



Catholic Care Community Sponsorship
Safeguarding Children Policy
November 2024

Hemsthorpe Community Welcome
Community Sponsorship Group

This policy has been adopted from the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Safeguarding Policy September 2020.

Named personnel with designated responsibility for Safeguarding

Community Sponsorship Group Safeguarding Lead	Designated Safeguarding Lead Catholic Care
Veronica Ward 07570 044008	Rachel Wilkinson 0113 388 5400 07895 201687

Policy Created September 2021

Last Reviewed November 2024

Contents

Introduction	4
Catholic Care Commitment	4
Roles and Responsibilities	5
Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm	11
Procedures	12
Safeguarding Appendices	18
Allegations regarding person(s) who work with Children	18
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	19
Confidentiality	21
Contacts	21
Domestic Abuse	22
Partnership with Parents and Carers	22
Partnerships with other agencies	23
Peer /Child on Child abuse including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment	23
Prevent, Protect and Prepare	24
Child Information	26
Understanding Safeguarding Principles	26
Serious Violence	28
Safer Recruitment and Selection	28
Safer Working Practice	29
Volunteers Induction and Training	29
Supervision, Support and Advice for Volunteers	31

This policy applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the Hemsthorpe Community Welcome Community Sponsorship Group in the Wakefield Council area.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Safeguarding includes the establishment and implementation of procedures to protect children from deliberate harm, however, safeguarding also encompasses all aspects of children's' health, and safety and well-being

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's **mental and physical health**;
- 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.

Catholic Care Commitment

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Rachel Wilkinson

Catholic Care is committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of all of the children in its care. Each child's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children *may* be especially vulnerable to abuse e.g. those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, those living in adverse circumstances. We recognise that children who are abused or neglected may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. We recognise that some children who have experienced abuse may harm others. We will always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our children.

Multi-agency working in Wakefield

Catholic Care has a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The three statutory safeguarding partners (Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership, Health, and Police) have planned to allow all Community groups in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in safeguarding arrangements. As a named and relevant agency we are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements.

Catholic Care is aware of and will always act in line with the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) policies and procedures and practice guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that:

- the Community Sponsorship group complies with the Local Authority's arrangements to promote co-operation between itself and relevant partners and organisations who are engaged in activities relating to children
- there is a clear accountability for the commissioning and / or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- there is a senior level lead to take leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements
- Catholic Care has a Safeguarding policy and procedures in place. They are in accordance with government guidance and refer to locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by the WSCP, are updated annually, and available publicly.
- there is recognition of the expertise that volunteers build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns. Opportunity should therefore be provided for volunteers to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and Safeguarding policy
- the Safeguarding policy and procedures are provided to and read by all volunteers, on induction.
- all volunteers undertake appropriate Safeguarding training
- a senior member of the leadership team is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and Safeguarding (Designated Safeguarding Lead). This is explicit in the DSL's job description
- the DSL has the appropriate authority and the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to all volunteers on child welfare and Safeguarding matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children
- information regarding the role of the DSL is provided to all staff and volunteers on induction
- Catholic Care prevents people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check volunteers who work with children, and taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised
- Catholic Care has written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place
- Catholic Care has a volunteers' code of conduct which includes amongst other things acceptable use of technologies, adult/child relationships and communications including the use of social media. This is provided to all volunteers, on induction
- Catholic Care has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against volunteers, that comply with guidance from locally agreed inter-agency procedures

- there are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult and the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left
- all volunteers recognise that children may abuse their peers, and that this should not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Any allegations of peer abuse and concerns about serious violence, including knife crime, sexual violence and sexual harassment, physical abuse, youth produced sexual imagery, (sexting,) initiation/hazing¹ type violence, rituals, upskirting (which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm), which is a criminal offence must be reported to the DSL and WSCP guidance and procedures must be followed. There should be a whole establishment approach to preventing sexual violence and sexual harassment between children. Catholic Care has due regard to the duties to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to protect and prepare children against the risk of a terrorist attack
- all volunteers understand the risk factors regarding female genital mutilation and known cases are reported
- where services or activities are provided on Catholic Care premises by another body, the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and Safeguarding and liaises with Catholic Care on these matters where appropriate
- any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding Safeguarding arrangements, whenever identified, are remedied without delay
- when there is a safeguarding concern the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take
- volunteers are aware that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children

