



The Yellow Book

Ealing Safeguarding Children and Young People Guidance

For Voluntary, Community, Faith and Private Sector Organisations

2022/23

Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership





Key contacts

Immediate help if you have a concern about the welfare or safety of a child:

Call **Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS)** on:

📞 **020 8825 8000** (Mon to Fri, 9am - 5pm)

Out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on the same number

If it is an emergency call the Police on **999**

Further information:
See page 74

If you are in need of advice or are unsure about whether to make a referral to ECIRS you can contact:

ECIRS Professional Consultation Line on

📞 **020 8825 5236** (Mon to Fri, 9am - 5pm)

Further information:
See page 76

Ealing Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) on:

📞 **020 8825 8930** or asv@ealing.gov.uk

Further information:
See pages 39 - 41 and page 100

This Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) guidance has been updated by Ealing Council in partnership with Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service and Young Ealing Foundation. It is up to date as of Summer 2022. Readers are advised to check website links for changes.



Foreword

Welcome to this new edition of Ealing's guidance for people working with children, young people and their families in voluntary, community, faith or private sector organisations.

The world of safeguarding has undergone significant changes in recent times, not least in the course of the Covid-19 pandemic and organisations' responses to it. There have also been major legislative changes which led to the emergence of the Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) from the old Safeguarding Children Board.

The Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) recognises the critical importance of the work undertaken in community-based services for children and their families, and I hope that this guidance helps you to continue and improve that work in the future.

Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is everyone's responsibility - in all organisations - so this guidance sets out what you should do to help protect children from abuse and harm. The guidance can be used to support your work and help you develop procedures for your organisations.

We are very grateful for the work of all partner agencies in contributing to this guidance.

Thank you

Sheila Lock
Ealing Safeguarding Adults & Children Boards Independent Chair



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Chapter 1

The Yellow Book

1.1 What is the Yellow Book and who should use it?

All groups and organisations in the Voluntary, Community, Faith & Private Sector (VCFPS) have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and must have up-to-date safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place.

This **Yellow Book** offers a policy and procedures model, safeguarding guidance and information on local resources. VCFPS organisations in Ealing are advised to adopt or commit to the Yellow Book guidance to ensure consistency of safeguarding practice in Ealing.

This updated guide is informed by **Ealing's Thresholds of Need Guide** as well as statutory safeguarding guidance contained in **Working Together 2018** www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk and the **London Safeguarding Children Procedures** www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk

The **Yellow Book** is for all VCFPS staff and volunteers, including trustees, committee members, senior management, religious leaders and sessional workers. It aims to promote good practice in the VCFPS and to ensure that anyone working with children and young people, in any capacity:

- » Understands their personal responsibility for safeguarding the children and young people they work with;
- » Is able to recognise and take appropriate action if there are suggestions that a child/young person is being abused or may be in need of early help;
- » Is informed and able to respond in a supportive manner to any child/young person who alleges or discloses that abuse is happening; and
- » Can confidently take steps to minimise opportunities for misunderstandings by following a code of conduct and good practice guidelines.

The scope of this book does not deal with safeguarding adults who may be vulnerable to abuse, but contact details for reporting concerns to Ealing Adults Services can be found in Chapter 8.

1.2 Adopting the Yellow Book in your organisation

It is recognised that VCFPS organisations and agencies will vary in size. Some will be subject to charity law and regulated by the Charity Commission and others affiliated with national bodies and subject to other regulators. The responsibility for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm applies to all.

Organisations that **do not** currently have their own safeguarding policies and procedures can adopt this Yellow Book as their policy and procedures or use it as a template to create their own.

Chapter 7 contains a model policy statement, other guidance and sample templates for use by VCFPS organisations where required. Templates can be adapted to suit the particular remit of the organisation or develop alternatives. If the Yellow Book is to be adopted, organisations should read it and make sure they understand their responsibilities.

By adopting the Yellow Book the organisation agrees to be committed to meeting minimum expectations of Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) in relation to safeguarding policies, procedures and practices. (See Chapter 7 Section C).

Organisations that **do** have their own policies and procedures in place can use the Yellow Book to check theirs are up to date and consistent with Ealing's approach to safeguarding.

NB. If you adopt the Yellow Book you must also have a 'policy statement' which states your organisation's commitment to safeguarding. It should be displayed in the organisation e.g. notice board or website so that all staff and volunteers, parents/carers and children and young people can see it.

All staff and volunteers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the contents of the Yellow Book. All Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's) and their deputies, trustees and (senior) managers are advised to read through the whole document carefully and explore relevant resources referenced in the Yellow Book.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and their Deputies to support all staff and volunteers in understanding the Yellow Book and applying it in their everyday work.

1.3 Sources of Guidance and Resources for the VCFPS

Throughout the Yellow Book there are links to useful sources of additional guidance. It is also recommended that organisations ensure they are joined up to a network to share and keep up to date with best practice. This is especially important given the changing nature of guidance through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ealing networks include:

- **Ealing and Hounslow Community and Voluntary Service (EHCVS)** – a forum every two months for safeguarding leads to discuss their challenges and triumphs and hear from external speakers.
- **Ealing Early Years DSL Network** – this network offers support to Early Years DSLs and their deputies to meet the requirement to keep their knowledge updated to fulfil the DSL role. This is a follow on after the initial DSL training.
- **Childminders Network** - this network offers support to Ealing childminders.
- **Young Ealing Foundation** - works in collaboration with local organisations, schools and the Council to provide local connections, training and resources.

National networks include:

NSPCC CASPAR. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/newsletter/caspar>

In addition, organisations are encouraged to participate in safeguarding training made available to the VCFPS through:

- **Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP):** Visit: www.ealingcpd.org.uk
- **Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS):** Visit: www.ehcv.org.uk

(See Chapter 7 for more details about Training and Chapter 8 for Resources)

Other sources of guidance for VCFPS:

The links below all contain helpful guidance on a range of topics covered in this Yellow Book.

The NSPCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Standards for the Voluntary and Community Sector and Online Self Assessment Tool may be especially useful for organisations starting out with developing safeguarding procedures, as well as established ones - who can use the resources to review existing processes.

- **Charity Commission:**

Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees -

www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees

- **NSPCC**

Safeguarding children and child protection, NSPCC Learning

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/voluntary-community-groups>

- **NSPCC Faith Communities (including videos)**

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-faith-communities/about-safeguarding-in-faith-communities>

Self Audit Tool: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-self-assessment-tool>

- **NCVO**

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/safeguarding>

KnowHow pages offers guidance and resources for voluntary organisations on many aspects of safeguarding.

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/site-homepage#>

- **Contextual Safeguarding Network**

www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk

- **DFE code of practice**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice>

Unregistered Independent Schools and Out of Schools Settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-independent-schools>

- **Ofsted**

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

DBS Guidance - Eligibility

www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-eligibility-guidance

DBS Guidance Regulated activity and others

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets

- **London Safeguarding Children Partnership**

www.londonscb.gov.uk

- **London Safeguarding Children Procedures**

www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk

1.4 Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP)

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 identified three 'Safeguarding Partners' - the Local Authority, the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief Officer of Police – and required them to make 'safeguarding arrangements' that respond to the needs of children in their area.

These 'safeguarding arrangements' resulted locally in the formation in 2019 of the Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) – replacing the Ealing Safeguarding Children Board.

The ESCP brings together the Safeguarding Partners with other organisations in the borough, both statutory agencies and from the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Private Sector (VCFPS).

The ESCP aims to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

In order to work together effectively, the ESCP aims to develop processes that:

- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
- ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families.

ESCP has representation from a wide range of statutory partner agencies as well as the VCFPS on its main partnership group and its subgroups. It also supports the operation of the Young Ealing Safeguarding (YES) group, a forum representing the views and wishes of children and young people in the borough.

For more information about ESCP:

Contact details: Steve Bourne, ESCP Business manager

Email: **BourneS@ealing.gov.uk**

Web: **www.ealingscp.org.uk**

Tel: **020 8825 9618**



Chapter 2

Introduction to Safeguarding

2.1 What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility** and is defined in the "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018 guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health and development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Organisations that work with children and young people must always act in their best interests, and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children, but also it enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the public.

All organisations working with children and young people should have and use up-to date safeguarding/child protection procedures that are compliant with **Working Together 2018** www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk, the **London Safeguarding Children Procedures** www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk and with other statutory requirements.

2.2. Key principles in safeguarding children

- » The child's welfare is **paramount**.
- » Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.
- » All children and young people have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their ethnicity, immigration status, religion or belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. This includes unborn children and all children and young people aged 0-18 years.
- » All allegations and suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. They must be reported and not ignored.
- » If somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering abuse or harm, they should always refer the concern to **Children's Social Care via ECIRS: 020 8825 8000 (24 hours) or the Police: 999 in an emergency**
- » Know how to recognise the signs that a child, young person or family may be in need of early help and how to respond.
- » 'Think family' - children and young people's lives are affected by siblings, grandparents, step-family members and those that they may not live with but visit their homes.
- » Understand that young people's experiences of abuse or harm can go beyond their families e.g. in their neighbourhoods, school and online. (See Contextual Safeguarding – Chapter 5)

Every group or organisation **MUST** select a senior member of staff or manager who has specific responsibility for safeguarding and child protection issues (this would usually be someone working on site). For the purpose of this document we refer to this person as the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** - (*previously known as NSP (Nominated Safeguarding Person)*). See Chapter 4 for more details

2.3 Keeping the child at the centre of your work

Organisations should prioritise direct communication with children and develop positive and respectful relationships with them, ensuring the child's wishes and feelings are at the basis of your organisation's approach, plans and/or activities.

Children and young people need to feel they are **respected and understood as individuals** and to have **their wishes and feelings consistently taken into account**.

Effective action to keep the child/young person in focus includes:

- Being vigilant and noticing when children appear troubled or anxious.
- Developing a direct and stable relationship based on trust and understanding with the child.
- Obtaining information from the child about their needs.
- Finding out about the child's wishes and feelings – about their situation now as well as plans and hopes for the future.
- Providing children with honest and accurate information about the current situation, as seen by professionals, and future possible actions and interventions.
- Involving the child in key decision-making (appropriate to age and level of understanding).
- Providing appropriate information to the child about their right to protection and assistance.
- Inviting children to make recommendations about the services and assistance they need.
- Ensuring children have access to independent advice and support (for example, through advocates or children's rights officers) to be able to express their views and influence decision-making. (Search the directories in the Resources section for details of advocacy organisations for children and young people).

It is also important to obtain and respond to the views and experiences of children with regards to staff and volunteers. Providing a safe space for children/young people to voice their experiences of contact with staff and volunteers can be crucial in building and maintaining a safe and responsive environment.

2.4 Safeguarding Children - The 4 R's

Keeping child at the centre



Recognise:

- Be vigilant
- Know the children you work with
- Be familiar with the types and indicators of abuse

See 2.3: 'Keeping the child at the centre of your work' and Chapter 5: Identifying concerns about a child

Respond:

- Never ignore concerns, signs or reports related to children's wellbeing and safety
- Do not delay your response

See Chapter 6: Dealing with your concerns

Report:

- Always report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy
- Ensure every member of staff/volunteer is aware of who the DSL and Deputy DSL are
- All cases where there is a concern about significant harm or risk must be referred to Children's Social Care via Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on **020 8825 8000**. This will usually be done by the DSL, but all staff and volunteers should be familiar with the process too.

See Chapter 6: Dealing with your concerns and Chapter 4: The role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Record:

- Always make a record of what happened – the incident or concern, the exact words of the child where possible (if they disclosed) and any immediate actions taken
- Use your organisation's standard recording log
- Don't delay it – record information as soon as possible

See Appendix 3: Incident Recording log

2.5 Safeguarding Children in Ealing's Diverse, Multi-Ethnic and Faith Communities

Ealing prides itself on being a borough of rich diversity. There are more than 200 languages spoken every day across the borough and over half of Ealing's residents come from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

The Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP) is committed to tackling inequalities in access to and delivery of safeguarding and support services and embraces the recommendations of the recently published Ealing Race Equality Commission Report.

<https://erec.dosomethinggood.org.uk/report/>

The report highlighted the importance of engaging with communities and the vital work of VCFPS organisations. Ealing's VCFPS plays a key role in safeguarding and supporting children and families, especially in marginalised communities. Parents/carers may face a range of issues that could potentially obstruct their ability to seek help, protect themselves or fulfil their roles as protective adults to children.

Examples of issues include:

- Limited ability to speak, read or write English.
- Weak or non-existent social networks.
- Reluctance to engage with statutory services - possibly due to lack of confidence in navigating the UK public services system or due to bad experiences with statutory services.
- Parent/s have their own perspective on how to raise their child which may be underpinned by their personal culture or faith, which may not be in line with UK law.

This Yellow Book aims to support the work of VCFPS colleagues in helping families in Ealing's diverse communities access help and support as well as recognise when a child or young person is at risk of harm and the action they need to take.

The ESCP offers safeguarding training and advice on a range of issues that can affect children and young people from all backgrounds including training on anti-racism and cultural competence*. (See link to ESCP training on offer below)

**Cultural competence means that staff and volunteers learn to understand, communicate, and effectively interact with children and families from different cultures and backgrounds – and can challenge attitudes and behaviours from a position of understanding, empathy, and knowledge.*

Further information on safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities can be found on the NSPCC website:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/children-from-black-asian-minoritised-ethnic-communities>

ESCP training: **Ealing Social Care and Safeguarding CPD Online** www.ealingcpd.org.uk



Chapter 3

Legislation and Responsibilities

3.1 Legislation and Guidance

This chapter introduces some of the key legislation and guidance that protects children and young people in the UK. It is not comprehensive and does not constitute legal advice.

There is no single piece of legislation that covers child protection in the UK, but various laws and guidance, which are continually being amended, so it is recommended you check links regularly to keep yourselves up to date.

Children's safeguarding is shaped by the Children Act 1989, but the key statutory guidance for VCSPS is 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', which states:

'Every VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise), faith-based organisation and private sector organisation or agency should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. These should be followed and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this.'

Where to find legislation:

www.legislation.gov.uk carries most (but not all) types of legislation and their accompanying explanatory documents.

The House of Commons Library has a helpful summary of Child Protection Legislation – key elements included below:

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06787/>

Where to find legal advice:

Free Legal Advice is offered by Coram Children's Legal Centre:

Family, Child and Education Legal Advice - **0300 330 5480**

Education Law - **0300 330 5485**

Migrant Children's Project Legal Advice Line - **0207 636 8505**

For more information visit **www.childrenslegalcentre.com**

Key Legislation

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Other relevant legislation

Serious Crime Act 2015

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Data Protection Act 2018 & General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Key Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance

London Safeguarding Children Procedures

Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework DfE

Key Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children - A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children 2018

Working Together to Safeguard Children is the government's statutory guidance for all organisations and agencies who work with, or carry out work related to, children in the United Kingdom.

Working Together should be read and followed by strategic and senior leaders and frontline practitioners of all organisations and agencies that commission and provide services for children and families. It focuses on the core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals, organisations and agencies must and should do to keep children safe.

Working Together is clear that effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part.
- A child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

It is of high importance and relevance to those in the VCFPS who play an important role in delivering services to children. Paid and volunteer staff must be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They should be aware of how to respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary.

All VCFPS organisations should have arrangements in place that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- A clear line of accountability for the provision of services to children.
- A senior board level leadership responsibility for safeguarding.
- A culture of listening to children and considering their wishes and feelings.
- Arrangements which clearly set out the processes for sharing information.
- A designated professional lead for safeguarding (DSL).
- Safer recruitment practices.
- Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including safeguarding training.
- Clear policies in line with those from the London Safeguarding Children Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who work with children.

Working Together can be accessed here:

www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk

London Safeguarding Children Procedures

The London Safeguarding Children Procedures (formerly known as London Child Protection Procedures) provides procedures and practice guidance for all London boroughs and must be followed by all local authorities, unless there are good, evidenced reasons not to do so.

They set out how agencies and individuals at all levels should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

They are based closely on Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and align with other key legislation e.g., Keeping Children Safe in Education (September) 2021 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The London Safeguarding Children Procedures contains core procedures to follow covering: Responding to Concerns of Abuse and Neglect; Referral and Assessment; Child Protection s47 Enquiries; Child Protection Conferences and Child Protection Plans; Children and Families Moving Across Local Authority Boundaries; Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers (People in Positions of Trust) who Work with Children; Organised and Complex Abuse; Risk management of known offenders and Information Sharing.

There is a section on Safeguarding Partnership arrangements (roles and responsibilities) which includes a chapter on Safe Recruitment and Selection, and the Management of Adults who Work with Children.

There are chapters containing practice guidance on a range of safeguarding issues and circumstances – links to relevant chapters have been included in this document as applicable.

Finally, contained within the Appendices is a chapter specifically applicable to VCFPS groups:
Appendix 2: Third sector agencies or community groups keeping children safe
www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/appendix_2.html

The London Safeguarding Children Procedures are available online only and are regularly updated. www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

This is statutory guidance that schools and colleges in England must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This guidance may apply to some VCFPS organisations, so reference has been included in this book.

www.keepingchildrensafeineducation.co.uk

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) is mandatory for all early years' providers. It applies to all schools, including maintained nursery schools that have early years provision.

It sets out the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5. Section 3 covers Safeguarding and Welfare requirements and should be read by relevant childcare providers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Key Legislation

Children Act 1989

The current child protection system in England is grounded in the Children Act 1989, as amended. The Act establishes several key principles, including:

- the concept of parental responsibility. www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities
- the child's welfare is paramount when a matter under the Act is before a court.
- that children are best looked after by their family unless intervention in family life is essential.

Provision of services for children in need

Section 17 of the Act places a general duty on local authorities to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in need in their area by providing a range of services appropriate to those children's needs.

Section 17 defines a child in need as a child who:

- (a) [is] unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision...of services by a local authority...;
- (b) [whose] development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or
- (c) [is] disabled.

Children suffering significant harm

Part five of the Children Act 1989 sets out what local authorities should do to protect children at risk of harm. Under **Section 47** of the Act a local authority must make the necessary enquiries to decide whether it should act to safeguard or promote a child's welfare where it:

- is informed that a child in their area is the subject of an emergency protection order (see below) or is in police protection; or
- has "reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm"

Certain bodies (including other local authorities, local housing authorities, and clinical commissioning groups) are under a duty to assist the local authority in conducting enquiries under section 47.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 provides more detail on the process of managing section 47 enquiries.

The Police, Social Workers & NSPCC are the **only agencies who can investigate** specific allegations and concerns about child abuse & neglect.

Section 20

Under section 20 of the Act, local authorities have a duty to provide accommodation to children in need who require it because:

- There is no one who has parental responsibility for them; or
- They are lost or abandoned; or
- The person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care or
- They have reached 16 and their welfare is “likely to be seriously prejudiced” if they are not provided with accommodation.

A child provided with accommodation under section 20 (sometimes referred to as a voluntary arrangement) is a looked after child.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

Children Act 2004

Following Lord Laming’s inquiry into the murder of Victoria Climbié

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-victoria-climbié-inquiry-report-of-an-inquiry-by-lord-laming>, the Children Act 2004 made several key changes to the child protection framework. The Children Act 2004 supplements (but does not replace) the Children Act 1989 and sets out the process for improved multi-disciplinary working and integrated planning, commissioning and delivery of services to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Among other things, the 2004 Act, as amended:

- placed a duty on local authorities in England to make arrangements to promote co-operation with key partners and local agencies, with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority’s area.
- placed a duty on a range of agencies, including local authorities, the police and health services, to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions.
- established the roles and responsibilities of safeguarding partners (the local authority, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and the police), which are responsible for determining how safeguarding arrangements should work in their area.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amended the Children Act 2004. A central feature being that three safeguarding partners – the local authority, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), and police forces – are responsible for determining how safeguarding arrangements should work in their area for them and relevant agencies. **(See 1.4 Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership)**

The Act also made changes to the Serious Case Review process, including provision for a central Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel for cases of national importance. It also established a new regulatory regime for the social work profession.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

Other relevant legislation

Serious Crime Act 2015 - Part 5: Protection of children and others

Part 5 makes a number of changes to the civil and criminal law to enhance the protection of children and others, namely:

- a) Updating and clarifying the offence of child cruelty in section 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, in particular, to make it explicit that the offence covers conduct which is likely to cause psychological suffering or injury as well as physical harm.
- b) Introducing a new offence of sexual communication with a child; this would criminalise an adult who communicates with a child for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification, where the communication is sexual or if it is intended to elicit a communication from the child which is sexual.
- c) Amending the Sexual Offences Act 2003; to remove anachronistic references to child prostitution and pornography. It replaces these terms with references to the sexual exploitation of children (recognising children as victims).

