults with respect. They must avoid making judgement on member's homes/lifestyles which may be different from their own.
- 2.8 Volunteers and staff must not make assumptions about vulnerable adults and life experiences they may from time to time have related to them by the vulnerable person.
- 2.9 Volunteers and staff must avoid inappropriate language and subject matter or say anything that could create a false impression or be misunderstood.
- 2.10 Volunteers and staff must avoid showing favouritism or singling out individuals in any way.
- 2.11 Volunteers and staff must always record on an incident form, any cause for concern about any vulnerable person and pass this to the Project Manager.
- 2.12 Volunteers and staff must under no circumstances 'cover up' information, even when friends, colleagues or members of staff are concerned. Volunteers and staff should not feel intimidated by other members of staff or volunteers.
- 2.13 If a project user or a member of their family makes a complaint about any volunteer or worker, then the appropriate policy procedure should be followed.
- 2.14 The Project Manager should keep a confidential list of all project users and other essential information, such as allergies and first aid needs. Volunteers and staff are given information on a 'need to know basis'.
- 2.15 The Project Manager/Management Committee are responsible for ensuring the Health and Safety of the project is met.

- 2.16 Volunteers and staff must inform their insurance company if transporting a vulnerable person in their own privately owned vehicle. The vehicle must be fitted with seat belts and the volunteer must drive responsibly and follow good practice guidelines of a trained mini bus driver.
- 2.17 At least 2 volunteers or workers should return a vulnerable person to their home if the front door is out of sight of the rest of the group.
- 2.18 Volunteers and workers should make every effort to get to know the names of project users as soon as possible.
- 2.19 Vulnerable adults should be encouraged but never forced to take part in activities at DYPP. Where a vulnerable person is not able or is upset by the activity, steps should be taken to find an alternative that does not detract from the safety or experience of the other members.
- 2.20 All volunteers need to ensure they engage with the vulnerable adults, do stimulating, well managed activities with regard to the vulnerable adult's well-being, both mental and physical whilst being aware of the member's mobility issues.

9.3.3. Reporting concerns and confidentiality

- 3.1 A reporting form is always available to record an incident or concern regarding a vulnerable adult or fellow worker or volunteer. An incident may include a disclosure of information by a member regarding their care and well-being, or an unusual incident that aroused concern. Physical signs and symptoms or changes in a vulnerable adult's behaviour may cause concern and should be reported in the same way.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the staff and volunteers to report any incident concern on the correct form and pass it to the project leader. If the concern or incident is regarding the Project Manager, the form should be passed to the staff or volunteer responsible for the vulnerable person's welfare.
- 3.3 The Project Manager is responsible for the progress of the report once the staff or volunteer has handed it to them. It is the Project Manager's responsibility to read the report, obtain more information from the volunteer /worker as necessary and pass the form on to the staff member responsible for the vulnerable person's welfare. This should be done on the day of the incident or report being logged.
- 3.4 The staff member responsible for the vulnerable adult's welfare will read the report and act appropriately. This may involve adding to other reports of ongoing concerns, contacting appropriate authorities e.g. Age Concern, Action on Elder Abuse, Social Services directly.
- 3.5 Safety and well-being of the vulnerable adult is of paramount importance and the volunteer must act accordingly. If an vulnerable adult implies or tells a worker or volunteer that they have been abused (physical, financial, sexual, neglect) the volunteer must make it clear to that person that the DYCP staff member concerned with the vulnerable adult's welfare will be told, and that appropriate action will be taken.
- 3.6 The volunteer must never agree to keep such a disclosure secret, but must be careful not to alarm the vulnerable person.

10. Data and Barring Service (DBS) Policy

In recruiting and appointing workers you must take into account DYCP "Volunteer Recruitment Policy".

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for the following:

As part of DYCP's safer recruitment process, prior to interview and as part of the application process checks to ensure the applicant is legally able to work in the UK must be carried out.