The Community Sponsorship Group Safeguarding Lead should ensure

- the policies and procedures adopted by Catholic Care, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are fully implemented and followed by all volunteers
- they liaise with the DSL in the event of allegations of abuse being made against a volunteer
- they receive appropriate safeguarding and Safeguarding training which is regularly updated

¹ **Hazing:** is any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The DSL role is set out in Catholic Care's safeguarding induction and this is explicit in the DSL's job description. They are a senior member of staff on Catholic Care's leadership team and take lead responsibility for Safeguarding (including online safety). They are given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff and volunteers on child welfare and Safeguarding matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.

The DSL will:

Manage referrals

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required
- Support volunteers who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- Refer cases to the Channel panel through the universal referral form where there is a radicalisation concern as required
- Support volunteers who make referrals to the Channel panel
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves
- Report cases of prejudice, hate based incidents or hate crimes to the Local Authority through the online reporting system. Hate crimes should also be reported to the police.
- Access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of additional mental health support

Work with others

- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- As required, liaise with the 'case manager' and the LADO for Safeguarding concerns in cases which concern a volunteer
- Liaise with volunteers on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety,) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for volunteers

Undertake training

- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should provide them with a good understanding of their own role and the process, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care and should be updated at least every two years.
- Undertake Prevent awareness training and Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) Training
- Refresh their knowledge and skills (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments and news such as those provided by the WSCP and NSPCC) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a Safeguarding case conference and a Safeguarding review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each volunteer has access to and understands Catholic Care's Safeguarding policy and procedures;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- Understand and support Catholic Care with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty, including online safety and are able to provide advice and support to volunteers on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all volunteers, in any measures Catholic Care may put in place to protect them.
- Understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe. Recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and be confident and have the capacity to support SEND children to stay safe online.

Raise Awareness

- Ensure Catholic Care's Safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately.
- Ensure Catholic Care Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors and volunteers regarding this.
- Ensure the Safeguarding policy is available publicly and volunteers are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of Catholic Care in this; and
- Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure volunteers are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding Records

- Ensure that Child Protection (CP) records are retained for an appropriate length of time and Catholic Care has regard to any other requirement requiring specific retention periods. The current requirement under IICSA (Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse) is that records of child sex abuse should be retained for the period of the inquiry.

Availability

- The DSL or their deputy is always available (during working hours) for volunteers from the Community Sponsorship Group to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the DSL (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or online is acceptable. Out of office hours, if the DSL or deputy is not available, see page 21 for the LADO and other useful contact numbers.

All Volunteers will:

- receive appropriate Safeguarding training, including online safety training, which is regularly updated, (for example, via email, e-bulletins and meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- be aware of systems within the organisation which support safeguarding. These should be explained to them as part of their induction. This includes: Catholic Care's Safeguarding policy; the Community Sponsorship Group's Code of Conduct; the identity and role of the DSL.
- know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused or neglected and know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved. Volunteers should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse

- be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments
- be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection
- be aware of children who may need support with their mental health
- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, volunteers should always act in the **best** interests of the child
- where there are concerns about a child, **always** speak with the DSL
- if the DSL or deputy is not available, volunteers should speak to the duty LADO
- understand that, whilst anyone can make a referral to Children and Families' Service, the correct procedure is to report any concerns to the DSL in the first instance. If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves
- have due regard to the duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism; report known cases of female genital mutilation and follow procedures when a child goes missing from education
- where there are concerns about another volunteer, refer these concerns to the DSL
- raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in Catholic Care's safeguarding regime and where, necessary have regard to whistleblowing procedures. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available as an alternative route for volunteers who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding Safeguarding failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their organisation. Volunteers can call 0800 028 0285 – or email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- be aware of local early help <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/early-help/> process and understand their role in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, and be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
 - is a young carer
 - has a family member in prison
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation

- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is a privately fostered child
- not assume a colleague or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe and be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. If in any doubt about sharing information, volunteers should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
 - Speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM)
Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

Adults working with children and young people in Catholic Care are well placed to observe any physical, emotional or behavioural signs which indicate that a child may be suffering significant harm. The relationships between volunteers, children's, parents and the public which foster respect, confidence and trust can lead to disclosures of abuse, and/or Catholic Care volunteers being alerted to concerns.