This Part also amends the Street Offences Act 1959 to decriminalise under-18s selling sex in the street and in doing so, again recognises children as victims in such circumstances rather than consenting participants (buying sex from an under-18 in any circumstances remains illegal).

- d) Creating a new offence making it illegal to possess paedophile manuals; that is, any item that contains advice or guidance about abusing children sexually.
- e) New provisions on tackling FGM by: Extending the extra-territorial reach of the offences in the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (and Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005) so that they apply to habitual as well as permanent UK residents; introducing a new offence of failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM:

- Granting lifelong anonymity to victims; bringing in a civil order (“FGM protection orders”) to protect potential victims; and
- placing a mandatory duty on those working in regulated professions (for example, teachers, social workers and healthcare workers) to report the discovery of FGM appearing to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Forced Marriages: June 2014 forcing someone to marry against their will is a criminal offence. Law enforcement agencies will also be able to pursue perpetrators in other countries, where a UK national is involved, under new powers defined in legislation.

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/pdfs/ukpga_20150009_en.pdf

Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018. It is an EU law that sets out guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information and aims to give individuals more rights over how their data is used. GDPR is incorporated into the UK's Data Protection Act 2018.

VCFPS organisations should develop and publish a confidentiality policy which details how any information regarding children and their families will be held and under what circumstances such information may be shared with other agencies. The policies must be in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Requirements, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Domestic Abuse Bill passed both Houses of Parliament and was signed into law on 29 April 2021.

What will the Domestic Abuse Act do?

The Domestic Abuse Act is set to provide further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse, as well as strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators.

Detailed factsheets on each new measure are available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets

How will the Act help victims?

The Domestic Abuse Act will:

- create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children will be explicitly recognised as victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse;
- create a new offence of non-fatal strangulation;
- extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;
- extend the 'revenge porn' offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images with the intention to cause distress;
- clarify the law to further deter claims of "rough sex gone wrong" in cases involving death or serious injury;
- create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);
- establish in law the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse;
- place a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation;

- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance;
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ("Clare's law") on a statutory footing;
- ensure that when local authorities rehouse victims of domestic abuse, they do not lose a secure lifetime or assured tenancy;
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance;
- stop vexatious family proceedings that can further traumatise victims by clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989;
- prohibit GPs and other health professionals from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid

When did the Act come into force?

The Act is now law and is being implemented across criminal justice systems and agencies now.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified by the UK in 1991, sets out the civil, economic, social, cultural and political rights of every child.

The CRC is the most comprehensive statement of children's rights and it is the most-widely ratified international human rights convention in history. Some of the key principles of the CRC include:

Safety and Protection:

- Everyone under the age of 18 enjoys all the rights set out in the CRC.
- The Convention applies to everyone: whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.
- The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all matters that affect children.

Parents and Carers:

- Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to direct and guide their child as they grow up.
- Children must not be separated from their parents unless it is in the best interests of the child (risk of harm).
- Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents.

Views of the Child and Access to Information:

- Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

- Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
- Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life.

Children in specific circumstances:

- If a child is a refugee or seeking refuge, governments must ensure that they have the same rights as any other child.
- A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community.

Right to leisure, play and cultural activities:

- Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

<https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>

3.2 Mandatory Responsibilities

Mandatory duty to report Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Since 31 October 2015, social workers, health professionals and teachers have had a mandatory duty to report to the police (via the non-emergency number 101) any known cases of FGM, when a disclosure has been made or there is visual confirmation for all under 18s. The duty is placed on the professional to whom the disclosure is made and/or visually sees signs of FGM. You must also follow your normal safeguarding procedures.

'Known' means that you have either visually identified that FGM has been carried out, or you have had direct verbal disclosure from the child affected.

Procedural information can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information

See Chapter 5 section 5 for more information on FGM and processes for all staff to follow and sources of support and further information.

Radicalisation and Extremism – The Prevent Duty

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Act) places a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent Duty). Specified authorities include local authorities, NHS, schools and also providers of certain services to those authorities.

See Chapter 5 section 5 for more information on Radicalisation and Extremism, processes to follow and support available.

3.3. Ofsted Registration Requirements

Ofsted is responsible for the registration, regulation, and inspection of early years childcare providers in England.

Early years childcare providers who care for a child from birth to age 5 (up to 31 August following the child's fifth birthday) and for more than 2 hours per day **must** register with Ofsted on its Early Years register. This includes nurseries, pre-schools and childminders (alternatively early years childminders can register with an early years childminder agency instead of registering with Ofsted).

It is an offence to provide early years childcare for a child for more than 2 hours a day without being registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency unless you are exempt from compulsory registration. Read Ofsted's guidance about when you should register and registration exemptions.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childminders-and-childcare-providers-register-with-ofsted>

The Ofsted registers

There are 2 Ofsted registers: the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register.

Early Years Register

You should join this register if you're caring for children aged from birth to 31 August after their fifth birthday.

You will need to meet all the safeguarding and welfare and the learning and development requirements of the Statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage.

More information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Childcare Register

If the children you want to look after are not going to be in the early years range, you might have to be registered on the Childcare Register.

The Childcare Register has 2 parts:

Compulsory – for providers caring for children from 1 September after the child's fifth birthday up until their eighth birthday

Voluntary – join this if you are looking after children aged 8 and over, or if you are choosing to register voluntarily (for example, if you are a nanny)

More information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-join-the-childcare-register-cr1#different-childcare-types>

3.4 Unregistered independent schools

Over recent times, we have seen a rise in the number of institutions operating outside the regulatory regime as unregistered independent schools; this involves a criminal offence and conduct that may be putting children at risk of harm, denying them a suitable education, and limiting their life chances.

An 'independent school' is defined as a school that is not maintained by a local authority or is not a non-maintained special school, and at which full-time education is provided (a) for five or more pupils of compulsory school age or (b) for at least one pupil of that age who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. If you are unclear whether your setting meets the criteria for an independent school, you should contact the DfE for further guidance.

More information:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-independent-schools

3.5 Charity Commission

The Charity Commission's aim is to make sure that charities are a safe and trusted environment. The Commission has an important regulatory role in ensuring that trustees comply with their legal duties and responsibilities in managing their charity. In the context of safeguarding issues, it has a specific regulatory role which is focused on the conduct of trustees and the steps they take to protect beneficiaries, employees, volunteers and others who come into contact with the charity through its work.

The Commission is not responsible for dealing with incidents of actual abuse and does not administer safeguarding legislation.

Some charities, such as those providing education, may be regulated by other bodies for certain activities.

For detailed information and further guidance on the Charity Commission and Safeguarding see:

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

3.6 Sports Organisations

Sports Organisations can obtain guidance and a range of resources to support safeguarding children and young people from Sport England. Resources include an online self assessment tool and a Child Protection in Sport Information Pack.

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/safeguarding/safeguarding-organisations-associations-and-bodies>

Chapter 4

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

4.1 The role of the DSL

There must be someone in your organisation who will take action if there is a concern, a report of abuse/risk of harm, or if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer in relation to maltreatment of a child. The DSL **takes the lead on safeguarding for your organisation** and is the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about a child.

Sometimes, different titles for this role can be used, including Child Protection Officer, (Designated) Safeguarding Children's Officer or Children's advocate/representative or Nominated Safeguarding Person. It is not the role title that matters but the scope of this person's responsibilities. In Ealing the term '**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**' is used and the role is referred to as this throughout this document.

There needs to be at least one Deputy DSL in case of sickness or leave, as a DSL must always be available to contact. In addition, if an allegation is made against the DSL, there must be someone else that the person/s complaining can go to.

4.2 Key responsibilities of the DSL

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a specific responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters within an organisation. The DSL's role includes:

- Having responsibility with the management committee or Board of Trustees to ensure that the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures are in place and regularly updated.
- Supporting the organisation to comply with safe recruitment and induction procedures for new staff members.
- Making sure staff, volunteers and service users are aware of how to contact the DSL and being available for them as a source of advice on all safeguarding/child protection matters.
- Making sure management, staff and volunteers are aware of safeguarding policies and procedures including mandatory reporting duties and keeping them informed about good safeguarding practice.
- Supporting decision making about whether concerns are sufficient enough to notify Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS), or whether other courses of action are more appropriate.
- Reporting any concerns about abuse/disclosures to ECIRS or the Police. In the absence of the DSL, if there are any **urgent concerns**, the person with the concern **MUST** take responsibility to report **IMMEDIATELY to either ECIRS or the police. (See Chapter 6 for more details about dealing with concerns)**
- Ensuring that concerns/incidents are logged in an **Incident/Concerns Recording Log** that is signed and dated and stored securely. A confidential record should be kept of any concerns about a child/ young person and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies.
- Acting as the lead where an allegation has been made against a member of staff/volunteer within their agency and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO (if the allegation is made against the DSL, your procedure should name a deputy DSL. **(See 4.8)**)
- Attending meetings following disclosures or investigations and working with other agencies as part of any investigations (Children's Social Care or Police).
- Promoting a safe environment for children/young people.
- Ensuring that all staff/volunteers receive adequate safeguarding/child protection training and know who to go to if they have a concern.

4.3 Additional responsibilities of the DSL

As well as informing the statutory agencies, the DSL may also be required, as a condition of an organisation's insurance, to inform the agency's insurer of any safeguarding concerns. If the VCFPS organisation is registered with Ofsted, DSLs should follow their guidance on when to inform them of a significant incident. In addition, if the VCFPS organisation is part of a larger organisation there may be other expectations of the DSL. DSLs should therefore familiarise themselves with the processes relevant to and within their organisation and note relevant telephone numbers or contact names and addresses.

Finally...

Safeguarding concerns within an organisation can be emotionally demanding and DSLs should ensure that they have support in place for themselves, taking into account confidentiality.

Being a DSL may seem very daunting but remember you are not meant to be an expert in child protection - leave that to the statutory agencies. You should, however, equip yourself with certain skills and knowledge by undertaking child protection training and reading your organisation's policies and procedures to better understand your role.

By creating an environment that is conducive to effective safeguarding and the promotion of children/young people's rights and welfare, you:

- Ensure that only suitable people are working with children/young people.
- Promote an environment of vigilance.
- Protect and enforce the rights of children and young people.

Remember that the LADO's involvement in the handling of any allegations against staff and volunteers both ensures compliance with statutory requirements and provides the DSL with guidance and support to make certain the process is handled sensitively and appropriately. **See 4.8 Liaison with LADO**

Please note. It is NOT the responsibility of the DSL to decide whether a child has been abused or not. **This is the responsibility of Children's Services or the Police.**

However, keeping children safe is everybody's business, and all staff and volunteers should know who to go to. They should all know how to report any safeguarding concerns they may have.

Contact for advice:

ECIRS Consultation Line – for advice when unsure about whether to make a referral to ECIRS ☎ 020 8825 5236 (Mon- Fri 9am – 5pm)

Contact for referral to Children's Services:

**Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on ☎ 020 8825 8000
(This is a 24 hour number - after office hours calls will go to Ealing's Emergency Duty Team (EDT))**

4.4 What to do before you assume the DSL role

The DSL should have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the rest of the staff. They should:

- be someone with authority in the group such as a manager or team leader
- a paid member of staff if possible
- have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- have at least two references that are validated

Skills and qualifications the DSL should have:

- Demonstrate at least six months' experience of working in the children and families sector. If they lack this experience, they must be willing to develop knowledge and skills necessary for a safeguarding role.
- Demonstrate a good level of spoken and written English, as the DSL will be required to attend training, deal with external agencies, make referrals, seek advice etc.
- Complete a certified 'Introduction to Safeguarding/Child Protection' training (or a refresher course) within the last two years and the ESCP modules as soon as practicable (see page 37).
- Complete Safeguarding training either provided by Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership, Early Years Training for Early Years providers, Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service or a recognised private provider.
- Early Years providers should attend a Designated Safeguarding Lead Network meeting bookable through Ealing Early Years CPD.

(Links to training can be found in Chapter 7.3)

BEFORE you assume the role of the DSL / Deputy DSL

Complete a certified **Introduction to Safeguarding / Child Protection training** within the last two years (or refresher).

Demonstrate **at least 6 months' experience of working in the children and families sector.**

OR (if you lack experience), demonstrate willingness to develop knowledge and skills necessary for a safeguarding role (this should be a personalised and time-bound professional training & development plan).

Demonstrate a **good level of spoken and written English.**

This is necessary as you will be required to attend training, deal with external agencies, make referrals, seek advice etc.

As soon as practicable after becoming an DSL / Deputy DSL

Complete the following **ESCP Multi-Agency training modules:**

- Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of the Child
- Neglect and Children's Safeguarding
- Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers
- Contextual Safeguarding

Join local **safeguarding/children and young people's networks** and mailing lists:

- Young Ealing Foundation
- NSPCC Voluntary Community Sector
- Ealing and Hounslow CVS's Safeguarding Development
- NSPCC learning (CASPAR)
- Check CPD online for Ealing's free face to face training and e-learning modules

4.5 DSL Networks in Ealing

Early Years DSL Network

Early Years facilitate a regular DSL Network meeting to offer support to Early Years DSLs and their deputies and to meet the requirement to keep their knowledge updated to fulfil the DSL role. This is a follow on after the initial DSL training.

The Network meeting offers:

- advice and support
- opportunities to reflect on local and national guidance including serious case views linked to early years
- the opportunity to practice safeguarding procedures using case studies and local policies
- network with other colleagues in a similar role as a form of support
- opportunities to extend your safeguarding knowledge and skills
- access to specialist guest speakers on relevant safeguarding topics

Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS)

EHCVS runs a forum every two months for safeguarding leads to discuss their challenges and triumphs and hear from external speakers.

4.6 DSL role in Early Years

An updated Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) DfE became effective from 1 September 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

The EYFS framework states that a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility on safeguarding children in every setting. Childminders must take the lead responsibility themselves. The lead practitioner is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. They must provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The Lead practitioner must attend a Child Protection Training course that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect.

Ealing Early Years run DSL network meetings 5 times a year to support the continued development and practice of DSL/Deputy DSL within their setting. This is an ideal follow on for candidates who have completed the Early Years DSL training and wish to increase their confidence and knowledge within their role. To do this please visit the CPD link:

www.ealingcpd.org.uk

4.7 Role of the DSL if they receive a report or disclosure about abuse

A DSL could be contacted by a child/young person who may disclose abuse directly, a worker may approach you with a concern, or a parent may want help or advice.

Where there is a disclosure or reported concern of sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect the following guidelines should be followed by the DSL:

- In cases of a disclosure or if a deliberate injury is suspected, there is concern for a child's safety or they are afraid to return home, Children's Social Care should be contacted without delay. Call ECIRS on **020 8825 8000**. Don't discuss with parents/carers. If the child is in immediate danger call the Police on **999**. **(See 6.3 for further guidance on responding to a disclosure by a child)**
- If the child is suffering from a serious injury, seek medical attention immediately from accident and emergency services and inform Children's Social Care, and the duty consultant paediatrician at the hospital.

If a child isn't at immediate risk but there are general concerns you can contact the ECIRS Consultation Line on **020 8825 5236** for advice on whether to refer to ECIRS or whether Early Help or other services may be more appropriate.

See also Chapter 6 Dealing with Concerns about a child

4.8 Role of the DSL in Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) and Liaison with LADO

All concerns, complaints and allegations must be recorded and brought to the attention of the DSL. There are circumstances when allegations are about bad practice rather than child abuse. It is important that all allegations are investigated so that bad practice can be addressed.

Liaison with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

If the information relates to the harm of a child/young person (or the risk of harm) by a member of staff or volunteer, then the DSL must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (no later than within one working day) on **020 8825 8930**. A referral form and guidance notes on the LADO process in Ealing are available on the ESCP website. (see link at end of section)

Every local authority has a LADO to whom allegations must be reported and with whom plans should be made about how matters are progressed. The LADO is a senior member of staff who:

- Is involved in the management and oversight of individual cases which meet a certain threshold.
- Provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations.
- Liaises with the police and other agencies.
- Monitors the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, following a consistent, thorough and fair process; and
- Makes referrals to barring services (the Disclosure and Barring Service).

Though allegations of abuse can be made to anyone in an organisation, it is the role of the DSL to take these forward and to be the link between the organisation and the LADO until the matter is resolved.

Children and young people can be abused in all kinds of settings and therefore all allegations must be taken seriously and acted on immediately. *It is extremely important that all aspects of any allegation and following investigation are carefully recorded (in writing). These records will be helpful if any future allegations arise, and to ensure transparency and accountability when dealing with complex and emotive issues.*

What should the DSL do if they receive an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer?

The DSL must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day if an allegation or concern has been made about a staff member or volunteer who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

When allegations do not meet above criteria

If the DSL feels that the allegation does not meet the above criteria, s/he should:

- Record why that decision was made and any further action needed.
- The person about whom the allegation has been made should be kept informed, as well as the child/young person's parents and the child/young person themselves.

If the DSL is unsure about this, s/he should discuss the case with the LADO to consider how to move forward.

When allegations require urgent actions

There will be occasions when urgent action is needed to safeguard the child/children (e.g. police contact in an emergency situation or medical attention for the child following an incident). In all cases, however, the LADO must be contacted without delay and all decisions should be made in consultation with the LADO.

Steps must be taken to fully support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns about a colleague and every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality for all parties whilst the allegation is considered.

Managing the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made

It may be necessary to suspend or remove from duties involving children/young people, the person about whom the allegations have been made. This decision should be made in liaison with the LADO and a senior manager (where available) and any decision should be carried out so that it is consistent with the organisation's disciplinary and staff procedures. Remember that those being accused must be treated fairly and with an open mind during any investigations.

Where suspension is the next step, it will usually be necessary to tell the person why they are being suspended. Details of the allegation must not be shared until this is agreed by the LADO as part of the investigation process. It is enough to simply say that an allegation has been made. Suspension protects the individual concerned as well as the child as it can prevent further allegations or any recriminatory behaviour.

If the person is a member of the union or professional association, s/he should be advised to seek support from that organisation. The DSL must also consider whether the person has children or has access to children in another setting and through consultation with the LADO, decide whether those organisations/agencies need to be informed.

All agencies should carry out internal disciplinary/investigative processes according to their own procedures, alongside an on-going consultation with the LADO. This ensures that the matter is handled in line with legal processes, including the child protection process. Internal processes are usually carried out following the conclusion of the child protection investigation and are informed by the findings of that investigation.

Remember that LADO's involvement in the handling of any allegations against staff and volunteers both ensures compliance with statutory requirements and provides the DSL with guidance and support to make certain the process is handled sensitively and appropriately. Discuss with the LADO your organisations procedures about suspension pending investigations. **See Flowchart on the next page and also Chapter 6 (part 6.3)**

See London Safeguarding Children Procedures chapter on Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers (People in Positions of Trust), who Work with Children

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/alleg_staff.html

See also Ealing Information and Guidance Leaflets on Allegations processes and LADO referral form on the ESCP website: **www.ealingscp.org.uk** - search for 'contact the LADO'.