- All applicants need to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with young people. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) requires that people applying for positions which give them 'substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis' to young people under the age of 18 must declare all previous convictions which are then subject to Data and Barring Service (DBS) checks. They can then only be offered employment subject to a successful DBS check and references. This includes potential staff, volunteers, trustees/management committee and self-employed people such as sports coaches. They are also required to declare any pending case against them. It is important that applicants in this particular category understand that all information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used against them unfairly.
- DYCP will ensure that successful applicants all obtain an Enhanced Data and Barring Service (EDBS) from the Criminal Records Bureau. Successful applicants will need to show the EDBS before we will confirm them in post. The applicant will also need to obtain a co-signature from a registered body. Successful applicants must also provide a minimum of two references, one of which must be from their last/most recent employer.

11. Renewal of DBS Checks

The Data and Barring Service does not recommend a specific renewal interval for DBS checks, this is for the employer to decide. However, in the interests of good practice DYCP trustees, staff and volunteers DBS checks will be renewed every 3 years.

12. Allegations against a member of staff

DYCP will assure all staff/volunteers that they will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concerns that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a young person.

12.1. Scope

The following procedure applies to situations:

- Where there are suspicions or allegations of abuse by a person who works with children in either a paid or unpaid capacity i.e. any employee or volunteer.
- When it is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children and,
- When the allegation or suspicion arises in connection with the individual's work, her/his own children or in relation to other children.

Compliance with these procedures should ensure that where allegations of abuse are made or where there is reasonable suspicion, organisational responses are prompt, thorough, independent and proportionate to the issue of concern.

12.2. Threshold & Response

Volunteers who work with children are also expected to maintain standards of conduct comparable to those prescribed for colleagues in paid employment. All allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect by staff and volunteers should be considered under Denton Youth & Community Project's Child Protection Procedures. All concerns must be referred to the Police as a potential criminal investigation. It is not permissible for a member of staff to conduct an enquiry about suspicion or allegation of abuse with respect to:

- A relative.
- A friend.
- A colleague, supervisor/supervisee or someone who has worked with her/him previously in any of these capacities.

Even when there is insufficient evidence to support a criminal prosecution, complaints, regulatory or disciplinary procedures may still be justified. Subject to legal constraints, any evidence gathered in the course of an enquiry about allegations against staff or volunteers should be referred to the relevant designated member of staff with responsibility for the disciplinary regulatory or complaint investigation.

If, following the conclusion of protection processes, further enquiries are pursued for the purpose of disciplinary, regulatory or complaint investigation, they should be arranged in a way that avoids the repeated interviewing of children or other vulnerable witnesses.

As far as possible, enquiries must be conducted in the strictest confidence so that information can be given freely and without fear of victimisation and in a way that protects the rights of employees and volunteers.

If an allegation relating to a child is made about a person who undertakes paid or unpaid care of vulnerable adults, consideration must be given to the possible need to alert those who manage her/him in that role.

12.3. Allegations against Staff in their Work

An allegation may require consideration from any of the following four inter-related perspectives:

- Child protection.
- Criminal investigation.
- Staff disciplinary procedures.
- Complaint procedures.

These procedures deal with child protection enquiries and any associated criminal investigation as distinct from complaints of poor practice and disciplinary procedures, though exploration of the latter may reveal abuse and/or neglect.

This section applies to allegations of abuse or neglect by individuals in their working role and section 22 addresses required responses to allegations about staff in their personal lives.

The employing or responsible agency must ensure that allegations are investigated and that any justifiable action is taken to ensure that the service is safe for children and young people to use.

Information about an allegation must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to:

- Protect children, (including the Family Court, where appropriate).
- Facilitate enquiries.
- Manage disciplinary/complaints aspects.
- Protect any rights of the alleged perpetrator.

12.4. Allegations against Volunteers

Allegations against volunteers conducting work on behalf of DYCP should be dealt with in a manner, which is consistent with the principles and procedures contained in the above section, as far as possible.

12.5. Initial Response to Recognition of Concern/Allegation

Recognition of concern or an allegation may arise from a number of sources e.g. a report from a child, parent of a child, colleague or a complaint or information arising from a disciplinary investigation.

When a member of staff is suspicious or has received allegations of abuse by a colleague, they must report this in accordance with agency procedure.