Definitions

As in the Children Act 1989, a **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

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 others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children

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.

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 children 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 and how they communicate. 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 (including cyber bullying), 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.

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.

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

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

Procedures

Taking action to ensure that children are safe at home

All volunteers follow the WSCP Safeguarding Processes and Systems which are consistent with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* and *What to Do If You Are Worried A Child is Being Abused 2015*

Extra Familial Harm – (Contextual Safeguarding)

All volunteers should be aware that Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside Catholic Care and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. **All** volunteers, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence

Volunteers should recognise that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. They must not assume that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration. They must remain alert to the fact that children with SEN and disabilities can be more prone to peer group isolation and disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and may have communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

It is **not** the responsibility of Community Sponsorship volunteers to investigate or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation of abuse or neglect. This includes allegations of peer abuse. All volunteers, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. Accordingly, all concerns indicating possible abuse or neglect will be recorded and discussed with the DSL (or in their absence with the person who deputises) prior to any discussion with parents.

Volunteers must immediately report:

- any suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play
- any explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- any behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. significant changes in behaviour, worrying drawings or play)
- any concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment, or emotional maltreatment
- any concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- any significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance
- any hint or disclosure of abuse or neglect received from the child, or from any other person, including disclosures of abuse or neglect perpetrated by adults outside of the family or by other children or young people
- any concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. volunteers in the Community Sponsorship Group or person living in a household with children present) including inappropriate behaviour e.g. inappropriate sexual comments;

excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images

- any concerns related to serious crime, including knife crime
- any concerns relating to peer abuse
- any concerns relating to youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
- any concerns relating to a child's engagement with extremist groups or ideologies

Responding to Disclosure

Disclosures or information may be received from children, parents or other members of the public. Catholic Care recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all volunteers will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and volunteers will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL and make a contemporaneous record. If in doubt about recording requirements volunteers should discuss with the DSL.

Principles

Volunteers will **not** investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Volunteers will:

- listen to and take seriously any disclosure or information that a child may be at risk of harm
- try to ensure that the person disclosing does not have to speak to another member of the Community Sponsorship Group
- clarify the information
- try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?'
- not ask leading questions
- try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- not express feelings or judgements regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
- explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the senior designated person
- reassure and support the person as far as possible
- explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told
- explain what will happen next and that the person will be involved as appropriate and be informed of what action is to be taken

Action by the DSL

The following actions will be taken where there are concerns about significant harm to **any child, including where there is already an open case to Children's Social Care**, (e.g. Looked after Child).

Following any information raising concern, the DSL will consider:

- if they believe there is immediate risk of significant harm to a child and therefore should contact West Yorkshire Police on 999
- if they should report a crime that does not need an emergency response by calling 101
- if there is an urgent safeguarding concern they should call 0345 8 503 503
- any urgent medical needs of the child
- whether to make an enquiry to 0345 8 503 503 to establish if the child is or has been subject of a Safeguarding Plan
- discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
- consulting with appropriate persons
- the child 's wishes and any fears or concerns they may have

Then decide:

- wherever possible, to talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm
 - whether to make a referral to Children and Families' Service because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately
- OR**
- not to make a referral at this stage
 - if further monitoring is necessary
 - if it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment and/or make a referral for other services

Consent

It is good practice that agencies work in partnership with parents and carers and they are informed of your concerns with consent obtained for referrals.

Consent is always required for referrals to services such as Prevention Service, without it, the services available to the family may be limited.

Consent is not required should you believe informing the parents or carers would place a child at significant risk of harm.

Where consent has not been obtained, and professionals feel that a referral is still warranted, they should submit a referral detailing their actions and inform parent and carers of their actions. In cases of suspected Child Sexual Abuse in the family and Fabricated or Induced Illness it is best practice NOT to inform the family of the referral.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

All referrals to Children and Families Service will be made by submitting a Safeguarding Report Form

Action following a Safeguarding referral

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to safeguard children. It is the role of the DSL to attend multi-agency meetings and provide reports for these. Community Sponsorship volunteers or other members of staff in Catholic Care however, may be asked to contribute.