You have become aware that a staff member/volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that could have harmed a child or young person.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or young person.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children/young people, or may pose a risk to children.

Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers Flowchart

Report immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The child and/or alleged abuser **MUST NOT** be questioned (unless agreed by the LADO).

DSL or Deputy to **contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.**

Police should be contacted in an emergency; seek medical help for the child if necessary.

Ensure the child/young person is safe and comfortable. Allow them to continue the activity if appropriate.

Agree with the LADO arrangements for informing parents/carers and the next course of action.

Is the person, against whom the allegation is made, still at work?

YES

Decide in discussion with the LADO and your HR advisor whether to remove the person from the situation (i.e. suspend them).
In agreement with the LADO, explain to the person that there has been a complaint/allegation (but do not provide the details of the complaint/allegation).

Make sure the LADO is aware that the person is no longer at work.
The LADO will then consider informing other relevant organisations.

If the person is suspended, this is a neutral act pending investigation to safeguard all parties.

Chapter 5

Identifying and understanding abuse, neglect or other concerns about a child or young person

5.1 Identifying concerns about a child or young person

Everyone has a role to play in identifying where there are problems for a child or young person and knows how to respond appropriately. Sometimes a child, young person or family may need help or support as problems are just emerging or needs are at a relatively low level and are not about abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Timely support can prevent problems getting worse – this is often called **‘Early Help’**. It can be provided at any stage in a child or young person’s life. See 6.7 for information on Early Help.

Sometimes the issues are more urgent and/or serious and concern abuse, neglect or exploitation and a **safeguarding or child protection** response is needed. This is when Children’s Social Care or the Police must be notified immediately for appropriate action to be taken. Contact ECIRS on **020 8825 8000** (option1) (See 6.2)

Ealing’s **Thresholds of Need Guidance** sets out how Children’s Social Care make decisions about the level of need and urgency of the response. See 6.1 for more information.

Staff and volunteers in the VCFPS may find themselves in a position where a child or young person shares their experiences of abuse or staff may make observations and develop concerns themselves. Knowing how to respond appropriately in such situations is very important (see section 6.3). If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

Experiencing abuse or neglect can have a serious and long-term impact on a child or young person’s wellbeing. Recognising some of the signs of abuse or neglect are vital and are covered in 5.2 below.

Sections 5.3 and 5.4 contains information on various other circumstances and safeguarding issues that can put children and young people at risk of harm and where action is needed.

Abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

5.2. Types and indicators of abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes: 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.

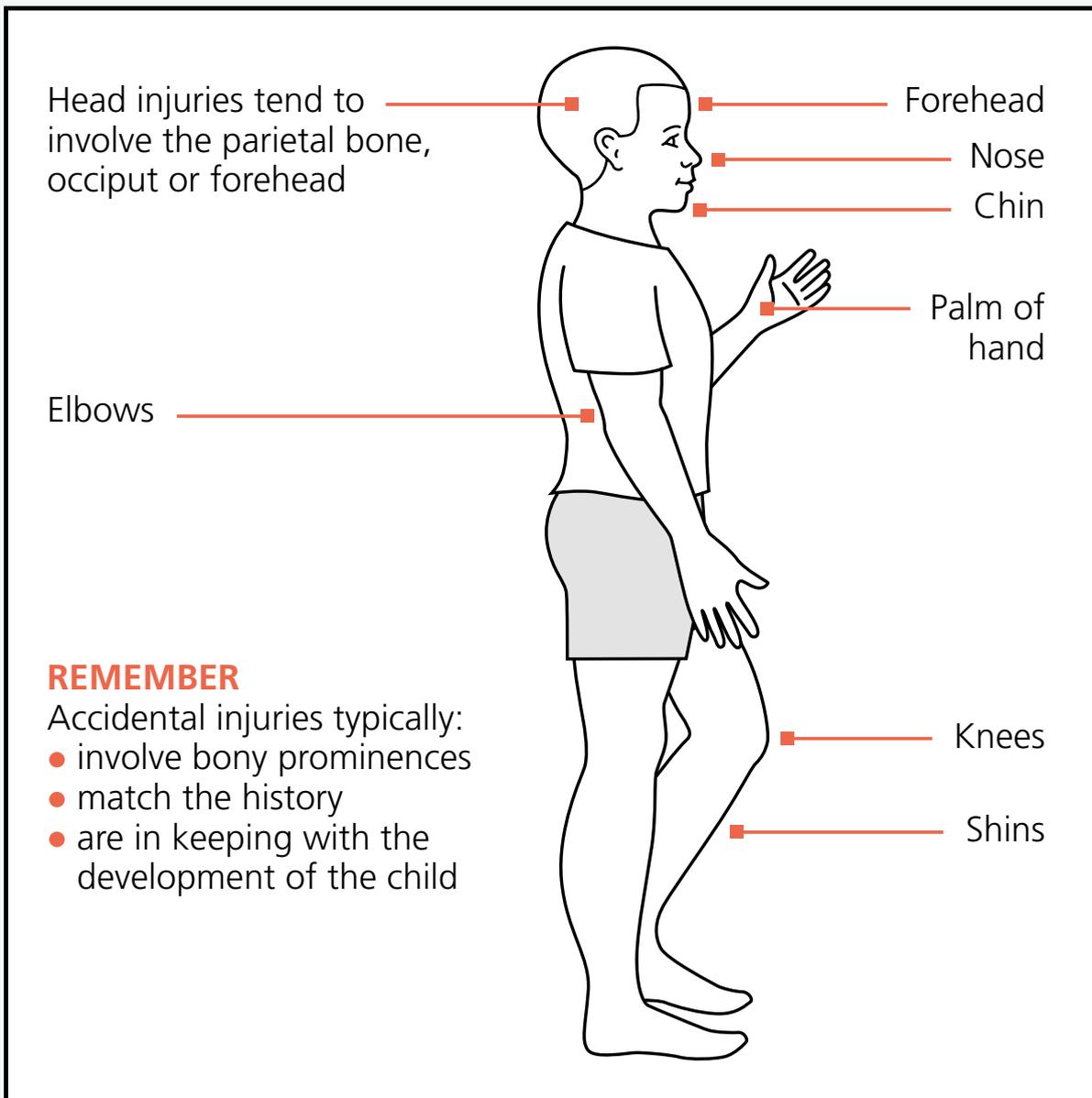
Physical signs

- Injuries which the child/parent cannot explain, or explains unconvincingly.
- Untreated injuries or injuries that have been treated inadequately.
- Injuries on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely, such as the cheeks, chest or thighs.
- Bruising in babies and in children who are not independently mobile.
- Bruising to the face, back, abdomen, arms, buttocks, ears and hands.
- Bruising which an imprint - of an implement, cord, hand or finger marks.
- Multiple bruises - in clusters or of uniform shape.
- Human bite marks.
- Fractures that are inconsistent with the child's development stage.
- Scalds, especially those with upward splash marks where hot water has been deliberately thrown over the child's arms, legs or body where the child has been made to sit or stand in very hot water.
- Multiple burns, burns with a clearly defined edge and burns affecting unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks.

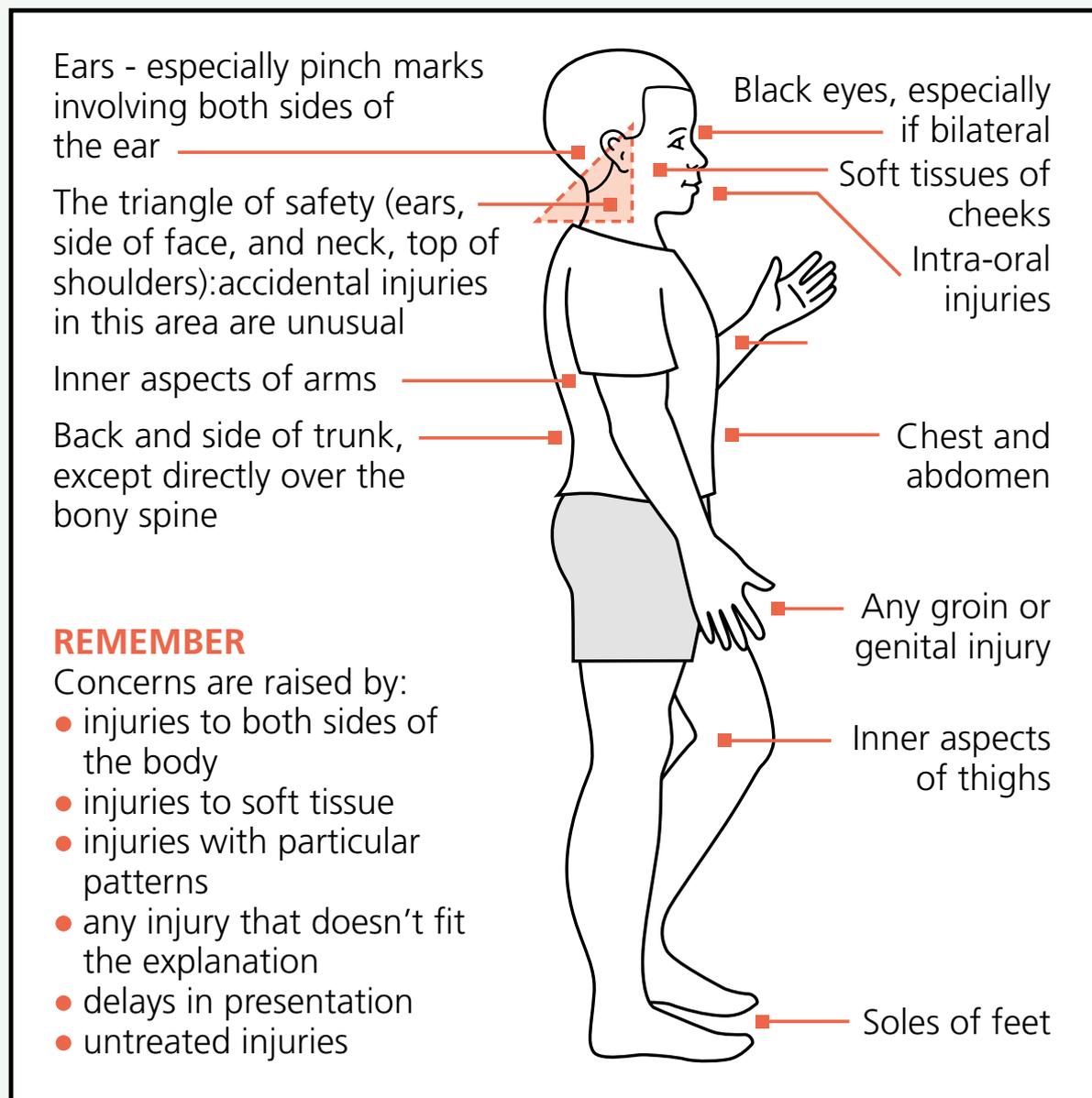
Behavioural signs

- Reluctance to have their parents contacted.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Running away or showing fear of going home.
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get undressed for sporting or other activities where changing into other clothes is normal.
- Covering arms and legs even when hot.
- Depression or moods which are out of character with the child's general behaviour.
- Unnatural compliance with parents or carers.
- Fear of meal times or eating, possible risk of force feeding.

Accidental Injury



Non Accidental Injury



Please note these diagrams show only the common places for injuries. Both accidental and non-accidental injuries can occur ANYWHERE on the body.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and a limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel threatened 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, although it may occur alone.

Physical signs

- A failure to grow or thrive.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Delayed development - physical or emotional.
- Stress related illnesses (e.g. eating disorders).
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Continually putting themselves down.
- Fear of new situations.

Behavioural signs

- The child seeing themselves as unworthy of love and affection.
- Excessive lack of confidence, (not just shyness), or low self esteem.
- Compulsive nervous behaviour.
- Self harming.
- Wetting or soiling.
- Excessive need for approval, attention or affection.

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-penetration 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 a sexually inappropriate way, or grooming a child in preparation for sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

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

Physical signs

- Pain, itching, bruising, or bleeding to genital or anal areas.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), recurrent genital discharges or urinary tract infections without apparent cause.
- Stomach pains or discomfort when the child is walking or sitting.
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in young girls.

Behavioural signs

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age.
- Sexualised behaviour in young children.
- Sexually provocative behaviour or promiscuity.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Nightmares, bedwetting, eating disorders, hysteria attacks, self-harm or suicide attempts.
- Reluctance to change for sports.
- Sexual bullying of other children.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/ or psychological need, 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:

- a. Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home and abandonment).
- b. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- c. Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers).
- d. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

See also Ealing's Neglect Toolkit Ealing Neglect - search on www.ealingscp.org.uk
London Safeguarding Children Guidance on Neglect:
<https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/neglect.html>

Physical signs

- Abnormal growth including failure to thrive.
- Underweight or obese.
- Recurring infection.
- Unkempt, dirty appearance.
- Smelly.
- Inadequate and/or unwashed clothes.
- Hunger.
- Lack of adequate supervision.

Behavioural signs

- Attachment disorders.
- Indiscriminate friendliness.
- Poor social relationships.
- Poor concentration.
- Developmental delays.
- Low self esteem.

5.3 Contextual Safeguarding in Ealing

Contextual Safeguarding has been developed by the University of Bedfordshire to inform policy and practice in safeguarding adolescents.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can expose them to violence and abuse. Parents and carers may have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Contextual Safeguarding includes (but is not limited to):

- Gang membership / Serious Youth Violence
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Missing from care, home and education
- Trafficking of children and young people
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Harmful Sexual Behaviours
- Radicalisation

Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership has embraced the Contextual Safeguarding approach and for several years has been working with young people in different ways as well as trying to make spaces around the borough safer.

Staff in the VCFPS can play an important role in recognising when children and young people are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Your group or organisation is one of the contexts in which young people will spend their time, so being aware of some of the risks young people face means you can take appropriate action if you are concerned. There may be a high level of gang violence or knife crime in your local area or you become worried that a young person is being groomed online. Your relationships with young people and the community can mean you are in a good position to notice any changes for individuals or issues in public spaces such as parks, cafes, bars and shopping areas.

Need more information or advice?

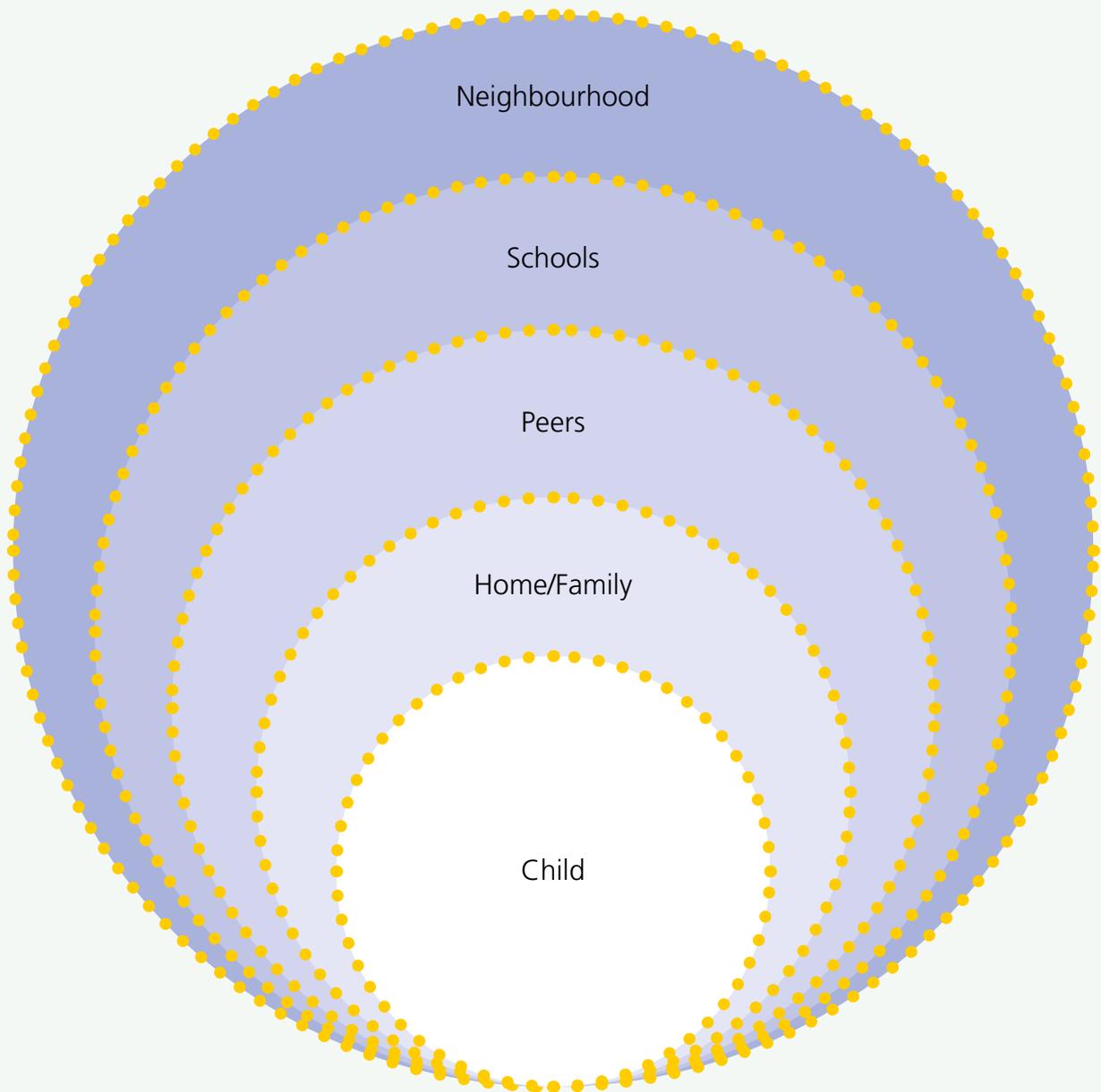
Ealing's Contextual Safeguarding Team provides consultative support for all Ealing professionals who are seeking to help a young person who may be at risk of harm from outside their family. If you have concerns about extra familial harm for a young person you are working with you can consider completing Ealing's Vulnerability Screening Tool (VST). This checklist can assist in the process of understanding the risk to a young person. You can also email the team to request a copy of the VST or to request a consultation. The duty worker will aim to get back to you within one working day:

Email: vulnerabilitiestool@ealing.gov.uk

NB. If your concerns are urgent or a young person is experiencing or at risk of harm you should follow the same process as for all safeguarding concerns.

If a young person is in danger call the Police on **999**

Make a referral to **Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service** on **020 8825 8000** (option 1)



Contexts of Adolescent Safety and Vulnerability

Image sourced from "Contextual Safeguarding: An overview of the operational, strategic and conceptual framework" November 2017 Carlene Firmin, University of Bedfordshire
Available on ESCP website www.ealingscp.org.uk

Further Information

For further information on Contextual Safeguarding (including resources for the VCFPS) see:
<https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>

5.4 Contextual Safeguarding Issues

Both **Child Sexual Exploitation** and **Child Criminal Exploitation** are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time. It can be opportunistic or complex organised abuse. Children and young people may be groomed in person or online.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may depend on their abuser and be too scared to tell anyone what's happening because they don't want to get them in trouble or risk losing them. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for sexual exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation operates in a similar way to Child Sexual Exploitation and is a form of child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. The child may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur online. Criminal Exploitation of children is broader than County Lines and includes for instance children forced to commit theft.

What are the signs a child or young person may be being exploited sexually or criminally?

- » Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- » Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- » Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- » Getting sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- » Having mood swings and or/self-harming
- » Chatting online to people they have never met and/or more secretive mobile phone/computer usage
- » Sending or posting explicit images online
- » Changes in emotional well-being or physical appearance
- » Misusing drugs and alcohol
- » Withdrawing from family and friends
- » Going missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- » Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education

Serious Youth Violence, Gangs, Knife Crime

All staff in VCFPS organisations should be aware of indicators which may signal that children and young people are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime, gangs or knife crime. Many of these indicators echo the signs highlighted for sexual or criminal exploitation on previous page.