If that person is implicated in the allegation, the concern must be reported to the Designated Named Person for child protection in the agency and in either case a record of the report which is timed, dated and includes a clear name or signature must be made.

The recipient of an allegation should not determine its validity and failure to report it in accordance with procedures should be a potential disciplinary matter.

The Designated Named Person for the agency will be able to advise staff and Directors if the concerns constitute sufficient grounds for the initiation of the relevant Local Authority's LSCB multi agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures. N.B. Children's Safeguarding Services or the Police Public Protection Unit or equivalent may be consulted for advice.

During such consultations:

- Any matter(s) that may constitute an allegation of crime must be reported to the Police.
- Consideration should be given to the suspension of the person(s) against whom the allegation has been made, pending the outcome of the enquiry.
- Consideration should be given to the need for protective action in relation to children in the care of the alleged perpetrator(s).

Any member of staff who believes that allegations or suspicions, which have been reported to the line manager, are not being investigated properly has a responsibility to report it to a higher level within the agency or the Designated/Named Person for child protection.

If, for any reason, there are difficulties with following the above procedure, the agency's whistle blowing procedure should be considered or a referral made directly to Children's Safeguarding Services or the Police Public Protection Unit. The need for consultation must not delay a referral to Children's Safeguarding Services or the Police Public Protection Unit.

The disciplinary policies of the agency should reflect the rigour of the approach summarised above and any other organisations contracted by DYCP should be made aware that they too would be expected to comply with these requirements.

12.6. Substantiated Allegations

Where concerns are confirmed, relevant information will be passed to appropriate authorities, such as the Protection of Children Act 1999 register or Criminal Records Bureau or the Vetting and Barring Panel (Formerly Known as List 99), this will be done by either the Children's Safeguarding Service who will carry out any investigations into the allegations or the Police Public Protection Unit. **(Refer also to The Protection of Children Act 1999 (Appendix 7 of these procedures))**

12.7. Unsubstantiated and false allegations

Where it is concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate an allegation or the allegation is thought to be untrue or unfounded, the chair of the strategy meeting, as appointed by the Local Authority Safeguarding Board, should ensure minutes contain an evaluation of the relevant information, including outcomes and outstanding tasks. These should be forwarded to the designated senior manager of the employer to enable her/him to consider what further action, if any, should be taken, both in respect, of disciplinary or support to be provided.

The member of staff concerned must be notified of the outcome by DYCP.

Staff conducting disciplinary proceedings, also need to be informed when the child protection investigation/enquiries have concluded.

False allegations are rare and may be a strong indicator of abuse elsewhere which requires further exploration. If an allegation is demonstrably false, the employer, in consultation with the Designated Officer from the relevant Local Authority, should refer the matter to Children and Families Services to determine whether the child is in need of services, or assessment of risk.

If it is established that an allegation is false then the police should be consulted as to whether there is a criminal matter to answer.

12.8. Disciplinary Procedures

Any disciplinary process must be clearly separated from child protection enquiries. Child protection enquiries take priority over any disciplinary investigations, and the strategy meeting will determine whether the investigations can be carried out concurrently.

Relevant service managers must be informed of all allegations made against members of their staff. Consideration must be given to any potential misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of a staff member, and the appropriateness of the staff member being suspended whilst the child protection enquiry takes place.

A decision to suspend or temporarily re-deploy staff rests with DYCP who should take into consideration:

- The safety of the children
- Any impact on the enquiry

The fact that there may be insufficient evidence to support a Police investigation or prosecution should not prevent any action being taken that is necessary to safeguard a child's welfare.

It may be that the allegation was prompted by inappropriate behaviour, not considered sufficiently harmful under DYCP Safeguarding and Child

Protection Procedures, but which may still need to be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

Following notification that the child protection investigation has been concluded, staff conducting any disciplinary proceeding should request access to relevant information from

Children's Safeguarding Services and the Police Public Protection Unit.

All possible steps must be taken to avoid repeated interviewing of children.