The DSL will:

- make regular contact with Children's Social Care
- contribute to the Strategy Discussion and all assessments
- provide a report for, attend and contribute to any subsequent Safeguarding Conference
- if the child has a Safeguarding Plan, contribute to the Safeguarding Plan and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Safeguarding Conferences
- where possible, share all reports with parents prior to meetings
- where in disagreement with a decision made e.g. not to apply Safeguarding Procedures or not to convene a Safeguarding Conference, follow the WSCP procedures
- where there is significant information in respect of a child subject to a Safeguarding Plan, **immediately** inform the key worker or their manager in Children's Social Care e.g. any significant changes or concerns, departures from the CP plan, or the child moves/goes missing/is removed

Recording and monitoring

If a child is or has been subject to a Child Protection Plan, Catholic Care will record:

- information about the child: name (aka) address, dob., those with parental responsibility, primary carers, emergency contacts, names of persons authorised to collect from Catholic Care, any court orders,
- key contacts in other agencies including GP details
- any disclosures/accounts from child or others, including parents (and keep original notes)
- significant contacts with carers/other agencies/professionals
- all concerns, discussions, decisions, agreements made and actions taken and the reasons for these (dated, timed and signed, to include the name and agency/title of the person responsible/ spoken to), the plan to protect the child and arrangements for monitoring/review

All records should be objective and include:

- statements, facts and observable things (what was seen/heard)
- diagram indicating position, size and colour of any injuries (not photograph)
- words child uses, (not translated into 'proper' words)
- non-verbal behaviours

All sensitive and CP records are held securely, kept confidential and are only accessible to those who need to know.

When sharing confidential information about a volunteer or child, Catholic Care has regard to the data protection principles, which allow them to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018, and the GDPR and where relevant, the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Catholic Care notes that The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.

Supporting the Child and Partnership with Parents and Carers

- Catholic Care recognises that the child's welfare is paramount, however good Safeguarding practice and outcome relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents and carers.
- Whilst we may, on occasion, need to make referrals without consultation with parents and carers, we will make every effort to maintain a positive and supportive working relationship with them whilst fulfilling our duties to protect any child.
- We will provide a secure, caring, supportive and protective relationship for the child.
- Children will be given a proper explanation (appropriate to age & understanding) of what action is being taken on their behalf and why.
- We will endeavour always to preserve the privacy, dignity and right to confidentiality of the child, parents and carers. The DSL will determine which volunteers or members of staff 'need to know' personal information and what they 'need to know' for the purpose of supporting and protecting the children.

Safeguarding Appendices

Allegations regarding person(s) who work with Children

Where an allegation is made against any person working in or on behalf of Catholic Care, or any other person who works with children, that they have:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- d. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Catholic Care will apply the same principles as in the rest of this document.

Volunteers

Where Catholic Care is not the employer of an individual they still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with the relevant parties (this includes volunteers).

Whilst Catholic Care are not the employer of Volunteers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should Catholic Care decide to cease to use a Volunteer due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Agencies should be fully involved and fully cooperate in any enquiries, but Catholic Care will usually take the lead.

Catholic Care will immediately contact the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on **01977 727032** or via email requesting a call back on Lado.Referrals@wakefield.gov.uk and then, where appropriate, submit an online form within one working day:

Where a child may have suffered significant harm, Catholic Care will also submit a referral to Children's Social Care.