A child who is affected by gang activity or serious youth violence can be at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as serious injury or death. The risk or potential risk of harm to the child may be as a victim, a perpetrator or both – in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved adult. *(The word 'gang' can mean different things in different contexts. A report by the Children's Commissioner 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs).*

More information and link to Government report can be found on NSPCC site:

www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation

'Knife crime' is any crime that involves a knife. This includes: carrying a knife or trying to buy one if you're under 18, threatening someone with a knife or stabbing someone. Research shows that the majority of stabbings occurred in males from deprived communities, with a sharp increase in incidence between the ages of 14 and 18 years.

Young people are the most frequent victims of knife violence. Knife crime can be linked to gangs, but this is not always the case. Some young people carry a knife to protect themselves but unfortunately in some cases they end up being the victims of the very weapon they used for protection.

Remember: any child can be drawn into gang activity through peer pressure including social media.

Staff in the VCFPS can keep up to date with local issues and best practice by joining Ealing's Tackling Youth Violence Forum:

Ealing Tackling Youth Violence Forum – this is a forum for local practitioners from across the voluntary, community, public and private sector who are working to tackle youth violence in the borough to discuss the issues children and young people face in regard to this matter, and to look at what already exists and what the gaps are in tackling youth violence.

Contact Young Ealing Foundation for more information:

www.youngealingfoundation.org.uk

Other sources of help and advice:

Ealing Integrated Youth Services – Youth, YJS and Connexions

Tel: **020 8825 7524**

www.youngealing.co.uk

NSPCC gang helpline **0808 800 5000**

London Safeguarding Children Procedures Guidance:

www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/gang_activity.html?zoom_highlight=gangs

County Lines

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs.

Peer on Peer abuse

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. It includes Domestic Abuse where young people aged 16 and 17 experience physical, emotional, sexual and / or financial abuse, and coercive control in their intimate relationships; Child Sexual Exploitation including another young person; Harmful Sexual Behaviour; Serious Youth Crime / Violence - where offences of the most serious nature including murder, rape and Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) occur between young people under 18. It is important professionals carrying out assessments understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be at risk of harm.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviours are 'sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult' (Hackett, 2014)

'The Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service' can provide initial support and signpost to further resources and advice. It is for those working with children and young people, particularly, designated safeguarding leads within primary and secondary schools and alternative provision. More info: <https://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service/>

Trafficking

Children and young people can be abused and neglected by adults who traffic them in, out of and/or around the UK in order to exploit them.

Child trafficking is child abuse and should be treated within a child protection context. It is also a crime, where children (under 18s) are the victims of organised or opportunistic criminality and exploited for sex, forced labour or marriage, domestic servitude or criminal activities such as street robbery or credit card /benefit fraud, begging, acting as a drug mule or decoy for adult traffickers, sweatshop or restaurant work. In the UK, trafficking is regarded as a form of modern slavery.

Trafficking can occur between and within countries, so professionals need to be mindful of children who may be transported short distances or harboured in local addresses.

If you suspect that a child may have been trafficked/be at risk of being trafficked discuss your concerns with your safeguarding lead. Professionals should consider carefully any involvement with “family members/carers” when making a referral to ECIRS as to do so may heighten the risk of harm or abduction to the child/young person.

For more information and guidance on trafficking – including links to key procedures see Ealing’s local policy, procedure and guidance:

Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked: www.ealingscp.org.uk

London Safeguarding Children Procedures:

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/sg_trafficked_ch.html

Campaigning against child trafficking and transnational child exploitation:

<http://www.ecpat.org.uk/>

What to do if you are concerned about any of the above issues

- Call the police on **999** if it is an emergency or a crime is ongoing.
- If you are concerned about a specific young person, call Ealing Children’s Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on **020 8825 8000**.
- If you have concerns about young people congregating or acting suspiciously or dangerously in public spaces contact Safer Communities **020 8825 5994** or **safercommunities@ealing.gov.uk**



5.5 Other Key Safeguarding Issues

This section highlights some other key safeguarding issues. Staff and volunteers in the VCFPS should follow normal processes for reporting concerns i.e. via the DSL or by consulting or referring to ECIRS (**See Chapter 6 for more on reporting concerns**). There is also some additional guidance and sources of information below as well as in the Resources section at the back of this guide.

Children at risk of radicalisation and exposure to extremist ideology

Keeping children and young people safe from radicalisation is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as other safeguarding risks.

Children and young people should be protected from all forms of extremism, including those with extremist narratives related to political, religious or ideological causes.

There is no standard profile of a child or young person likely to become involved in extremism or act violently in support of extremist ideas. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a short time.

Children and young people may be vulnerable to a range of risks as they pass through childhood and adolescence. They may be exposed to new influences and potentially risky behaviours, influence from peers or older people in their network or from the internet/social media.

Children and young people can be radicalised in different ways:

- They can be groomed either online or in person by people seeking to draw them into extremist activity. Their parents may not know about this or feel powerless to stop their child's radicalisation.
- They can be groomed by family members who hold harmful, extreme beliefs, including parents/carers and siblings who live with them and/or person(s) who live outside the family home but have an influence over their life.
- They can be exposed to violent, anti-social, extremist imagery, rhetoric and writings which can lead to the development of a distorted world view in which extremist ideology seems reasonable.
- They can be treated in a way that makes them feel they do not belong, e.g. When they travel to their country of origin they are seen as an outsider; when they return to the country they reside in they are seen as an outsider.
- Additional factors include exposure to attacks on family members, friends and other community members due to their religious beliefs, having to deal with issues that make them feel there is no support from those in authority e.g. the police or the community. They may feel the need to become associated with gangs for protection or form their own gangs to protect either their community, family members or those from the similar religious beliefs.

Much like any other safeguarding concern, the potential danger for grooming children and vulnerable adults to engage with extremist narratives has been increased by the access to the internet and social media, enabling terrorist organisations and extremists to spread messages and recruit in a cyber space as well as a physical one.

Consideration should be given to the possibility that sharing information with parents may increase the risk to the child/young person. However, parents can also be key in challenging radical views and should be included, unless there are clear reasons why not to.

Government Response

The **Prevent** duty was introduced by the Government to stop people from being drawn into terrorism. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

- A video providing information about how the Prevent programme works can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Otc2eaRY32s>
- For training around Prevent, you can access the Home Office Prevent E-learn training <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>.
- Department for Education's website with information and advice for parents and professionals <http://educateagainsthate.com/>

Ealing's Prevent Programme

Ealing's Prevent programme is designed to support families, professionals, faith and community settings with an aim to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism or extremism. The team offer a range of free training and support including Workshops to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) which helps staff/volunteers understand the issues and their role in recognising extremism and radicalisation and knowing when to make an appropriate referral. Prevent Team: <https://www.egfl.org.uk/services-children/safeguarding/anti-radicalisation-prevent-duty>
Email: prevent@ealing.gov.uk. Training link: www.ealingcpd.org.uk

What to do if you are concerned

Staff from all agencies with concerns about a child or young person's vulnerability to extremism or risk of radicalisation should:

- Make a clear written record of the concerns they have heard and/or witnessed.
- Contact the Ealing Prevent team on **020 8825 9849** to explore these concerns and the context for the young person e.g. sources of information; friendship groups; interests; access to IT and other relevant background and protective factors.
- Ealing Prevent may advise you to make a formal referral to Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS).
- Low level concerns – these may be managed by universal services and the family themselves.
- ECIRS and Prevent will work together to ascertain whether the Prevent threshold has been met. If met, Ealing Prevent may refer to the Channel Panel (a multi-agency panel designed to safeguard vulnerable individuals from being drawn into extremist or terrorist behaviour).
- Where there is imminent threat of harm to others, the Police (**999**) or Terrorist hotline (**0800 789 321**) must be contacted.

Definitions

"Radicalisation"- refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. During that process it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist-related activity.

"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. Extremism also includes calls for death of members of the armed forces.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It is not just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their own relationships. Domestic abuse is a factor in a high proportion of child protection cases.

Why is it a child protection issue?

- Children are at risk of physical injury during an incident of domestic abuse.
- Children who witness (see or hear) domestic abuse suffer emotional and psychological harm.
- Domestic abuse rarely exists in isolation. Substance misuse and mental health issues are often involved. This can significantly impact on parental capacity to protect children and meet their needs.
- Research shows that abuse towards women increases both in severity and frequency during pregnancy. Babies under 12 months old are particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Responding to Domestic Abuse:

Practitioners in the VCFPS may identify or receive a disclosure about domestic abuse. Practitioners should be alert to the signs that a child or parent may be experiencing domestic abuse and know how to respond appropriately. Some key things to do:

- Be familiar with signs and indicators of domestic abuse in both children and parent. This can be best achieved by attending domestic abuse training via Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The issue of domestic abuse should only ever be raised with a child or parent when they are alone, in a safe space and away from the abuser/s.
- Be aware of the additional vulnerabilities experienced by victims from Black and Minority Ethnic communities.
- Provide information about domestic abuse and local support services in your organisation.

What to do if you are concerned.

If there is a concern about the risk of abuse or harm to the child, then every practitioner's overriding duty is to protect the child.

- Call the Police on **999** if it is an emergency or a crime is ongoing or **101** if an immediate response is not needed.
- If you are concerned about a child or young person, call Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on **020 8825 8000**.

Where a vulnerable adult is a victim of domestic abuse a referral should also be made to Adult Safeguarding via the Ealing Social Care Advice and Referral Centre on **020 8825 8000**.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting, and by other terms, such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others.

FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts.

Female Genital Mutilation is child abuse and constitutes significant harm.

Female Genital Mutilation is a criminal offence in the UK. The Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) makes it an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out FGM abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

Identifying girls at risk /indicators

It is important that everyone makes themselves aware of the range of possible indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM or has already undergone FGM. Further information including videos to help you identify FGM and risks can be found here:

NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

Multi-agency statutory Guidance on FGM

Multi-agency guidelines on FGM for those with statutory duties to safeguard children and vulnerable adults can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

London Safeguarding Children Procedures:

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/sg_ch_risk_fgm.html

Mandatory duty to report FGM

Since 31 October 2015, social workers, health professionals and teachers have a mandatory duty to report to the police (via the non-emergency number 101) any 'known' cases of FGM, when a disclosure has been made or there is visual confirmation for all under 18s. The duty is placed on the professional to whom the disclosure is made and/or visually sees signs of FGM. You must also follow your normal safeguarding procedures.

'Known' means that you have either visually identified that FGM has been carried out, or you have had direct verbal disclosure from the child affected.

If you are a regulated health and social care professional or teacher:

If a child discloses that FGM has already happened to them:

- Talk to your Safeguarding Lead and discuss actions needed.
- As this is a disclosed case, you will need to follow your mandatory duty. Therefore, you will need to call the non-emergency 101 number
- Write down the crime reference number
- Your safeguarding lead will follow up with a referral to ECIRS
- Make a note of all your actions and keep a record of any conversation with the child and/or family

If you suspect a girl is at risk of FGM:

- Follow your usual safeguarding procedures in your setting
- Discuss with your safeguarding lead
- Safeguarding Lead may contact ECIRS for further advice
- Make a note of all your actions and keep record of any conversation with child and/or family

If you are not a regulated professional, you should follow your normal safeguarding procedures.

Contact ECIRS Tel: **020 8825 8000** to make a referral or need advice about a child you are worried is at risk of FGM or has already undergone the procedure.

You can also discuss whether a referral should be made with one of Ealing's Child Protection Advisers: **020 8825 8930** or with the ECIRS Consultation Line for professionals **020 8825 5236 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)**

If there is concern that the child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted without delay by telephoning **999**. You can also contact:

- Police Project Azure (department dealing with FGM): Tel: **020 7161 2888**
- The NSPCC if you're worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM. They operate a free 24/7 FGM helpline: Tel: **0800 028 3550** Email: **fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk**

Forced Marriage

A Forced Marriage is a marriage that takes place without the full and free consent of both parties. Force can include physical force, as well as being pressurised emotionally, being threatened or being a victim of psychological abuse. Forced Marriages are not the same as arranged marriages.

In an arranged marriage, families take the lead in selecting a marriage partner but the couple have the free will and choice to accept or decline the arrangement.

Forced Marriage is now a criminal act. Forcing someone into marriage in England and Wales carries a maximum seven-year jail sentence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It also criminalises forcing a British national into marriage outside the UK.

Forced Marriage involving a child/young person is both illegal and a child protection issue as the child is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Situations where a child fears being forced into marriage have similarities with both domestic violence and 'honour' based violence, and Forced Marriage falls under the definition of domestic violence.

Forced Marriage may involve the child being taken out of the country (trafficked) for the ceremony, is likely to involve non-consensual and/or underage sex, and refusal to go through with a Forced Marriage has sometimes been linked to 'honour' killing.

Forced Marriage Unit: <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>

Government Guidelines. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

'Honour' Based Violence

'Honour' Based Violence is the term used to describe acts of violence in the name of so-called honour. These are murders in which predominantly women are killed for perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have breached the "honour code" of a family or community, causing shame.

These acts can include physical assaults, abduction and murder, which are carried out in the name of family 'honour'. A child who is at risk of 'honour'-based violence is at significant risk of physical harm (including being murdered) and/or neglect, and may also suffer significant emotional harm through the threat of violence or witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or other family member.

Murders in the name of 'so-called honour' are often the culmination of a series of events over a period of time. There tends to be a degree of premeditation, family conspiracy and a belief that the victim deserved to die.

Families may feel shame long after the incident that brought about "dishonour" occurred, and therefore the risk of harm to a child can persist. This means that the young person's new boy/girlfriend, baby (if pregnancy caused the family to feel 'shame'), associates or siblings may also be at risk of harm.

The Metropolitan Police 'Honour' Based Violence Website:
www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/honour-based-abuse/honour-based-abuse

Karma Nirvana: <http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

Abuse linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession or Witchcraft

Where parents, families and the child themselves believe that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling them, the belief includes the child being able to use the evil force to harm others. This 'evil' is variously known as 'black magic', 'kindoki', 'ndoki', 'the evil eye', 'djinn', 'voodoo', 'obeah'. Children are sometimes called witches or sorcerers. A belief in spirit possession is not confined to particular countries, cultures, religions/faiths or communities.

A child may suffer emotional abuse if they are labelled and treated as being possessed with an evil spirit. In addition, significant harm to a child may occur when an attempt is made to 'exorcise' or 'deliver' the evil spirit from the child.

The forms of abuse that acts of 'exorcism' can take include physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect.

Common factors that put a child at risk of harm include: Belief in evil spirits (this is commonly accompanied by a belief that the child could 'infect' others with 'evil'); scapegoating because of a difference; rationalising misfortune by attributing it to spiritual forces and when a carer views a child as being 'different' (for instance because of a disability, bedwetting or rebelliousness); changes and / or complexity in family structure or dynamics; change of family circumstances for the worse; and parenting difficulties.

Project Violet is a Metropolitan Police service, which specifically responds to the threat of abuse related to faith and belief. <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/faith-based-abuse/>

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing is a traditional cultural practice that involves massaging or pressing the breasts of adolescent girls in order to suppress and reverse their development. The rationale is to prevent girls from developing breasts in the belief that a flat, childlike chest will discourage unwanted male attention, rape and teenage pregnancy.

In communities across London, women and girls are beginning to speak out breast ironing. However, it remains a hidden issue that many organisations know nothing about. For more information contact CAME Women and Girls Development Organisation: www.cawogido.co.uk

Modern Slavery

Slavery is a term for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in forced service. The following definitions are encompassed within the term 'modern slavery' for the purposes of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. These are:

- 'Slavery' is where ownership is exercised over a person.
- 'Servitude' involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion.
- 'Forced or compulsory labour' involves work or service extracted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily.
- 'Human trafficking' concerns arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view to exploiting them.

For further information please refer to the Modern Slavery Act 2015:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/pdfs/ukpga_20150030_en.pdf

Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery>

Unseen Website provides guidance and support;

<https://www.unseenuk.org/what-we-do/Helpline-&-Resource-Centre>

Missing children

The Metropolitan Police definition, based on national policing guidance is “Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed”.

The Met Police no longer use the “Absent” category for young people reported missing to police. Therefore, all children reported to police will be recorded as missing and police will assess the risk category (low, medium or high). The level of risk determines the police response.

Children who go missing even for a short period can be vulnerable to significant harm. There are particular concerns about the links between children who go missing and the risk of exploitation. Children who are in care and go missing from their placements can be especially vulnerable.

A child going missing from school may be an indication that the child has experienced harm or abuse or is at serious risk of exploitation, extra familial harm, potential forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM) which may be influencing the absence from school.

What to do if you are concerned about a child being absent or missing?

If a child or young person is not attending your setting as usual and you are concerned about their absence, you should:

- Try to contact the child and their parent/carer to ascertain their wellbeing and whereabouts.
- If you are unable to contact the family or remain concerned, discuss with your DSL, or call the ECIRS Consultation Line on **020 8825 5236**.

If you are concerned that a child or young person may be at risk of going missing or running away, you (or DSL if available) you should consider reporting to ECIRS on **020 8825 8000**.

If a child has already gone missing, contact the Police on **999**.

Detailed guidance can be found in Ealing Local Guidance ‘Safeguarding children missing from care, home or education’ at: www.ealingscp.org.uk

The Ealing Guidance is based on the London Safeguarding Children Procedures which can be accessed here too:

www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/ch_miss_care_home_sch.html



5.6 Other circumstances where safeguarding concerns may arise

The following section sets out various circumstances where children and young people may be especially vulnerable and where an early help or a safeguarding/child protection response may be needed. This will not be the case for all children in categories below, however staff and volunteers should be mindful of any potential additional vulnerabilities to abuse or exploitation.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

These are children under the age of 18 years who are seeking asylum, but not living with their parents, relatives or guardians in the UK. Most come from countries which are in a state of chaos, including war and endemic violence.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children require a broad package of support, including legal advice, advocacy, emotional and/psychological support, language support, help with adapting to a different culture and other basic needs such as health, education, housing and general care.

Evidence indicates that some children trafficked into the UK, apply for asylum following instructions received by the traffickers. Research and evidence also show a higher vulnerability of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to sexual exploitation and going missing from care, home and/or school.

All Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children should be referred to Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) as there is a statutory duty of care towards them. Ealing's Unaccompanied Minors team in Children's Services will undertake work to assess need and offer appropriate help and support.

Further information:

The Children's Society:

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/young-refugees-migrants

The Refugee Council Children's Section:

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/childrens_services

Coram Voice - <https://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/about-us/what-we-do/migrant-childrens-project/>

Children in care and care leavers

A child or young person is in care, or 'looked after', if they live with foster parents, in a residential children's home, or in a residential setting such as a school or secure unit.

Children come into the care of the local authority for a variety of reasons. The law allows local authorities to look after children if the child's parents/carers are ill or temporarily unable to look after their child for some reason; the child has no parents/carers or anyone else to

care for them; there are serious concerns about the way the child is being cared for by their parents/carers.

A child will stop being in care when they are either adopted, return home or turn 18. The local authority will continue to support children as care leavers from age 18 until they are up to age 25 (in various ways depending on individual circumstances).

Children in care and care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group. They may have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma which can lead to emotional, behavioural and mental health needs. This can put them at increased risk of being groomed or exploited.