12.10. Allegations against Staff in their Personal Lives

If an allegation about abuse or neglect of a child is made about conduct outside of the work role, by a member of staff from one of the agencies subscribing to these procedures, the general principles and approach detailed above apply. The designated / named officer representing DYCP should be briefed and involved in the process and a Local Safeguarding Children Board Strategy meeting called if appropriate.

As in the case of allegations against staff in their work role, achieving an appropriate degree of independent scrutiny over the process and an independent element in the investigation may involve:

- The appointment of external independent investigator/s to the team or to oversee the process.
- Use of staff within the organisation that are sufficiently separate from the line management of those against whom the allegation is made e.g. Independent Reviewing Officers.

The decision about the methodology to be adopted is to be made by the Protection Services Manager, (in conjunction with the DYCP lead), leading the enquiries. The decision and reasons for it must be placed on the case record.

Staff/volunteers are reminded that they have a responsibility not to put themselves or others in a situation where an allegation could be made or bring into question their conduct (i.e. Lone Working). Any touching of a young person should be appropriate to the activity and in full view of the rest of the group. There should be no touching of a young person against their wishes except if it is to restrain them for their own safety or that of another member of the group.

13. Supervisory arrangements for the management of activities and services.

In providing all staff/volunteers with an induction programme, policies and procedures and the necessary training, including child protection and safeguarding training at the required level for the role, we have provided specific guidelines in ensuring that young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and that staff are safe from false allegations of abuse.

14. Support and Training

DYCP is committed to the provision of regular Child Protection training for all our trustees, staff and volunteers who will have read this document as part of their induction. That training should be renewed annually or not less than bi-annually.

15. Commitment to Practice

The original policy was adopted by the Board of Directors on June 2016 and will be reviewed on a Yearly basis, following this recent update the next date of review will be, March 2024.

Note.

In conjunction with this policy, it will be helpful for all trustees, staff and volunteers to also make themselves familiar with the following policies and guidelines: -

General Health and Safety Policy
Volunteering Policy
Guidelines on producing risk assessments
Code of conduct
Whistleblowing Policy

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors of DYCP:



Print Name:

Chris Patton

Position in Organisation:

Chair of Board of directors

Date:

4/4/2025

Signed as the designated person with responsibility for Safeguarding:



Print Name:

Sara Hardeland

Date:

4/4/2025

Appendix 1

Definitions of Abuse from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

Child abuse occurs when any avoidable act, or avoidable failure to act, adversely affects the physical, mental or emotional well being of a child/ young person (NSPCC, 1991).

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

- **Physical abuse** – Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, squeezing, burning or scalding, biting. It also includes giving a child/ young person poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol, and attempted suffocation or drowning 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.
- **Emotional Abuse** – Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved and lack of affection, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children. Threats, verbal attacks, taunting and shouting, can lead to a child's loss of confidence and self esteem, so that they become nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Where children and young people are used by another person to meet their own sexual needs and/or gratification. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative (rape, buggery and oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, kissing, fondling, masturbation, oral sex, self-exposure. They may include non-contact activities such as exposing or involving children in looking at or on the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Neglect** – Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic, essential 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 and clothing, shelter and warmth including exclusions from home or abandonment, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs. Leaving children alone and unsupervised is also an example of neglect. Parents or carers refusing to give love and affection to their children are a case of emotional neglect.

Appendix 2

The role of the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person is to:

- Obtain information from staff/volunteers, young people, parents/carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully asking for further information as appropriate and decide what the best course of action is.
- In case of an acute emergency, the designated Child Protection person will liaise with the club leader/senior worker to make an assessment of whether any other young people may be at risk from the same situation or person/s.
- They should also consult with a Statutory Child Protection Agency such as the Local Social Services Departments or the NSPCC to clarify any doubts or worries.
- The designated Child Protection person should make a referral to the Local Safeguarding Authority (i.e. Social Services and/or the Police) without delay. Any verbal referral need to be followed by a written referral as soon as practical, i.e. the next day.
- In the case of a complaint about a member of the staff/volunteer, that if proved would be a disciplinary matter, the designated Child Protection person will follow the Clubs disciplinary procedure.
- The designated Child Protection person is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the “Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse” reporting forms, in line with the Clubs Data Protection Policy. The forms should be kept in a secure and lockable place. There will not be copies of the form kept in the Club’s files; all the forms will be kept centrally.