Detailed and accurate records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely

Initial Action

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event **MUST** immediately inform the DSL, (the senior manager,) make a record and have regard to Catholic Care's whistleblowing procedure
- The senior manager will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs
- The volunteer will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the **immediate** safety of children
- The senior manager may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation, however no person will be formally interviewed or asked to write a formal statement at this stage
- The senior manager will consult with the Duty LADO in order to determine if it is appropriate for the allegation to be dealt with by Catholic Care or if there needs to be a referral to social care and/or the police for investigation
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of children's, parents and volunteers

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Sexual Exploitation:

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

The key to identifying potential CSE is a change in behaviour, having money or items they cannot or will not explain, alcohol or drug misuse, sexually transmitted infections, being secretive. Indicators of CSE can also be children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends and children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant. Catholic Care will consider whether a referral should be submitted to Wakefield Children's Service and whether information should be passed onto West Yorkshire Police. WSCP Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation is available on their website – <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/>

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

County Lines:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and Home Office County Lines. WSCP guidance on Criminal Exploitation and County Lines is available on their website – <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/>

Trafficking:

Catholic Care recognises Trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to be moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for sexual and criminal exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic slavery, forced labour, committing crime like theft, county lines. Catholic Care will consider whether a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) should be undertaken in order to safeguard that child and/or other children.

MACE (Multi-Agency Child Exploitation):

Within Wakefield, the identification, risk assessment, risk management, investigation and recovery with regards to all forms of Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding are covered by our Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding arrangements. MACE is an umbrella term for the following vulnerabilities Child Criminal Exploitation (including County Lines), Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing from Home, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Online Child Exploitation, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Wider Contextual Safeguarding. The Level 1 MACE arrangements encompass the risk identification, risk assessment and risk management of children and young people who may be at risk of exploitation for more information see here and the Level 2 MACE arrangements relate to the multi-agency information sharing and problem solving of hotspots/locations, persons who may pose a risk of exploitation and themes for more information see here.

Confidentiality

Catholic Care has regard to [DfE guidance on Information Sharing](#):

‘Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect.’

Catholic Care ensures the child’s wishes or feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Catholic Care ensures that volunteers do not promise confidentiality to the child and always act in the interests of the child.

Catholic Care confidentiality policy indicates:

- a) when information must be shared with police and Children and Families’ Service where the child/young person is / may be at risk of significant harm
- b) when the pupil’s and/or parent’s confidentiality must not be breached

Contacts

These are useful phone numbers if you are concerned about the safety of a child. The first port of call should be Catholic Care’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or their deputy. But if they are not available, don’t wait! Contact the Integrated Front Door

Integrated Front Door (consultations, new referrals & urgent matters) 0345 8 503 503

For more information see the Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership website - <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/worried-about-a-child/>

Wakefield Integrated Front Door

0345 8 503 503

Advice and Referral

Duty and Advice team

0345 8 503 503

Domestic Abuse

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and / or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Refuge run the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, 24 hours a day on 0808 2020 247. Advice is available at:

- [NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects](#)
- [Safe Lives: young people and domestic abuse](#)

WSCP guidance is also available: <https://hub.wakefieldscp.org.uk/domestic-abuse/>

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Catholic Care shares a purpose with parents to keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. Parents can access support through the following agencies

WSCP - <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/>

[NSPCC](#)

[CEOP](#)

[Internet Matters](#)

[Parent Zone](#)

[Childnet](#)

[Parents Protect](#)

We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child.

Catholic Care will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns they may have with their Community Sponsorship Group Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding policy is available publicly through Catholic Care website and the Group Safeguarding Lead also has a copy. It is introduced to the volunteers during their induction training.

Partnerships with other agencies

Catholic Care recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies.

Catholic Care complies with the requirement under the Children Act 2004 to co-operate with other organisations and agencies in activities relating to children.

Peer /Child on Child abuse including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and any sex.

Catholic Care recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers, that this can manifest itself in many ways and may reflect gender issues. Where there are concerns or allegations of peer abuse, the procedures and guidance in this policy will be followed, in the same way as if the matter was in respect of abuse by an adult.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment involving children is a form of peer on peer abuse. Sexual violence involves the criminal sexual offences defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sexual Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and can include online behaviour. Neither is acceptable and will not be tolerated by Catholic Care. Catholic Care take all such reports seriously and they will receive the same high standard of care that any other safeguarding concern receives. A multi-agency approach will be undertaken when responding to all such complaints; however, Catholic Care will always take immediate action to protect children despite the actions of any other agency. These actions may include an immediate risk assessment in respect of the needs of the child victim and will address any risks identified to any child in respect of an alleged perpetrator of sexual violence or sexual harassment to ensure children are protected from harm. Any risk assessment will be fluid and may change to reflect any developments during the management of the case.