The experiences of being in care can continue to impact on children and young people after they have left the care system. Care leavers are often required to become independent at a younger age than their peers. They may be expected to become responsible for finding housing, employment and study opportunities without all the support networks available to many other young adults. This transition can be challenging and stressful, difficulties increased by past childhood trauma. Employment, housing and financial difficulties and feelings of isolation and exclusion can make care leavers particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

Ealing's Local Offer for Care Leavers setting out the services and support available can be viewed here: <https://www.youngealing.co.uk/local-offer-for-ealing-care-leavers/>

Young Carers

A young carer is someone aged 18 or under who helps look after a relative who has a condition, such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem. Most young carers look after one of their parents or care for a brother or sister. Their day-to-day responsibilities often include: cooking, cleaning, shopping, providing nursing and personal care, giving emotional support.

With so many adult responsibilities, young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play and learn. Many struggle educationally and are often bullied for being 'different'. They can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home, and no chance to enjoy a normal childhood. They are often afraid to ask for help as they fear letting the family down or being taken into care.

Ealing offers support and activities for young carers through the Ealing Young Carers project run by Brentford FC Community Sports Trust. www.brentfordfcst.com

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately without the involvement of a Local Authority, for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if they are disabled) by someone other than a parent or 'close relative' with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. *(A close relative is defined in the Children Act 1989 as a grandparent, uncle or aunt (whether by full-blood, half-blood or by marriage or civil partnership), sibling or step-parent).*

Local Authorities do not formally approve or register private foster carers. However, it is the duty of the Local Authority to ensure they are satisfied that the welfare of children who are privately fostered is being satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted.

Examples of situations where private fostering arrangements happen:

- Children living with a friend, or the family of girlfriend/boyfriend
- Children who have come to the country for medical treatment, exchange holidays or language courses
- Children being cared for while a parent is in prison or hospital.

Staff in the VCFPS may come across private fostering arrangements as part of their day-to-day work. If you suspect or doubt that Children's Social Care have been informed about a private fostering situation or you are unsure, you should call ECIRS on **020 8825 8000**.

Further information and downloadable leaflets can be found at:

www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk (search for Private Fostering)

Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves.

The damage inflicted by bullying is often underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development and can be a source of significant harm, including self-harm and suicide. Professionals should be aware that bullying can rapidly escalate into sexual or serious physical or emotional abuse.

Bullying can take the following forms: physical abuse (e.g. hitting or kicking); verbal or mobile telephone or online (internet) message abuse (e.g. racist, sexist or homophobic name-calling or threats); mobile telephone or online (internet) visual image abuse – these can include real or manipulated images; emotional abuse (e.g. isolating an individual from the group or emotional blackmail).

Further information can be found at: **www.stopbullying.gov**

Disabled children

Any child with a disability is by definition a 'child in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This means that Local Authorities have a legal duty to support them and their families to ensure that they are safeguarded and that their needs are met.

Research suggests that children with a disability are more vulnerable to significant harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and / or neglect than children who do not have a disability. The increased vulnerability is attributed to risk factors such as: increased likelihood of being socially isolated; dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care; an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse; possible communication barriers, such as speech impairments; limited access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused. Evidence also indicates that disabled children are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation.

Safeguards for disabled children are 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 within your organisation.

Further guidance can be found at:

London Safeguarding Children Procedures

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/disabled_ch.html

For information on services and support for children, young people and families in Ealing see Ealing Offer website **www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) young people

LGBTQ+ young people may experience discrimination, domestic abuse from family members, prejudice and bullying, become victims of hate crime and suffer serious harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and/or neglect.

Children and young people who are unsure about their sexual orientation or gender identity or are unable to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to their families or social support networks are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation, depression, self-harm and/or involvement in substance misuse and may engage in risky behaviour or find themselves coerced into inappropriate relationships.

In some communities, children and young people may be also more vulnerable to forced marriage or “honour” based violence. For more information and advice:

www.stonewall.org.uk

Children and young people with mental health issues

Mental health is as important to a child’s safety and wellbeing as their physical health. It can impact on all aspects of their life, including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health issues can also sometimes lead to safeguarding and child protection issues, for example if a child’s mental health begins to put them or other people at risk of harm.

It can be hard for adults to recognise when a child needs support with mental health issues. And it can be difficult for young people to speak out about the challenges they’re facing. So it is important that anyone who works or volunteers with children is able to recognise the signs that a child may be struggling with their mental health. And that they know how to take appropriate action to support children and young people in getting the help they need.

Follow your organisation’s procedures to share any concerns you have about a child’s wellbeing. Further information and resources can be found below:

NSPCC: **<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/child-mental-health>**

YoungMinds: children and young people’s mental health charity

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Ealing Family Information Service (FIS): **www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk**

West London NHS Trust has set up a new service 'Speak CAMHS' a helpline run by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. CAMHS professionals provide immediate talking support, basic counselling and advice for children, young people and families who are in significant distress. 0800 328 4444 (Option 2). Open Mon - Fri, 11am to 8pm Sat/Sun & Bank Hols 12pm to 8pm

Self-Harm and Suicidal feelings

Self-harm can take lots of physical forms, including cutting, burning, bruising, scratching, hairpulling, poisoning and overdosing. There are many reasons why children and young people try to hurt themselves. Self-harm isn't usually a suicide attempt or a cry for attention. Instead, it's often a way for young people to release overwhelming emotions. It's a way of coping, so whatever the reason, it should be taken seriously.

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health

London Safeguarding Children Procedures Practice Guidance:

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/self_harm_suic_behv.html

Substance Misuse

Parental or carer drug and/or alcohol use can reduce the capacity for effective parenting. Children may develop behavioural problems, experience low educational attainment and be vulnerable to developing substance misuse problems themselves.

Some children's health or development may be impaired to the extent that they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Young People & Substance Misuse

Young people can also develop dependency. Those who use drugs or alcohol problematically are likely to be vulnerable and experiencing a range of problems, of which substance misuse is one. Substance misuse in young people is closely linked to a range of risky behaviours such as unprotected sex, criminal activity and domestic abuse.

Young people do not usually develop substance misuse problems in isolation. Data has shown that a significant proportion of young people who entered specialist treatment services also had other multiple problems or vulnerabilities that were linked to their substance misuse. These include:

- Having a mental health problem.
- Being affected by domestic violence or sexual exploitation.
- Not being in education, training or employment (NEET).

For some young people these wider issues may be the cause of their substance misuse problems, and for others, a consequence.

Support is available for young people (and parents/carers) in Ealing from Change Grow Live, a national charity offering a range of services in Ealing. There are services specifically for people under 21 or those supporting a young person.

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/advice-info/under-21-advice>

Online abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet through computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices. It can happen anywhere online that allows digital communication, such as:

- social networks
- text messages and messaging apps
- email and private messaging
- online chats or voice chats in games
- comments on live streaming sites

Children and young people may experience several types of abuse online:

- bullying/cyberbullying
- emotional abuse (this includes emotional blackmail, for example pressuring children and young people to comply with sexual requests via technology).
- nude or semi-nude images (pressure or coercion to create sexual images)
- sexual and/or criminal exploitation.

Children and young people can also be groomed online. Perpetrators may use online platforms to build a trusting relationship with the child in order to abuse them. This abuse may happen online, or the perpetrator may arrange to meet the child in person with the intention of abusing them. Children and young people can be revictimised (experience further abuse) when abusive content is recorded, uploaded or shared by others online.

In the VCFPS, staff have the responsibility, firstly to support children and young people to stay safe online and secondly to create and manage a safe online environment within their organisation (See Chapter 7)

Supporting children and young people to stay safe online.

Staff and volunteers can support children and young people to stay safe online and use the internet responsibly by:

- Educating children and young people about potential risks and ways of avoiding/mitigating them.
- Raising awareness of issues such as grooming, bullying, online sexual exploitation and pornography.
- Providing children and young people with information about organisations and sources of help and advice.
- Supporting parents and carers to effectively engage with, understand and monitor their children's access to and use of the internet and help their children stay safe online.

There are many resources to support children and young people, here are some:

Parentzone: <https://parentzone.org.uk/home>

CEOP 'Think you know' website: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

Childnet International: <https://www.childnet.com>

This site includes information in many community languages.

Chapter 6

Dealing with your concerns

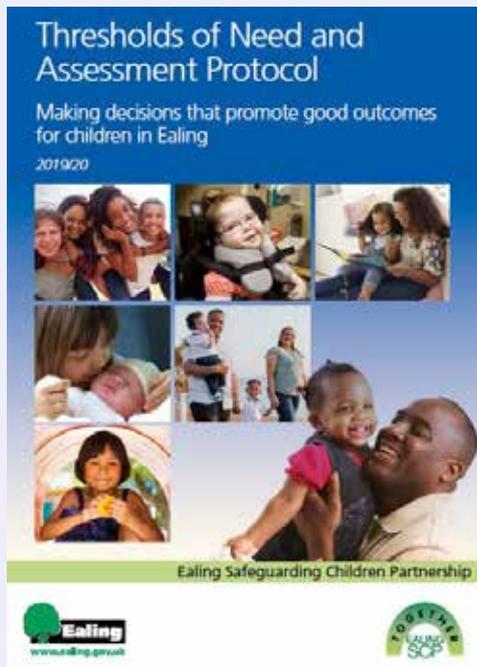
Dealing with your concerns

If you have a concern about a child or young person, deciding what the best course of action to take will depend on the nature of the concern. A DSL (or deputy) in the VCFPS organisation should be available to guide staff and volunteers and take appropriate action.

However, there will be situations where a member of staff or volunteer may have to decide what to do without the support of the DSL. It is therefore important that everyone understands what action to take if a child or young person is being harmed/ is at risk of harm. It will also be important for all to understand how to get help for a child and family if concerns are at a lower level.

6.1. Thresholds of Need Guidance

Ealing's Thresholds of Need Guide is a document aimed at every agency in the Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP), including the VCFPS, that works directly or indirectly with children, young people and their families.



The Thresholds of Need Guidance can assist organisations and individuals to:

- Recognise and understand the signs (indicators) that a child may be in need of help or safeguarding.
- Understand the Thresholds of Need levels which determine the response and type of intervention that may be needed.
- Know what action to take if you have concerns about a child.
- Know what Children's Social Care will do if a referral is made to them.

Some of the information in this Yellow Book is also covered in the Thresholds Guidance.

Link to Thresholds of Need Guidance:

https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/1352/thresholds_of_need_and_assessment_protocols_201920 or [threshold_guide_2019_final_2.pdf](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/downloads/download/1352/threshold_guide_2019_final_2.pdf) (openobjects.com)

Ealing's Thresholds guidance is based on a model with descriptors for each of four levels of need.

Level 4: Acute Needs - Safeguarding and Child Protection (Getting help where there is a risk of significant harm or for acute needs)

At this level children have acute needs and require safeguarding, intensive statutory support, or specialist services.

What this means:

This is when children are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm; where children need to become legally looked after or are remanded to custody or statutory youth offending services; or need specialised residential, day or outpatient health services due to severe and /or complex health needs.

Children's Social Care (CSC) will carry out a Child Protection investigation under section 47 Children Act 1989 (sometimes with the Police) to assess risk and to ensure children are safeguarded. In other circumstances CSC will take required action where a child needs to be Looked After by the Local Authority or where specialist health services are needed

Action to take:

If you have safeguarding or child protection concerns, a referral to ECIRS should be made on **020 8825 8000**. Your telephone call should be followed up in writing on the ECIRS Referral Form (Appendix 4) within 24 hours. (See 6.2 for more details). If a child is in immediate danger call the Police on **999**.

Level 3: Complex - Child in Need (Get help with complex issues)

At this level children may have complex multiple needs and need specialist support, sometimes longer term, to keep them safe and/or promote their wellbeing.

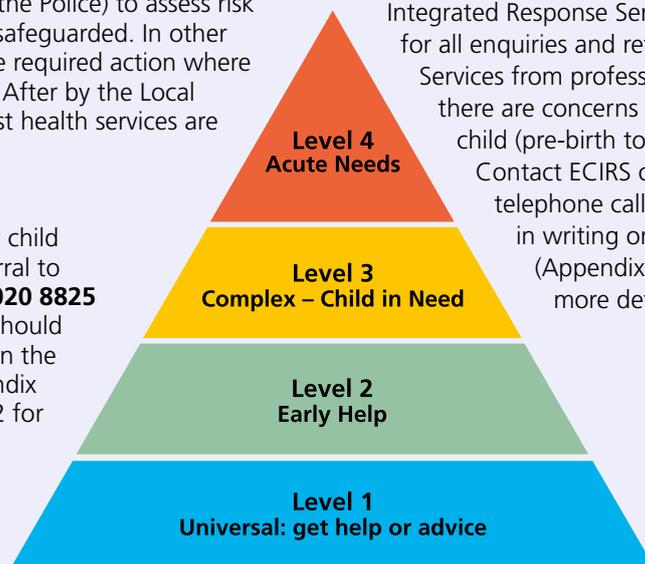
What this means:

This is the threshold for referral to Children's Social Care. An assessment of need under section 17 Children Act 1989 will be carried out by a social worker to decide what ongoing services and support are needed.

Action to take:

If you have concerns about a child or young person's welfare you should make a referral to Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) - the 'front door' for all enquiries and referrals into Ealing Children's Services from professionals and the public, where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child (pre-birth to aged 18 years).

Contact ECIRS on **020 8825 8000**. Your telephone call should be followed up in writing on the ECIRS Referral Form (Appendix 4) within 24 hours. (See 6.2 for more detail).



Level 2: Early Help (Get Help)

At this level children have identified or emerging needs; may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; or their needs are not clear, not known or not being met.

What this means:

This level is the threshold for Early Help services such as an Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP), SAFE – Parenting or Counselling services, Early Start Ealing 0-19 (Health visiting, community school nursing; SEND and inclusion services) as well as universal services

Action to take:

If you are concerned that a child or family needs help or you are not sure whether you should make a referral to Children's Services, you can contact the ECIRS Professional Consultation Line on **020 8825 5236** (Mon to Fri, 9am - 5pm). This is a 'no name' advice line where you can obtain advice from a Social Worker on what best to do. Ealing Family Information Service (FIS) on **020 8825 5588** or www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk can also provide advice on the Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP) process and Early Help services. (See 6.7 for more details).

Level 1: Universal (Get Advice)

At this level children are kept safe from harm and will be able to reach their full potential with support from universal services such as schools, early years and youth services, local police, GP and community health services, housing, voluntary and community sectors.

What this means:

Families can directly access services that are available to all, but some children and families may need extra support to prevent a situation deteriorating.

Action to take:

If families need more information or help to access universal services, contact Ealing Family Information Service (FIS) on **020 8825 5588** or www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

ECIRS CONSULTATION LINE

020 8825 5236

A telephone Consultation Line for professionals provided by Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) & Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

No matter how experienced you are as a professional, there may be times when you want to discuss a worry about a child. You may be unsure about what action to take and need some support and guidance to make the most appropriate decision.

If you are a professional and are worried about a child and would like to discuss your concerns, you can contact the **ECIRS Consultation Line** to obtain help or advice.

The ECIRS Consultation Line will:

- Offer quick and easy access to Children's Social Care advice
- Provide advice regarding Ealing Children's Services Thresholds of Need
- Provide advice about universal, targeted and early help services within Ealing
- Provide the opportunity for professionals to discuss concerns, to help determine the appropriate response, without giving a name or making a referral.

If ECIRS considers that your worry about a child is a safeguarding concern, you will be informed to make a direct referral to ECIRS on 020 8825 8000 (option 1)

What to do prior to contacting the Consultation Line

- If the child has an allocated social worker, you should contact them directly
- Do consider whether you have the appropriate resources within your own organisation to help and assist the child before contacting the Consultation Line.

What to expect from the Consultation Line

- There will be consultation offered by a qualified and experienced social worker based in ECIRS/MASH who will offer advice and support
- There will be a record of the nature of the discussion for monitoring and trend purposes
- The Consultation Line is not to be used to discuss or make a referral ECIRS/MASH. It is not a short cut to a referral into ECIRS/MASH
- The Consultation Line is open from Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

Children's Services



6.2 What to do if you think a child is suffering or at risk of abuse or harm

If you think a child/young person is at risk of or suffering significant harm, you should immediately inform your DSL (or Deputy if DSL unavailable) who should call **Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS)** on **020 8825 8000** without delay (24-hour number).

In the absence of a DSL or Deputy, you must take responsibility yourself and report your concerns to ECIRS immediately – do not delay.

In emergencies/if urgent action is required to protect a child, call the Police on **999**.

What is Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS)?

ECIRS acts as a single 'front door' for all enquiries and referrals into Ealing Children's Services from professionals and the public, where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child (pre-birth to aged 18 years).

Do we need to obtain consent or inform the parents/carers about referring to ECIRS?

You should inform the parents/carers before you refer to ECIRS unless this could:

- put the child at further risk of harm;
- compromise a criminal investigation or;
- cause undue delay in taking action to protect the child.

If you are not clear if any of the above apply you should discuss with ECIRS what – if anything – you should say to the child's parents/carers before making a referral. **See also 6.4 and flowchart for more guidance on Consent and Information Sharing.**

What if I am unsure about whether a child is suffering or at risk of significant harm?

If you have any doubts about the level of need or risk, are not sure whether you should be making a referral or simply don't know what to do when you have a concern, you can call: Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) **Professional Consultation Line** on **020 8825 5236 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)** (see page 76)

This is a 'no name' line where you can get advice about your concerns and next steps from an experienced Social Worker. You may be advised to make a referral to ECIRS using names etc.

How do I make a referral to ECIRS?

Contact: ECIRS on **020 8825 8000 (24-hour number)**

Your telephone call should be followed up in writing on the ECIRS Referral Form within 48 hours. The form and guidance can be found on the ESCP website (see page 119 for links).

Once you have made a written referral you will receive an immediate automated acknowledgement email from ECIRS. If you do not receive this call ECIRS on **020 8825 8000** without delay.

What happens once you have contacted ECIRS?

ECIRS 'screen' referrals and make decisions about next steps within **one working day** – the action they take will depend on how urgent and serious concerns are.

Social Workers have a duty by law to investigate the situation or circumstances that have led to the referral so will speak to / visit the child and family and contact other agencies as relevant. In some situations, they involve the police who also have a duty to investigate circumstances where it is believed a child has been harmed. They will decide whether:

- The child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- The child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989;
- There is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquires must be made and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989;
- Any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;

The possible outcomes of the referral can be seen below – Pathways after ECIRS screening.

Pathways after ECIRS screening of a referral

Referrals will be directed to different services after the ECIRS screening process. There are four possible outcomes following screening. ECIRS may as part of the screening process liaise with relevant teams e.g. Contextual Safeguarding Team (regarding vulnerable adolescents); PREVENT (regarding radicalisation and extremism), Youth Justice Service etc.

Children's Social Care teams

If the referral meets Section 47 (Child Protection) and/or 17 (Child in Need) criteria and thresholds - directed to relevant team. e.g. Multi Agency Support (MAST), Intervention Team, Children with Disabilities, Unaccompanied Minors/ Housing Support or Supportive Action for Families in Ealing (SAFE) subject to team eligibility criteria.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The MASH is a partnership of professionals from the three statutory children's safeguarding agencies (Children's Social Care/Police/Health) and other agencies/services that work together to consider referrals where the level of risk and need is unclear or complex. The MASH supports decision making on next steps.

Early Help Services

If the referral meets Early Help criteria and thresholds it can be referred straight to Early Help Services e.g. Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP), SAFE, Parenting, Early Start, SEND services.

Universal Services or No Further Action

If the referral indicates that a child is or can be kept safe from harm and will be able to reach their full potential with support from universal services, then families will be signposted to these or no further action taken.

What happens once you have contacted ECIRS

From this point your concerns are known as a “referral”. After contacting ECIRS, you need to confirm your concerns in writing within 24 hours using the ECIRS enquiry form. (See sample form Appendix 4). The form is available on the ESCP website www.ealingscp.org.uk (see page 119 for link)

Your written referral should always be acknowledged by the ECIRS within 72 hours. If you do not receive a confirmation of referral, contact ECIRS again.