Informing Parents/Carers

We believe as an organisation working with young people, good practice dictates it is extremely important that parents/carers are involved as soon as possible to the discretion of the dedicated Child Protection/Safeguarding person, involving them in any decisions concerning the welfare of the young person. It is good practice that this should be done through direct face to face contact with a senior colleague (i.e. Club Leader) present, unless:

- You feel the parent/s are directly involved or implicated in any way.
- You feel that anyone (i.e. young person/s, family, staff/volunteers) are at or would come to any serious harm as a result of you informing the parents/carers.
- Circumstances dictate the family relationship to be such that parental involvement may further jeopardise the well being of the young person.

The designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person will liaise with the Club Leader to discuss the best way to link with the parents/carers (except when the allegations

are made against either the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person or the Club Leader).

In all cases consult with the young person with the aim of consulting the parents/carers on the young persons terms and in the least compromising manner.

When informing parents/carers an assessment should be made on how they will respond given the circumstances/incidents. Parents may need support to explore and come to terms with the issues facing the young person.

It is the judgement call and discretion of the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person to decide if/when you inform the parents/carers. You can contact Social Services and/or the NSPCC at any time of the day (24hrs) for advice or if you have cause for concern and unsure what if anything you should do next. If/when you **report** and **pass** on suspicions and/or allegations to the Local Safeguarding Authority (i.e. Social Services and/or the Police) they will then act accordingly (i.e. informing the parents/carers). You should however consider the following legislation when making judgments:

- Data Protection Act.
- Freedom of Information Act.
- Human Rights Act, i.e. Legal rights on confidentiality.

Appendix 3

Staff/Volunteers Responsibilities

Abuse cases involving young people are highly sensitive and confidential and should be treated as such. They should not be the subject for casual conversation in the project, family or neighbourhood. It is essential that as little attention as possible is drawn to the situation. However, in some cases other young people may know about the abuse and some work may be needed around their reactions/feelings, particularly if they are close to the victim or the perpetrator of the abuse.

It is important for any staff/volunteer when faced with the possibility of a case of abuse to:

- Be aware of their role in such a situation.
- Inform the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding person.
- Have knowledge of procedures for reporting such cases within this policy.
- Be able to give immediate assistance to the young person at risk.
- Under no circumstances should staff/volunteers attempt to act as a “go-between” with the young person and the alleged person/s.

Staff/volunteers should not approach the young person, family or individuals about allegations or suspicions.

Staff/volunteers should undertake regular Child Protection Training. The above Child Protection Procedures are intended only as instruction for the recording and reporting of suspected/actual abuse. The skills, attitudes and awareness that are required to support young people making disclosures or who are suspected as being victims of abuse, are the subject of directed training, and the support of your line manager. It is the responsibility of the project leader to provide information, and organise for staff/volunteers to attend appropriate training.

Staff/volunteers have a duty to co-operate fully with the Local Safeguarding Authorities agencies in line with the Area Child Protection Committees.

Appendix 4

Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse

If you have any concerns about allegations or suspicions of abuse regarding a child/young person you should follow the project Policies and Procedures and inform the designated Child Protection person detailed below.

Project Name

Name

Job/Role

Address

Tel no

Important contacts outside

Area Child Protection Committee

Local Social Services Office

Address

Tel no

Emergency no

Local Police Station

Address

Tel no

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000

Reporting Suspected Abuse

Confidential Recording Sheet

Organisation

Name of Person Reporting

Name of Young Person

Age & Date of Birth

Ethnicity

Religion

First Language

Disability

Parent's/Carer's Name (s)

Home Address/Tel no

Are you reporting your concerns or reporting someone else's. Please give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include date, time, specific incidents.

Any physical Signs? Behavioural Signs? Indirect Signs?

Have you spoken to the young person? If so, what was said?

Have you spoken to the parent(s)? if so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details?

Have you consulted anybody else? Please give details

Person reported to and date of reporting

Signature of person reporting

Today's date

Action taken