Upskirting (which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, (both male and female) with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm). As of April 2020, upskirting is now a criminal offence, with offenders facing up to 2 years in jail and being placed on the sex offenders register.

For further DfE statutory guidance Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children see [here](#).

All such reports will be managed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. There are a number of options Catholic Care may consider in respect of the management of a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment between children and each case will receive an appropriate bespoke response once all the facts are known. Irrespective of any potential criminal outcome, Catholic Care have a duty to safeguarding all children and may deal with any such report on a balance of probability basis when considering the outcomes for children involved.

Concerns or allegations of all forms of peer abuse must be reported to the DSL, who will have regard to the WSCP Safeguarding guidance and procedures and make referrals in respect of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator, where appropriate. Where the concerns are of a sexual nature the DSL will have regard to the WSCP guidance.

Wherever concerns of peer abuse arise the DSL will undertake an immediate risk assessment and put all necessary measures in place to ensure that the alleged victim,

perpetrator and all children in Catholic Care are safeguarded and their welfare is supported. Where there are concerns or allegations of youth generated sexual imagery, (often referred to as 'sexting') these must always be reported to the DSL, who will have regard to the 2017 guidance: 'UK Council for Child Internet Safety Guidance

The DSL, having had regard to this guidance, will make referrals to police and children's social care where appropriate.

The Community Sponsorship Group and Catholic Care will make every effort to minimise the risk of peer abuse by working with children, in an age appropriate way about: how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships; self-respect and respect for others; commitment; tolerance; boundaries; consent; how to manage conflict; and how to recognise unhealthy relationships.

Prevent, Protect and Prepare

Prevent: In order to fulfil the Prevent duty, it is essential that volunteers are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of Catholic Care's wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Community Sponsorship volunteers can also build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. The Prevent duty is not intended to stop children debating controversial issues. On the contrary, the Community Sponsorship Group should provide a safe space in which children, young people and volunteers can understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

Roles and responsibilities:

- The strategic Prevent lead in Catholic Care is Rachel Wilkinson
- They understand the expectations and key priorities to deliver Prevent and this is embedded within safeguarding procedure
- The senior leadership team and trustees are aware of the Prevent Strategy and its objectives
- The Prevent agenda and its objectives has been embedded within the appropriate safeguarding processes

Training:

- A training plan is in place so that key volunteers, understand the risk of radicalisation and extremism and know how to recognise and refer children who may be vulnerable

A programme of 'Prevent' training and consultancy is available to Catholic Care and Community Sponsorship Groups through WSCP

Referrals:

- An appropriate internal Prevent risk assessment and referral process is in place
- All volunteers including the DSL follow the WSCP procedures
- Partner agency communication channels are in place
- An audit trail for notification reports/referrals exists
- Prevent referrals/notifications are managed or overseen by The Prevent lead
- A process is in place to identify and develop 'lessons learnt'

Child Information

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them Catholic Care requires accurate and up to date information regarding children who are or have been subject to a Safeguarding Plan:

- names (including any previous names), address and date of birth of child
- names and contact details of persons with whom the child normally lives
- names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above)
- emergency contact details (if different from above), ensuring that if the person(s) with parental responsibility is unable to collect this person, who could collect the child and keep them safe until either the person(s) with parental responsibility is available or a more suitable arrangement is made.
- any relevant court orders in place including those which affect any person's access to the child (e.g. Residence Order, Contact Order, Care Order, Special Guardianship Order, Injunctions etc.)
- name and contact detail of key persons in other agencies, including GP
- any other factors which may impact on the safety and welfare of the child

Catholic Care will collate, store and agree access to this information at Head Office

UNDERSTANDING SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes:

- 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children from:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- racist, disability and homophobic, transphobic and biphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- child criminal exploitation and county lines
- risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; and the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example 'sexting'
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example Youth Produced Sexual Imagery, (sexting) and accessing pornography
- teenage relationship abuse
- peer on peer abuse
 - o serious violence, including knife crime
 - o bullying (including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying)
 - o physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - o sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - o sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
 - o initiation / hazing type violence and rituals
 - o upskirting
- substance/drug misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic abuse
- So, called 'honour –based' abuse
 - o female genital mutilation
 - o forced marriage

- o Breast-ironing²
- faith abuse
- fabricated or induced illness
- mental health issues
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children

It relates to aspects of care including:

- children missing from education
- children with family members in prison
- homelessness
- children's health and safety and well-being including their mental health
- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- alternative provision
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, considering the local context.