REMEMBER: It is your responsibility as the referrer to ensure that your referral has been received and recorded by ECIRS.

More information

More information about ECIRS processes and pathways and how the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) works can be found here on the ESCP website www.ealingscp.org.uk (see link on page 119)

You may also find the following guide useful:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

Dealing with concerns about a child / young person

Staff/volunteer **REPORTS** concern/s to the DSL or Deputy DSL & **RECORDS** concern/s (using Incident/Concerns recording log)

Is there a risk of **significant** harm to the child?

In an emergency dial 999 for the Police for an immediate response

YES

NO

If unsure about what to do and need advice you can also contact **ECIRS Professional Consultation Line** (no name's used) on **020 8825 5236**

Refer to Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) 020 8825 8000 (24hrs)

Remember to make a record of initial referral details (time, date, person spoken to). Referral form link in Appendix 6 or look under Professionals tab on **www.ealingscp.org.uk**

Refer family for Early Help via ECIRS with consent.

Gain consent from parents (and child aged 12+) to initiate EHAP process. (EHAP link on page 88)

No consent

Consent given

You should receive a confirmation of referral from ECIRS within 24 hours. REMEMBER, it is your responsibility to follow up on a referral, so contact ECIRS again if you have not received a confirmation.

Keep a written record of all your actions.

If consent is not given, continue to monitor the child and family and be prepared to contact ECIRS if the situation escalates.

Contact Family Information Service (FIS) Team to find out if an Early Help Assessment & Plan (EHAP) exists for the child/young person or a sibling, and how you can contribute to it.

If you have sent a referral to ECIRS and you are not happy with the response or continue to have concerns, you can re-refer, seek advice from the Consultation Line or use the escalation process via ECIRS Team Manager/ Head of Service.

If an EHAP does not exist, and you have consent from the family you can initiate one (Go to **www.ealing.gov.uk/EHAP** for more information).

If you have any doubts about the level of need or risk, are not sure whether you should be making a referral or simply don't know what to do when you have a concern, call Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) Professional Consultation Line on 020 8825 5236

6.3 Responding to an allegation of abuse from a child/young person

If a child/young person says that he or she is being abused or provides information that suggests that they are being abused ('allegation of abuse'), the person receiving that information should:

- Remain calm, accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully without interrupting or asking leading questions.
- Communicate with the child/young person in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.
- Be aware of the non-verbal messages you are giving.
- Make it clear that you are taking them seriously.
- Acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to tell.
- Reassure them that they should not feel guilty and say that you're sorry that this has happened to them.
- Let them know that you are going to do everything you can to help them and what may happen as a result.
- Make a note of what was said and who was present, using the child/young person's actual words wherever possible.

You should NEVER:

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse.
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children/young people.
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action.
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc.
- Speculate or accuse anybody.
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information.
- Confront another person (adult or child/young person) allegedly involved.
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved.
- Forget to record what you have been told.
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person.

Remember to always RECORD what has happened and REPORT it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead even if a referral is not made to ECIRS.

If the allegation concerns a member of staff or volunteer (see Flowchart in Chapter 4)

Allegations may be made directly by the child/young person, a parent, a friend of the child or indeed by another staff member/volunteer. It is important to listen to what is said, to reassure the person that what they have said will be taken seriously but that you need to report the matter to the DSL.

- Do not arrange a meeting between the accused and parents/carers.
- Do not inform staff and the accused of the allegation, the DSL and LADO will provide you with guidance.

6.4 Consent and Information Sharing

In most cases parental consent should be obtained before making a referral to Children's Social Care via Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) or sharing information with other agencies. Most parents/carers will give consent and appreciate practitioners who are honest and direct with them and inform them what action they intend to take.

Where the child is at risk of significant harm, consent is NOT required if this would:

- Put the child at further risk of harm
- Compromise a criminal investigation
- Cause undue delay in taking action to protect the child

Staff/volunteers should discuss with the DSL what to do. If there is no DSL (or Deputy) available, you can contact ECIRS who will clarify what you need to do.

If you decide not to inform the parent/carer, remember to record why you made that decision.

Use the flowchart on page 85 to help you determine whether information about a child and/or family you are working with needs to be shared.

Remember, data protection should never be used as an excuse for failure to protect a child/young person from a real risk of harm. Data protection law is not a barrier to sharing information when it is necessary, proportionate, and justified to do so. The most important consideration is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or young person.

Seek advice if you are not sure what to do at any stage and ensure that the outcome of the discussion is recorded.

Further Information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about a living person is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with consent, where appropriate, and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Further Information:

London Safeguarding Children Procedures Information Sharing Guidance

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/info_sharing.html

6.5 Recording your concerns

It is important that all concerns should be recorded, regardless of whether ECIRS have been contacted. An 'Incident/Concerns Recording Log' should be used for this purpose (see Appendix 4 if you do not have one). The DSL should keep a copy of the Incident/Concerns Recording Log securely.

Where available, the following information should be recorded:

- Name, age, date of birth, gender, full address and telephone number of the child;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of the child and their family;
- If the parents/carers or the child need an interpreter, signer or any other communication aid;
- Address and contact numbers for parents/carers and other household members;
- Any special needs of the child;
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location;
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Any immediate or impending danger to the child;
- Where appropriate, current location, if known, of the alleged abuser;
- The child's explanation of what happened in their own words;
- Adult's explanation of what happened, if appropriate;
- Any questions that were asked;
- Any significant/important recent events/incidents in the child's or family's life;
- Action taken and people contacted since concern arose, including any information given to or received from parents or carers;
- Date and time of the record and the name and signature of the person recording the incident;
- Information regarding parental awareness of the concern, and the referral to ECIRS.

NB. Information should be based only on facts. Record what the child/young person said rather than assumptions about what they may have meant. Be aware that you may be required to give this information to a Social Worker, the Police or the Court at some future date.

Storing and disposing of records securely

Every organisation that holds records about children or adults must have policies and procedures in place regarding the retention and storage of that information. Clear guidelines for the retention, storage and destruction of safeguarding/ child protection records are also required as part of safeguarding policies and procedures.

- Concerns about the welfare of a child (i.e. incident recording / concerns logs) must be kept separate from all other records relating to the child in your setting.
- Child protection records on paper must be stored in a locked cabinet with access only to those with direct safeguarding responsibility for children in your setting.

Some key points about storage are here:

- A senior person must be nominated to be responsible for holding the key to the locked cabinet in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- If written concerns about a child are kept electronically, then you must ensure that access privileges to this separate file are limited to only those with safeguarding responsibilities in your setting.
- It is essential to ensure that your managers/leadership teams know the arrangements for access to records in the absence of the DSL.

Further Information:

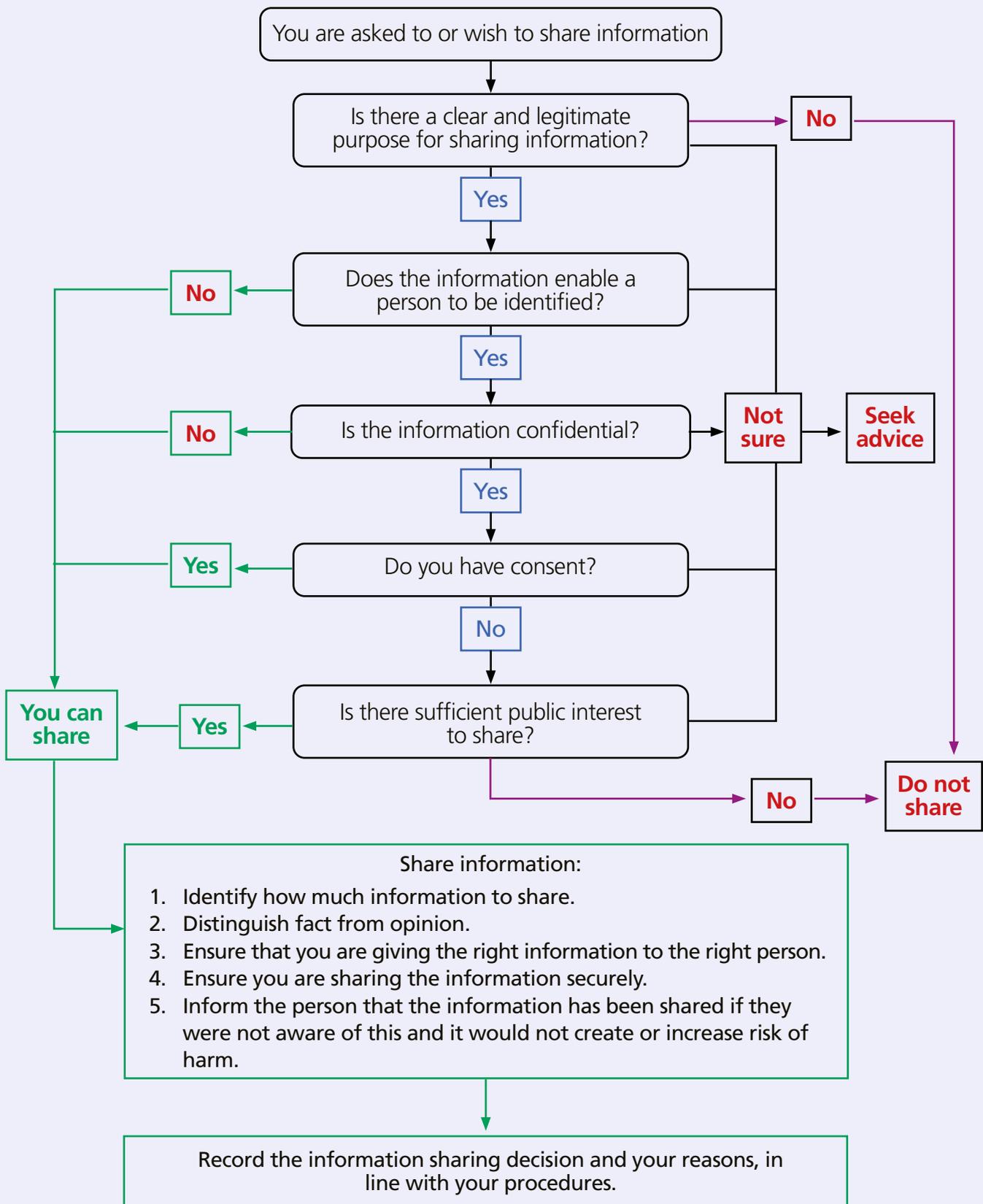
NSPCC Learning have produced short guidance for organisations:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1442/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines.pdf>

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) has detailed guidance available on its website:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection>

Flowchart of key questions for information sharing



Flowchart taken from: Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers July 2018 (HM Government)

See link to document on page 83

6.6 Safeguarding - DO's and DON'Ts

It is vital that all adults working with children understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect. The areas listed below should be used to check if the related policies and procedures are being adhered to in everyday practice.

DO record:

- Always make a record of what happened – the incident or concern, the exact words used by the child where possible (if they disclosed anything) and any immediate actions taken.
- Use your organisation's standard recording log.
- Remember to date and sign the recorded information.

See Incident / Concerns Recording Log Appendix 4

DO report:

- Always report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL. In their absence, contact Ealing Children Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) for advice.
- Ensure every member of staff and volunteer is aware who the DSL and Deputy DSL are in your organisation.
- If you believe a child is in danger – contact the Police immediately!

See Chapter 4 role of DSL and Chapter 6 Dealing with concerns

DO seek advice:

- If you are in doubt about anything you should or should not be doing – seek advice from your DSL, their Deputy, or Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) Service.

Use ECIRS Consultation Line
020 8825 5236

DON'T investigate:

- Don't try to prove or disprove any information – it is not your job and you could be placing the child and yourself at risk.
- Remember, you are not authorised to investigate child protection matters – this is the job of Children's Social Care and the Police.

See Chapter 6 Responding to a child or young person

DON'T ignore concerns or delay your response:

- Don't dismiss concerns, reports, disclosures and/or allegations.
- Don't delay your response – the sooner you act, the easier it is to put support in place and manage any risks/needs

See Chapter 6 Dealing with your concerns

6.7 What to do if your concerns are not about abuse but you think a child or family may need help or support

Working Together to Safeguard Children highlights the importance of Early Help in promoting the welfare of children. Ealing has a range of Early Help services (see below) and works closely with many voluntary and community organisations who provide support to children, young people, and families.

Early Help

If you think that a child/young person or family may need help or support to address an emerging problem or family situation (Level 2 in Triangle), this is where Early Help services come in.

Examples of this might be where a child is suffering due to poverty; where there are difficulties at school or with behaviour; significant parental stress or parent/child relationship breakdown; or where support is needed due to additional needs – mental health, disability, substance misuse etc.

Early Help services aim to give families the right support when issues first arise, to prevent things escalating to the point where a referral to Children's Services is needed. Early Help Services work on the principle of working in partnership with children, young people, and their families through the delivery of consent-based services.

If you think a child, young person or family may benefit from Early Help services you should discuss your concerns with the parent/carer and obtain consent to refer or support them to self - refer if appropriate.

Information about how to refer to particular services e.g. SAFE, Early Start Ealing and Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP) can be found below.

Ealing's Family Information Service (FIS) can provide advice on all services available and can be contacted on:

📞 **020 8825 5588**

🌐 **www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk**

@ **children@ealing.gov.uk**

Ealing's Early Help Services

Supportive Action for Families in Ealing (SAFE)

SAFE is a multi-agency service that works with children, young people, and families with their consent, to find solutions to family situations before they escalate into something more serious. The team consists of psychologists, family therapists, family support workers, social workers, youth workers and domestic violence workers. SAFE offers a range of Parenting programmes and a Counselling service.

How to access SAFE: SAFE is accessed via Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) on Tel: **020 8825 8000**. ECIRS consider whether the referral is suitable to progress to SAFE.

Early Start Ealing is a service for families - pregnant mums, expectant dads, parents, babies, children and young people up to the age of 19, and brings together practitioners from children's centres, early years, health and other specialist services.

Ealing Start Ealing teams work with GPs, midwives, schools, family support services and more to offer services such as breastfeeding support, health visitor services, help with postnatal depression, baby and child clinics, parenting support and groups, support for teenage parents and play and activity-based sessions.

Early Start SEND Inclusion workers are based within Early Start and offer targeted and specialist support to families of children with additional needs including children with social and communication differences. This support can be at home, or at the child's early years setting or both.

How to access Early Start services: A family can speak to their health visitor or early years setting or can contact the Early Start teams directly or via Family Information Service.

Early Start Main Hub: **clcht.ealingadminhub@nhs.net**

Tel: **020 8102 5888** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)

Ealing Family Information Service: Tel: **020 8825 5588** (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm)

Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP)

The Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP) is the process and tool Ealing uses for professionals to support children and young people and their families through the delivery of multi-agency, multi-disciplinary or targeted support. It assesses the child or young person's needs in the context of all the challenges faced by the family as a whole and agrees an action plan with them to address these.

Depending on your role or organisation, you may be an appropriate professional to initiate an EHAP. Families can speak to their health visitor, early years setting or school to find out more or you can get more information on how an EHAP works from the Family Information Service (FIS):

More information on EHAP: **www.ealing.gov.uk/EHAP**

Web: **www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk**

Telephone: **020 8825 5588**

Email: **children@ealing.gov.uk**

If things change.

It is important to remember that even when your concerns are not about a child's safety you should monitor the situation and keep a record of all actions taken to support the child/family, including any observations and discussions with the child/family and/or professionals from your or other agencies.

If you become concerned that the situation has changed and may need a safeguarding rather than Early Help response, you should seek advice from your DSL and contact ECIRS in the usual way. (See 6.2)

Chapter 7

Safe Working Practices

Section A: Management of Staff and Volunteers

1. Recruitment and Selection

Organisations employing staff to work with children/young people should have a consistent and thorough process of recruitment that reduces the risk of selecting those who may pose a risk to children/young people.

In the recruitment of staff, organisations must ensure that:

- Recruitment documentation (application forms and adverts) contains reference to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.
- DBS checks are undertaken where the role is regulated activity. (See next page for DBS guidance and eligibility)
- A minimum of two references are obtained, including one from the applicant's current or most recent employer. Where possible, one reference should be from a person who has experience of the applicant's work with children/young people.
- Wherever possible references should be obtained before the interview so that any issues of concern can be taken up beforehand.
- Referees are asked questions relating to the applicant's suitability to work with children/young people, including whether the applicant has been the subject of any disciplinary sanctions and whether there have been any allegations made against him/her which relate to the safety and welfare of children and the outcome of these.
- Applicants should be asked to bring original or certified copies of documents confirming any necessary or relevant educational and professional qualifications.
- All applicants should bring to the interview evidence of their identity, which could include a full birth certificate, passport or photo card driving license and additionally a document such as a utility bill that verifies the candidate's name and address.
- Applications should be scrutinised for any anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided. Any gaps in the applicant's history should be explored.
- Interviews should be rigorous in addressing safeguarding issues.

The same processes should apply to volunteers who have unsupervised or regular contact with children/young people. However, where volunteering activity is unplanned and does not include unsupervised contact e.g. a one-off day trip, a DBS check is not required. (See DBS – section 2 Chapter 7 for more information).

If you/your organisation is registered with Ofsted

If you/your organisation is registered with Ofsted you should adhere to the **Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage** (1 Sept 2021) . This framework is for all early year's providers in England (maintained schools; non-maintained schools; independent schools (including free schools and academies); all providers on the Early Years Register; and all providers registered with an early years childminder agency (CMA).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

It contains guidance (Section 3) for providers on ensuring that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles and have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable.

Other useful resources:

NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/safer-recruitment>

NCVO: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/checklists-training-and-other-support/specialist-guides/safeguarding-for-volunteer-managers/safer-recruitment-of-volunteers/safer-recruitment-of-volunteers#>

London Safeguarding Children Procedures:

https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/safer_recruit.html

2. DBS Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

DBS Checks

Criminal records checks (DBS checks) are a valuable tool in identifying unsuitable staff however should be seen as only one element of safe recruitment practice. For example, the majority of child sex offenders have no relevant criminal record. It is therefore essential that DBS checks supplement other safe recruitment practices (see section 1. above) including reference checking, exploring any gaps in employment, conducting interviews, induction, supervision or training.

The Role and Remit of DBS

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) allows organisations to check the criminal records of existing and potential trustees, employees and volunteers (over age 16), to check if they are suitable to work with children and adults.

DBS is responsible for:

- Processing requests for criminal records checks (DBS checks, formerly CRB checks).
- Deciding whether it is appropriate for a person to be placed on or removed from a DBS barred list for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (that is a list of people who are barred from working with children or/and adults because they pose too great a risk to them).

When is a DBS needed?

The need for a DBS check will be dependent on the type of work and contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. Not all roles within an organisation, whether undertaken by a paid member of staff or a volunteer, will meet the eligibility for a standard or enhanced check. (see also regulated activity below). Basic DBS checks are available if the criteria to apply for a Standard or Enhanced DBS check are not met.

The minimum age at which someone can be asked to apply for a DBS check is 16 years old.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-eligibility-guidance>

It is a different process to get checks for trustees, staff and volunteers from overseas. See guidance: **<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>**

If an organisation asks about criminal records they must have a policy in place setting out the lawful basis and condition of processing to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the position they are applying for, or are currently undertaking, is listed in the Act (Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975) as an exception to this. Rehabilitation Periods - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Where an exception to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act exists, the post/role is eligible for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks containing the individual's full criminal record (subject to filtering), including spent cautions and convictions.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance

Type of check	Type of information included in the disclosure
Basic check	Unspent convictions and conditional cautions.
Standard check	Spent and unspent convictions, and adult cautions, reprimands, final warnings.
Enhanced check	As above – plus any additional information held locally by police forces that’s reasonably considered relevant to the post applied for and ought to be disclosed.
Enhanced check with children’s and/or adults’ barred list check	As above (enhanced) – plus a check of the appropriate DBS barred list/s (children, adults or both).

Regulated activity

A DBS check must be carried out for those roles carrying out activities that meet the legal definition of regulated activity.

Regulated activity in relation to children means carrying out any of the below activities frequently or with intensity (more than 3 days in a 30 day period or overnight):

Regulated activity in relation to children includes:

- Unsupervised activities (e.g. teaching/instruction, supervision of children).
- Work for a limited range of establishments (e.g. children’s homes).
- Healthcare / relevant personal care (e.g. washing, dressing).
- Regular day-to-day managers of people doing any of the activities listed above.
- Registered child minders and foster carers.

Full details of what is included in the definitions of regulated activity with children and adults are available on the eligibility pages of the DBS website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-workforce-guidance>

Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service

Any organisation that employs someone who is carrying out regulated activity with children and/or adults is a Regulated Activity Provider (RAP). This means the organisation has legal duties under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 to make referrals to DBS in specific circumstances.

A RAP includes employers or voluntary, community, faith & private organisations who are responsible for the management or control of regulated activity and make arrangements for people to work in regulated activity.

This also includes personnel suppliers, which is an employment business, employment agency or an educational institution that makes arrangements with a person with a view to supplying that person to employers to undertake regulated activity.

In Ealing, the LADO will support organisations in cases where a referral to DBS has to be made.

Staff and volunteers should be made aware of the type of behaviours and situations that justify a DBS referral so that they can recognise those behaviours / situations and alert the DSL or the LADO directly.

Two main conditions must be met for a DBS referral:

1. Staff/volunteer has:
 - Engaged in relevant conduct (e.g. conduct that endangers or is likely to endanger a child, for instance smacking a child or coming to work under the influence of alcohol) OR
 - Satisfied the harm test (where an individual may harm a child, cause a child or to be harmed; put a child at risk of harm; attempt to harm a child; or incite another to harm a child). OR
 - Received a caution for, or been convicted of, a relevant offence AND
2. Staff/volunteer has been removed from working with children or would have been removed had he/she not resigned, left etc.

In all cases where you believe a staff member or volunteer has engaged in relevant conduct, has satisfied the harm test or has been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence, you should speak to your DSL or the LADO **immediately**.

How to get DBS Checks

- Basic checks
An individual can apply for a basic check at:
<https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>

(Depending on the role and organisation, the cost of this may be covered so check with recruiter)

- Standard and Enhanced checks
The umbrella body directory is **<https://www.gov.uk/find-dbs-umbrella-body>** can assist in the process and may have a small admin charge (including for volunteers which are normally free).

If an organisation conducts 100 DBS checks a year and above it can then become a registered umbrella body and would not need to approach another organisation.

A short video explaining the process may be helpful:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dbs-disclosure-process-video>

DBS Update Service

DBS offer an Update Service which allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date and employers to check a DBS certificate.

The service is for standard and enhanced DBS checks only.

Organisations need to register for the Update Service and pay a small charge but there's no charge if you're a volunteer.

More information: **<https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>**

Barring

The barring side of DBS provides expert caseworkers who process referrals about individuals who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to children and/or vulnerable groups.

They make decisions about who should be placed on the children's barred list and/or adults' barred list and are prevented by law from working with children or vulnerable groups.

An employer or volunteer manager is breaking the law if they knowingly employ someone in a regulated activity with a group from which they are barred from working.

A barred person is breaking the law if they seek, offer or engage in regulated activity with a group from which they are barred from working, be it paid or voluntary.

For most cases, DBS only has the power to bar a person who is, has been or might in future engage in regulated activity. (See above)

When making barring decisions, DBS will rely on information provided by the referring party as they do not have investigative powers.

Therefore, it is essential that organisations work closely with the LADO to ensure all necessary information is gathered and that any other relevant agencies are involved in the process (e.g. the police).

Useful Contacts

Ealing LADO

Telephone: **020 8825 8930**

Email: **asv@ealing.gov.uk**

DBS

For more information about disclosure and barring visit: **<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>**

Help and support re: DBS queries

Ealing VCFPS organisations can obtain advice on DBS checks from an advisor from the DBS Regional Outreach Service (Greater London). Email: **DBSRegionaloutreach@dbs.gov.uk**

Tel: **0300 105 3081**

The regional advisor can help with:

- Questions about DBS checks, eligibility and regulated activity
- Support with making barring referrals and the "legal duty to refer"
- Delivery of training and workshops directly to your team or network
- Support your training programmes that require DBS information

3. Induction/ Training / Supervision

All staff, both paid and voluntary, should receive an induction as well as ongoing support and supervision throughout their employment/volunteering. They should be provided with basic safeguarding /child protection training in their induction period and opportunities to develop their safeguarding knowledge on an ongoing basis. Paid and voluntary appointments should be conditional on successful completion of a probationary period.

Induction

The induction process should clearly set out the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and expectations and requirements for staff and volunteers to comply with the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures and code of behaviour. This should include being explicit about:

- Role boundaries and professional propriety;
- Individual safeguarding responsibilities, including what to do if concerns about a child's welfare arise;
- Providing the name, contact details and responsibilities of the DSL and their Deputy within the organisation;
- Providing a copy of your organisation's safeguarding children policy statement;
- Providing a copy of your organisation's code of conduct, whistleblowing policy and
- Undertaking relevant training related to the post.

Supervision

The work that both paid staff and volunteers take on can be difficult and demanding. This can have an unexpected impact on staff members themselves, placing them in potentially sensitive or risky situations that even the most experienced person will need help in dealing with.

Supervision is essential in organisations providing services to children/young people, as it allows staff and volunteers to reflect on their own practice and their relationship with children, and to raise concerns or difficulties. It also enables the organisation to ensure that staff and volunteers are always clear about professional standards, boundaries and organisational objectives.

Though supervision may be more formal for paid staff than for volunteers, it should always:

- Follow a standard format.
- Clarify the objectives of your organisation and the expectations on the individual and their role in meeting those objectives.
- Support the individual in fulfilling their role and responsibilities.
- Ensure an anti-discriminatory approach to practice which puts the welfare of children/young people first.
- Be clear about confidentiality and its limits.
- Be appropriately recorded.
- Ensure that standards, content, storage, and status of records are agreed by both parties.
- Be jointly reviewed and evaluated.
- Ensure both parties share responsibility for ensuring supervision is regularly undertaken and outcomes acted upon.
- Ensure both parties share responsibility for being open and honest in raising concerns about practical, developmental or emotional blocks to effective delivery of service, and work together to identify solutions.

Training

All staff and volunteers working with children/young people should have basic safeguarding/child protection training (Level 1) that equips them to recognise and respond to child welfare concerns. This should take place during the induction period.

This training is provided through:

- Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP): www.ealingcpd.org.uk
- EHCVS – EHCVS offers support with safeguarding development, law and guidance, training and updates, safe recruitment and safeguarding policies. Workshops for individual groups within the Borough including customised workshops for individual groups.
www.ehcv.org.uk
- Ealing Early Years Professionals via Early Years CPD <https://earlyyears.ealingcpd.org.uk/cpd/default.asp>

Where that is not immediately possible, due to shortage of available courses, the organisation should make alternative arrangements. This might include providing appropriate guidance/literature, regular safeguarding briefing session or basic safeguarding awareness packs.

Refresher/Enhanced Training

Child protection and safeguarding training should not be a 'one off' experience. Staff and volunteers should undertake refresher courses at least every 2 years post the basic awareness course to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date. Sometimes enhanced or specialist courses will also be beneficial and are provided through the agencies listed above.

4. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

A Code of Conduct sets out your expectations of what people should and shouldn't do and say. This will help raise awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. Being clear about standards of behaviour is an important part of safeguarding.

By having a Code of Conduct in place, all staff and volunteers work under the same rules and have a shared understanding of what is good and what is bad practice. This protects both the children/young people and staff and volunteers.

Further guidance for staff and volunteers on appropriate conduct /behaviour is also set out in Section B.

Below is a suggested list of things to include in your Code of Conduct. Sample Codes of Conduct can be found via the links below. It is not an exhaustive list and can be added to and adapted to suit the needs of your organisation. When developing a Code of Conduct for your organisation, follow these two simple rules:

- Consider the type of activities you provide, age of children and any specific cultural issues of relevance to your work and reflect these in your Code of Conduct.
- Keep it succinct and straightforward; avoid vague statements.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow their organisation's Code of Conduct at all times and must contact the DSL or their Deputy if they have any questions or if they are unclear about any of the points include in the Code.

What you should do with your code of conduct:

- Involve staff, volunteers and service users in creating the code so you can make sure people feel it protects everyone.
- Make sure everyone in the organisation is aware it applies to them and they must follow all its standards.
- Be clear about what will happen if someone doesn't follow it.
- Include specific standards or expectations for roles with particular responsibilities if necessary.
- Keep a record to show that all your staff and volunteers have seen and understood it and agree to follow it.
- Make sure the code allows service users to question staff and volunteers if they think they're doing something wrong.

Suggested list for inclusion in a Code of Conduct

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that your main priority is the child/young person in your care.
- Listen to children and young people and talk to them about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Exercise caution about being alone with a child or young person. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a young person wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret, for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are or leaving a door open. Remember to record your conversation in the log.

- Make sure physical contact is initiated by the child's needs, e.g., for a hug when upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- Set an example to children and young people - dress appropriately, use appropriate language and show respect to your colleagues, parents/carers, children, and young people at all times.
- Seek advice and support from your colleagues, activity leaders or supervisors and your DSL.
- Be careful about forming personal relationships with parents/carers. This could make it difficult to report allegations/suspicions of abuse. Remember your duty of care is to the child/young person.
- Report all concerns, disclosures or allegations (made by children, parents/carers or colleagues) to the DSL or their Deputy.

Staff and volunteers should not:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Kiss or cuddle children or allow children to sit on your lap and do not give them presents.
- Invite a young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a young person you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Add children/young people or their families onto social networking sites. Also be aware of your online profile and check your privacy settings.
- Investigate any concerns or reports. Instead, you should contact your DSL or the Deputy immediately.
- Let allegations, made by anyone, go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon - Talk to your DSL or Manager.

Further Guidance and Samples

Further guidance on creating and using Code's of Conduct can be found at:

NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/behaviour-codes-adults-children>

NCVO (for members): <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/steps-to-a-safer-organisation/policies-and-procedures#section-2>

Breaches of Code of Conduct

Organisations need to actively use their code of conduct to make it effective. It is essential that leaders in the organisation respond quickly when someone is not behaving as expected. This will demonstrate how important the Code of Conduct is and your commitment to keeping everyone safe from harm. When someone breaks the Code of Conduct, action should be taken. This could mean giving all staff and volunteers a gentle reminder or additional training. In some cases, you may need to carry out a formal disciplinary process.

In most organisations, you will need different policies in place for how you deal with unacceptable behaviour from staff, volunteers and the people you work with.

5. Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

All organisations which have employees or volunteers working with children (people in positions of trust) should have clear and accessible policies and procedures, consistent with the London Safeguarding Children Procedures, which explain what should happen when allegations are made about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer.

These should include the requirement to appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead to whom these allegations are reported. It is the responsibility of this DSL to report allegations to, and liaise with, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations against people who work with children.

See Chapter 4.7 about role of DSL and flowchart showing how the process works.

London Safeguarding Children Procedures Guidance on Allegations can be found here:
www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/alleg_staff.html

Section B: Policies, Procedures and Guidance for Safe Working

This chapter focuses on the practices that should be implemented in the day to day running of your organisation's activities with children/young people. By applying these processes, you keep children safer and reduce the risk of allegations against staff/volunteers being made due to poor practice.

Lone working guidance

Working on your own with a child, in your setting or as a childminder, could mean that you are more vulnerable to allegations as there is no one to witness what happens in the setting/home. Because of this, it makes sense to take steps to protect yourself, particularly when many of these steps are simply good practice.

You should:

- Report suspicious injuries or your concerns promptly.
- Keep a diary or daily record. As well as noting all the activities that happen during the day, you can record details of any behaviour that is different in the child.
- Keep a record of any accidents and make sure parents/carers know about them – this makes explanations easier if questions are raised.
- Always keep parents/carers fully informed of things that happen during the day.
- Get parents/carers written permission before photographing or filming children.
- Attend training to update your understanding of child protection.
- Familiarise yourself with these child protection procedures.

If you are a childminder, you should also make sure that everyone else in your home is aware that they are also open to allegations. Explain that, while you are working and have children in your home, some things could be misinterpreted. For example, would it be suitable for your teenage son to “just nip downstairs” in his underwear to get some jeans out of the tumble dryer? Think about how a young child might tell their parents about this. If you are employing another childminder, or an assistant, then follow safe recruitment and employment processes, to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Further Information: This section was taken from “Safeguarding children: A guide for childminders and nannies” by the National Childminding Association (NCMA)

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/childminders/>

<https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/nannies/>

Use of mobile phones guidance

Nearly all mobile phones now have cameras and access to the Internet. Organisations in the VCFPS should set out guidance and policies for their own organisation to address the use of mobile phones by staff, volunteers, and service users whilst engaged in activities. Policies and guidance can reduce the risk of allegations against staff and volunteers and protect children, especially from online abuse. Having a clear policy can also mean staff and volunteers are not distracted from their duties by texting or making personal calls whilst working with children – a potential staff conduct issue.

NB. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states that settings on the Early Years Register should cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in their Safeguarding policy. This should be in line with local safeguarding partnership guidance.

The following are considerations to assist you in putting together a mobile phone policy for your organisation:

- A blanket ban on mobile phones is likely to be unnecessary but organisations /managers should decide on whether and how mobile phones should be used.
- Mobile phones are likely to be needed on outings, but also many settings (such as out of school clubs) operate from community halls, mobile classrooms, etc, where there are no landline facilities, so a mobile phone is the only means of contact.
- The main concern with mobile phones is the possibility that their cameras could be used to take images for abusive practices. A simple ban on taking photographs with anything other than the organisation's camera addresses this issue.
- You could trust your staff to behave professionally and only intervene if you notice someone abusing your trust by making frequent, non-essential calls during work time; or you could have a hard and fast rule that staff cannot use their mobiles at all during working hours. Or you could have something in between, for example staff can use their phones for brief essential calls but are not allowed to carry them around with them and only use during scheduled breaks.
- Consider banning children, young people, and parents from taking photographs on their phones whilst engaged in activities in your organisation.
- Staff should be reminded of their responsibility to report to management any breaches of agreed procedures. Any substantiated breaches of procedure should lead to disciplinary action, according to your setting's disciplinary procedures.

Photographing and recording children

It is important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have visual aids to reinforce their special moments. The majority of occasions when people take photographs of children and young people are valid and do not provide any cause for concern. Unfortunately there are occasions when this is not the case and these are some of the risks associated with photographing children:

- The collection and passing on of images which may be misused.
- The identification of individual children to facilitate abuse.
- The identification of children in vulnerable circumstances.

There are several issues to be aware of:

Permission (verbal or written) of all the people (children and adults) who will appear in a photograph or video image must be obtained before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.

- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.

- If photographs or recordings of children's / youth groups are made and individual children can be easily identified, children's / youth leaders must find out whether any parents do not want their children to be in the photograph.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers. In particular, cases such as a youth group in a small rural area, it might be wise to avoid even using first names since in a small locality these children could be very easily traced.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.

Adult to Child Ratios

When working with groups of children or young people, it is important that the level of supervision is appropriate to their age group and their needs, which may be very specific.

In general, younger children need to be more closely supervised and will require a higher adult to child ratio. The following are the adult to child ratios we would recommend for voluntary organisations, which are based partly on Ofsted guidelines:

If Ofsted Registered -Under 5's		
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
3-5	1	8 (13 if QTS or EYP status)

Over 5's- recommended		
5- 8	1	6
9- 12	1	8
13 - 18	1	10

When deciding on the number of adults required, it is important to bear in mind that these ratios are guidelines only, in certain situations it will be necessary to have a higher number of adults than our recommendations suggest. If, for instance, the children or young people have specific support needs, or a risk assessment identifies behaviour as a potential issue for the group or event, the number of supervising adults will need to be higher.

It may not always be possible to adhere to these recommended ratios. However, every effort should be made to achieve the best level of supervision of children at all times.

Safety tips for outings and trips

Many of you take children out on trips during the school holidays; below are some top tips on keeping children safe whilst out and about:

- Ensure you have written parental permission to take the children on outings.
- Visit each specific location before taking the children, to identify any potential risks. Carry out a full risk assessment and produce an action plan.
- Will you use public transport? What are the risks? Stairs, lifts, escalators, etc.
- Check the public transport timetable.
- Are you using a coach or minibus?
- Do you have a back-up plan in the event of a breakdown?
- Have you got a named driver? Do you have adequate vehicle insurance?
- Consider your adult to child ratios: do you need to exceed the normal ratio requirements?
- Are you able to identify all of your children whilst out and about? Do they wear a coloured tabard/ vest, hat, coloured strip etc.?
- Can the children identify you if they get lost? Do you wear a uniform?
- Is there a lost child point?
- Check the weather report: are the children dressed appropriately?
- Create sticky labels with the organisation's mobile number on for each child.

Essential items to take with you:

- First aid kit.
- Contact numbers of parents.
- Mobile phone (fully charged).
- Register (also remember to leave a copy with a member of staff who is not going on the trip. Make sure that the parents/carers have this person's details in case they need them to contact you in an emergency).
- List of allergies if the children have any.
- EpiPen, asthma inhaler or other medication.

Although this may seem a long list, it is necessary to ensure that you are prepared for any situation to ensure the children are kept safe. By doing these checks you and the children will have a stress-free fun outing.

Reducing the risk of children going missing

Discovering that a child in your care has gone missing is one of the most traumatic situations staff and volunteers may have to deal with. Groups/organisations must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Legal requirements specific to premises and security are:

- The premises - both indoors and outdoors - must be safe and secure.
- Providers must only release children into the care of individuals named by the parent/carer.
- Providers must ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised.

Providers must take steps to prevent intruders from entering the premises.

The safety checklist provided below should help you evaluate your security systems to determine future improvements, and form part of your regular self-evaluation processes.

Safety Checklist

- All gates and doors into the setting are well secured and child proof.
- Visitors cannot enter your premises unnoticed.
- Children cannot leave your premises unnoticed.
- All staff and children are signed in, with actual times recorded for arrival and departure.
- All visitors including prospective parents sign your visitors' book, and are asked for proof of identity.
- There is a list of adults other than parents who are authorised to collect children.
- Notices are displayed to reinforce security where necessary.
- There is a system for monitoring children e.g. headcounts.
- Ratios are always maintained.
- Children are adequately supervised.
- Regular risk assessments are carried out.
- A robust missing child procedure is in place, and all staff are inducted into that procedure.

It is good practice to regularly check all entry and exit points. Wooden doors and gates for example can expand or contract with changes in the weather making a gate that could shut securely in the summer unable to shut in the winter.

Regularly review your procedures for recording all arrivals and departures, and monitor the whereabouts of other users of the premises.

Health and Safety Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Everyone in your organisation (children/young people, staff/volunteers, parents/carers, trustees etc.) has a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures.

With regards to working with children and young people, risk assessments must be undertaken for any activities/excursions you are planning. Factors such as behaviour of children/young people, weather conditions and the medical needs of any children/young people must be considered and a plan put into place to deal with any problems that may arise.

Also, some organisations recruiting staff and volunteers may need the person to start before their Enhanced DBS check has come through (as this can take several weeks). If this is the case then a risk assessment **MUST** be done to ensure that the children and young people in your care are protected. This includes ensuring that the staff member is not left alone with the children/young people and that their references, identity and qualifications have been thoroughly checked.

The five steps to assessing risk are:

1. Identify the hazards/risks
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
4. Record your findings and implement necessary changes
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

By not assessing risks, accidents and incidents can occur that can ruin lives and affect your organisation not least because if insurance costs increase if you have had to claim or not least because go to court. You are legally required to assess the risks in your workplace so that you can put plans in place to control risks.