Serious Violence

All volunteers should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. Serious violence may also include knife crime.

All volunteers should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for volunteers is provided in the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#) and its [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) guidance. WSCP Guidance on Criminal Exploitation and County Lines is <https://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk/parents-carers/child-exploitation/>

Safer Recruitment and Selection

² **Breast-Ironing:** Involves flattening a girl's chest with a hot stone or other objects to delay breast growth, as child abuse. CPS legal guidance makes clear to police and prosecutors that breast-ironing is a crime even if it is said that the victim has consented. The offences to be considered by prosecutors include child cruelty and causing or allowing a child to suffer serious harm. Both crimes are punishable by up to ten years in prison.

Catholic Care pays full regard to government guidance to the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012; the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 under S75 of the Childcare Act 2006

We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in or on behalf of Catholic Care who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult and follow government guidance on checking volunteers.

Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job.

Where appropriate, Catholic Care undertakes checks of

- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All Community Sponsorship volunteers are made aware that they are required to notify their group leader of any convictions or cautions during the time they are volunteering with them or if they receive a Penalty Notice for Damage or a Penalty Notice for Disorder.

Where volunteers move to a different role in the Group, then they will be treated as a new volunteer and all appropriate checks for the post carried out.

Catholic Care keeps a single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on their volunteers who are involved in Community Sponsorship.

An Enhanced DBS check is obtained for all volunteers who will visit the family to support their resettlement.

Safer Working Practice

All volunteers should be aware of systems within their Community Sponsorship Group which support safeguarding and these are explained to them as part of their induction. This includes: Community Sponsorship Safeguarding policy; Community Sponsorship Code of Conduct. All volunteers are given a Volunteers Handbook

Safer working practice ensures that children are safe and that all volunteers:

- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- work in an open and transparent way

- discuss and/or take advice from Catholic Care management over any incident which may give rise to concern
- record any incidents or decisions made
- apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality
- are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them

Volunteers Induction and Training

Catholic Care senior leadership and trustees are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where they feel able and are supported in their safeguarding role.

Catholic Care, determines what level of training individual volunteers for Community Sponsorship Groups will require, depending on their roles and responsibilities.

Volunteers must be able to:

- understand the policy and procedures
- understand individual volunteer's responsibilities to ensure that concerns for the safety of a child are effectively addressed
- identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity
- be aware of and understand their role in the early help process
- respond to concerns in a timely and appropriate way
- communicate appropriately with children
- understand the role of the DSL
- be aware of external avenues for notifying concerns including the use of escalation and whistle-blowing procedures
- comply with record-keeping requirements
- recognise grooming behaviour by adults including inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention or inappropriate sharing of images
- recognise normal and concerning sexual behaviours of children
- have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues
- understand the requirements of the Prevent duty on protecting children from radicalisation
- recognise the unique risks associated with on line safety
- recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities face online
- understand the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

Induction

All volunteers are given the Community Sponsorship Safeguarding policy, the Community Sponsorship Code of Conduct and the information on the safeguarding response of children. Catholic Care's Community Sponsorship Safeguarding arrangements include the

role and identity of the DSL and any deputies.

Safeguarding training is included for all volunteers in their induction.

Volunteers training

In addition to the training at induction, volunteer training should be regularly updated.

All volunteers will also receive Safeguarding updates (for example via email, e-bulletins, meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

DSL Training

The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.

Safeguarding Training Resources

Training for DSLs and volunteers can be accessed via North Yorkshire Services, or any other suitable alternative provider/s.

Supervision, Support and Advice for Volunteers

All volunteers are given sufficient time and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

Volunteers will be supported by the Group Safeguarding Lead and Rachel Wilkinson
Safeguarding advice and support are available from Rachel Wilkinson