Useful Resources:

For more information on how to assess risks visit the HSE website:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/steps-needed-to-manage-risk.htm>

See also Model Risk Assessment Template at Appendix 3 and Guidance on producing a Health and Safety Policy (page 109).

Creating and managing a safe online environment within your organisation

It is the responsibility of the DSL and the management to ensure your organisation has an online safety policy and clear rules regarding the use of the internet, social media, mobile phones and any other modern technology tools within the workplace.

The key rules that staff and volunteers should follow are:

- Avoid using personal phones for professional business.
- Do not take photographs of children on your mobile phone or personal camera.
- Do not accept or invite children or their families as 'friends' or contacts on social networking sites.
- Ensure your personal profile on websites such as Facebook is not visible to 'strangers' and that it does not contain any inappropriate content.
- Make sure all children and young people are aware of the meaning and importance of professional boundaries and how they impact on the child/young person – professional relationship.

Supporting children and young people to stay safe online

This can be achieved by:

- Educating children and young people about the potential risks and ways of avoiding/mitigating them.
- Raising awareness of issues such as grooming, cyberbullying, technology-based sexual exploitation and pornography.
- Providing children and young people with information about expert organisations and sources of help and advice.
- Supporting parents and carers to effectively engage with, understand and monitor their children's access to and use of internet and help their children stay safe online.

Key messages for children and young people:

- Know who you're talking to, as people aren't always who they say they are.
- Learn how to use and set security settings across a range of devices.
- Keep your personal information private.
- Know how to report on sites and services you are using.
- Implications of owning a mobile and location services.
- Understand your digital footprint.
- Implications of self-taken images and video.
- Future implications of actions of online behaviour.

For dedicated resources for professionals, parents/carers, children aged 5-7, 8-10, 11-13 and 14+, visit CEOP ThinkUknow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Reporting Online safety issues:

Report concerns about a child to ECIRS in the usual way (see 6.2)

Grooming or other illegal behaviour: Visit www.ceop.gov.uk In an emergency dial **999**

Criminal content online such as child sexual abuse images or criminally obscene adult content, should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk/report

Online scams: Report financially motivated scams to Action Fraud online at www.actionfraud.police.uk

Online safety incident raised by child / young person or member of staff

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record in the incident /concerns log (see Appendix 6).

Is the child at immediate or imminent risk?

YES Child is at **IMMEDIATE** risk, e.g. going to meet someone they have met online
Contact Police on 999

YES Child is at **IMMINENT** risk, e.g. planning to meet someone they have met online
Contact ECIRS on 020 8825 8000

NO

Inappropriate activity or material
(Bullying, adult content, peer related threats/harassment, hacking, creating fake accounts, circulating offensive content such as messages/photos/images, websites promoting issues such as self-harming and extremist behaviour found or suspected)

Illegal/harmful activity or material
(Grooming, online sexual exploitation, sexually explicit material shared with a child e.g. images/chat/conduct, child abuse images, high end cyberbullying, sexting found or suspected)

DSL action re: child or staff/volunteer

DSL action re: child or staff/volunteer

CHILD

- Inform parents/carers
- Report to internet site if appropriate
- Log incident and keep any evidence e.g. screenshots & emails
- Refer for counselling if necessary

STAFF/VOLUNTEER

- Report to manager
- Report to LADO (within 1 day)
- Log incident and keep any evidence report to police if necessary
Follow disciplinary procedures

CHILD

- Inform parents/carers
- Keep any evidence e.g. screenshots & emails
- Refer to ECIRS
- Refer for counselling if necessary
- Report:
If Illegal Activity
Report to Police
If Illegal Content
Report to Internet Watch Foundation
Child at Risk
Report to CEOP
www.ceop.gov.uk

STAFF/VOLUNTEER

- Report to manager
- Report to LADO (within 1 day)
- Log incident and keep any evidence e.g. screenshots and e-mails
- Follow disciplinary Procedures
- Report:
If Illegal Activity
Report to Police
If Illegal Content
Report to Internet Watch Foundation
www.iwf.org.uk

- Debrief on online safety incident and lessons learnt
- Review policies, procedures, technical tools and monitoring methods
- Review risk assessment to prevent future incidents
- Run awareness raising sessions for children and parents/carers

Insurance

All organisations need to take out insurance.

When taking out insurance, you need to make sure that it covers the risks that your organisation may face e.g. being sued over a child becoming injured in your setting.

The only way you are able to do this is assess all the possible risks that your organisation may face. (see Health and Safety Risk Assessments page 105) Below are some key points that you should consider before taking out insurance:

- Is the insurance compulsory or required to meet the needs of funding agreements?
- What risks are covered by the policy?
- What risks are excluded?
- What are the conditions of the policy? For example, do door locks need to be of a specific standard?

General guidance on taking out insurance for voluntary and community sector organisations

- Make sure that you complete any forms related to insurance applications or claims with great care and with complete honesty. Any significant information that has been missed out or falsified could result in your insurance being rendered invalid.
- Your insurance may well rely on you having specific arrangements (such as child protection policies and procedures, adequate health and safety provision, or security measures) in place. Make sure that you have checked this out and that you have done what you need to do to make sure that you are covered.
- Check out the small print to make sure that your insurance covers your needs and is sufficient. If there is anything that you are unsure of, ask before you commit to it.
- Keep all your insurance documents together in a safe place. As a minimum, you should keep hold of the certificate and the schedule for each insurance type, plus the contact details in case you need to make a claim.
- Review your insurance regularly and audit it against your needs.
- Use an insurance broker or shop around to get the best deal. Talk to other groups/ organisations or your umbrella group to see what they have found useful.
- If your group is part of a national charity, check with your head office to see whether the insurance you are considering is already arranged or whether your project can be part of a corporate purchase.
- Some types of insurance are a legal requirement. Others are a matter of choice. It is important to be adequately insured, but it is equally important to be proportionate and not to waste money on insurance policies that are unnecessary.

The most common and probably the most important types of insurance cover are:

- Public liability insurance
- Employer's liability insurance
- Professional indemnity insurance
- Buildings and contents insurance

Further Information:

NCVO Knowhow: <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/tools-resources/volunteers-and-the-law/insurance/insurance#>

Gov.uk: www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-insurance-cc49/charities-and-insurance

Section C: Developing your organisation's Safeguarding Children Policies

Introduction and Minimum Expectations

Every VCFPS organisation must have policies and procedures in place to help it manage safeguarding well. Policies and procedures should set out what your organisation will do to keep children, young people, and adults safe, and cover all the key risks for the groups you work with and the activities you do.

This section of the Yellow Book contains brief guidance on developing key safeguarding policies. Sample policy templates can be found in the Appendices and links to other resources included in this section.

Organisations adopting the Yellow Book and meeting minimum expectations (below) can demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding children and young people in line with Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership and regulatory frameworks.

Organisations should have in place the following policies and procedures as a **minimum**.

1. Safeguarding Policy Statement (Appendix 1)
2. Health and Safety Policy (See page 112 and Appendix 5)
3. Bullying Policy (See page 113 and Appendix 7)
4. Whistleblowing Policy (See page 114 and Appendix 8)
5. Other safe working procedures and guidance as in Chapter 7 of this Yellow Book including a code of conduct.

The Safeguarding Checklist (Appendix 2) should be used to establish whether your organisation meets minimum expectations.

Advice and support on meeting minimum requirements can be obtained via Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS) and Young Ealing Foundation (YEF).

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The purpose of a safeguarding policy statement is to show clearly that your organisation takes the safety of children and young people seriously, and that it expects its staff, volunteers, and trustees to do so too. You should also provide parents/carers (and young people as relevant) with a copy of the policy statement so that they know what to expect from you. The policy should be accessible to everyone's needs (language /etc.).

a) Why does your VCFPS organisation need a safeguarding policy statement?

- This is a legal requirement (Section 11 of the Children Act 2004).
- To effectively protect children from harm and abuse and to promote their welfare.
- To set out clear procedures and guidance for all staff and volunteers to follow.
- To help parents/carers make informed decisions about trusting you with their children.
- To make it harder for risky/unsuitable individuals to get access to children and young people.
- To evidence your organisation's commitment to safeguarding to the Local Authority, the Charity Commission, funders, commissioners and other strategic partners and stakeholders.

b) What should the safeguarding policy statement contain?

- The purpose of the policy and a statement of commitment to safeguarding and child protection.
- How in broad terms you will put the policy into action.
- Scope of the policy/who does it apply to e.g. staff, trustees, volunteers etc.
- Underlying principles (e.g. welfare of the child is paramount, working in partnership).
- Briefly state the main legislation and guidance that supports the policy.
- Details of your DSL and their Deputy (name, job/role title, contact details).
- Date when the policy was adopted and review arrangements (how often you plan to review it).

The main safeguarding policy statement will need to be linked to other policies and procedures that set out what adults within the organisation must do to keep children safe. Organisations adopting this Yellow Book can refer to the relevant section of the book to comply with this expectation if no other policies or procedures are in place. The policy statement should include:

- how staff and volunteers should respond to concerns about a child's wellbeing
- how the organisation will respond to allegations of abuse made against a child
- how the organisation will respond to allegations of abuse made about an adult who works or volunteers for your organisation
- how the organisation will meet health and safety requirements
- how the organisation will safely recruit the right people to work/volunteer and provide training, supervision, and support
- how it will run a safe environment and activities to minimise risk of accidents or incidents
- a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers
- how the organisation will prevent and respond to bullying
- a whistleblowing policy
- how the organisation will share information appropriately with other agencies
- how the organisation will store confidential safeguarding and child protection records

See Model Policy at Appendix 1

REMEMBER:

A good safeguarding children policy statement:

- Is clear
- Communicates the key messages
- Reflects the particular nature and needs of your project
- Contains all core elements (see above)
- Does not contain professional jargon or vague/unclear statements that are subject to individual interpretation

Your staff and volunteers must be able to understand and follow your policy in order to effectively safeguard children!

Health & Safety Policy

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and others who may be affected by the actions of your organisation.

Health and safety legislation applies to everyone involved in your organisation: employees, volunteers, beneficiaries, service users, trustees and visitors. To keep up to date with latest guidance it is recommended you visit the website of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) where you can also find sample policies.

In brief the guidance sets out that organisations and individuals should make sure:

- You recognise and act upon all health and safety issues.
- You take appropriate actions to minimise any avoidable risks.
- The venue complies with appropriate statutory and regulatory standards.
- Responsibilities for health and safety related issues are clearly defined and designated.

You are responsible for health and safety regardless of where your organisation runs from e.g., a classroom, a sports pitch, a tuition centre, a residential setting, etc.

You should have a clear health and safety policy in place. This should:

- Assess the risks to any staff, volunteers, and visitors to the setting for the activity.
- Introduce measures to manage those risks (risk management).
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements and facilities for providing first aid are in place.
- Tell any employees about the risks, and measures to be taken to manage the risks.
- Ensure that relevant training is given to employees and volunteers on health and safety.

You should ensure the following measures are in place, reviewed yearly and kept up-to-date:

- A site risk assessment of the venue (access, lighting, fire), surrounding area, and equipment.
- Appropriate insurance cover, such as employers' liability insurance. Professional indemnity insurance and personal liability as well as buildings insurance may be equally important depending on your setting.
- A safe surrounding area for children being dropped off or collected by their parents/carers.
- A fire safety management policy.
- A fire safety and evacuation plan, tailored to the premises (including clearly marked escape routes and exits, and a safe meeting point).
- Awareness among all staff, volunteers, parents, carers and children on exit procedures in the event of an emergency.
- If you rent a venue, for example a church hall, you should be familiar with the venue's policies and procedures such as fire and evacuation policies. Note that if you rent a venue you are still responsible for health and safety matters as well as child protection.

More information:

NCVO: www.ncvo.org.uk - search for health and safety

Health and Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk

A sample Health and Safety Policy template can be found at Appendix 5

Bullying Policy

The harmful impact of bullying on the wellbeing of children and young people can be serious and prolonged and have a big impact on a child or young person's wellbeing.

As is the case with child protection and safeguarding, we all have a part to play in dealing with it, including the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

Organisations should develop policies and practices to cover prevention and response to bullying and provide support and guidance to staff and volunteers on how to recognise signs and support children and others.

The NCVO Standards document has a helpful chapter on Preventing and Responding to Bullying which includes advice for organisations about:

Prevention

- have a written anti-bullying policy
- have a code of behaviour that sets out 'dos and don'ts' on how to behave
- have regular discussions about bullying with the children and young people they work with
- have a policy and procedure for complaints

Response

- ensure that staff, volunteers, families, children, young people and carers can easily access information about how the organisation deals with bullying
- have a written anti-bullying procedure for responding to bullying
- ensure that their policies and procedures address cyberbullying.

NSPCC safeguarding standards and guidance (England)

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/safeguarding-child-protection-standards>

A model bullying policy can be found at **Appendix 7** - adapted from a template available on NSPCC learning: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/>

The NSPCC also offer one specifically for Sports Organisations:

www.uefa-safeguarding.eu/sample-anti-bullying-policy-nspcc

Whistleblowing Policy

What is whistleblowing?

Sometimes whistleblowing is called 'speaking up' or 'raising a concern'. It's about making sure if you or someone else sees something wrong, it's reported to the right people. Whistleblowing policies protect your organisation, everyone within it and people you work with.

Organisations should have a whistleblowing policy, so harm can be identified early, action can be taken, and everyone can be safer.

Your policy

You can either have a standalone policy or include whistleblowing in your general safeguarding policy. It should be written in plain English so all staff can understand the policy and raise concerns as soon as they are worried.

The document should cover:

- How to raise whistleblowing concerns internally and externally
- Protection and confidentiality
- How internally raised concerns will be investigated, recorded and dealt with
- How you will let people who raised a concern know the outcome

An example Whistleblowing Policy can be found at Appendix 8.

Chapter 8

Contacts and Resources

Key contacts in Ealing

Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS)

ECIRS is Ealing Children's Services 'front door' for all concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or young person:

☎ **020 8825 8000** (ECIRS operate Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Out of hours call the **Emergency Duty Team (EDT)** on the same number

In an emergency call the Police on **999**

ECIRS Referral Form and Guidance:

Making a referral to ECIRS / MASH - search on **www.ealingscp.org.uk**

Email for referrals: **ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk**

ECIRS Consultation Line

Professionals in need of advice or who are unsure about whether to make a referral to ECIRS can contact the Consultation Line on ☎ **020 8825 5236** (Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Ealing Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

For advice and reporting of Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

Ealing LADO

☎ **020 8825 8930**

Email: **asv@ealing.gov.uk**

Contextual Safeguarding Team

Consultative support for Ealing professionals seeking to help a young person who may be at risk of harm from outside their family. Advice on Vulnerabilities Screening Tool.

Email: **vulnerabilitiestool@ealing.gov.uk**

Ealing Family Information Service (FIS)

For information on all services for children and families

Web: **www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk**

☎ **020 8825 5588**

Email: **children@ealing.gov.uk**

Local Offer site: **www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk**

Early Help Assessment and Plan

Web: **www.ealing.gov.uk/EHAP**

☎ **020 8825 5588**

Email: **ehap@ealing.gov.uk**

Early Start Ealing (0-19)

Early Start Main Hub: **clcht.ealingadminhub@nhs.net**

☎ **020 8102 5888** (Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Key contacts in Ealing

SAFE - Supportive Action for Families in Ealing

SAFE are accessed via a referral to ECIRS on ☎ **020 8825 8000**

ESCAN - Ealing Service for Children with Additional Needs

Ealing Service for Children with Additional Needs (ESCAN) is a multi-agency service run by the NHS and Ealing Council for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Web: www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk

Integrated Youth Services (Youth Justice; Connexions; Youth Services)

☎ **020 8825 6524**

Web: www.youngealing.co.uk

Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP)

Web: www.ealingscp.org.uk

☎ **020 8825 9618**

Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS)

Web: www.ehcv.org.uk

Email: info@ehcv.org.uk

Young Ealing Foundation

Web: www.youngealingfoundation.org.uk

Ealing Council Adults' Services (including Safeguarding)

Ealing Social Care Advice and Referral Centre

☎ **020 8825 8000**

Email: ssadultcallcentre@ealing.gov.uk

For information and to report concerns about an adult at risk

Directories of Organisations

Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service (EHCVS) have an online database with many organisations working in the sector in Ealing. It can be searched via category.

<https://ehcvs.org.uk/databasesearch>

Young Ealing Foundation have a directory of activities available for children and young people in Ealing.

www.younealingfoundation.org.uk/directory

Ealing Family Information Service has an online directory with information on a range of services available to children, young people and families in Ealing.

It contains Ealing's **Local Offer** site which offers information, advice and guidance on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services and support within the London Borough of Ealing as well as some key national organisations.

020 8825 5588
(Mon - Fri, 9am to 1pm)
children@ealing.gov.uk
www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk
www.ealinglocaloffer.org.uk



The FIS have produced a Guide to Family Support Services - available here: www.ealingfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

Young Ealing

For information about services in Ealing for young people - including Connexions, Youth Projects, Youth Justice and more.

www.younealing.co.uk

CarePlace

This directory (produced by the Commissioning Alliance) contains information about care and community services in London and beyond. You can narrow search to Ealing specific services. It covers services for adults as well as families.

www.careplace.org.uk

References and resources

Throughout this book there are links to further sources of information. This page highlights a few of the most commonly used ones. See also page 12 of this book for additional sources of guidance and information.

Policies, Procedures and Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance:
www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk

London Safeguarding Children Procedures:
www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk

Keeping children safe in education: **www.keepingchildrensafeineducation.co.uk**

Ealing's Thresholds of Need Guide: **www.ealing.gov.uk** (search for Thresholds of Need)

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Links to Forms, toolkits and resources

Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS) Referral form and guidance:
Visit **www.ealingscp.org.uk** and look under Professionals tab

Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP) resources: **www.ealing.gov.uk/EHAP**

Neglect Toolkit: Search on **www.ealingscp.org.uk**

Vulnerabilities Screening Tool and Vulnerable and Exploited Children and Young People Guidance: Search on **www.ealingscp.org.uk**

Barnardo's Domestic Violence Risk Identification Matrix: Search on
www.barnardos.org.uk

Commonly Used Acronyms /Abbreviations

Below is a list of acronyms and a glossary of terms that you may come across around children and young people’s services in Ealing. Whilst this is not an exhaustive list of all terminology and acronyms it is a selection of some of the more commonly used ones.

ASV	Allegations against Staff and Volunteers	ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advocate
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service	LA	Local Authority
CAIT	Child Abuse Investigation Team	LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	LGBTQ+	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning and “plus,” which represents other sexual identities
CIN	Child in Need	MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
CFA	Child and Family Assessment	MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
CLA	Child Looked After	NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
CP	Child Protection	NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training (Young People)
CPA	Child Protection Advisor	NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse	OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	RISE	Recovery Intervention Services Ealing
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation	SAFE	Supportive Action for Families in Ealing
CSPR	Child Safeguarding Practice Review	SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
CYP	Children and Young People	VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	TAF	Team Around the Family
DfE	Department for Education	VCFPS	Voluntary Community Faith and Private Sector
DA	Domestic Abuse	UNCRC	United National Convention on the Rights of the Child
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	YEF	Young Ealing Foundation
ECIRS	Ealing Children’s Integrated Response Service	YJS	Youth Justice Service.
EHCVS	Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service		
ESCP	Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership		
FIS	Family Information Service		
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation		
FMU	Forced Marriage Unit		
HBV	‘Honour’ Based Violence		
HO	Home Office		
HV	Health Visitor		
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Adviser/Advocate		

Key Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children; peer on peer.
Child	The legal definition for a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in a secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018). Please note that there are responsibilities placed on some organisations for children transitioning into adulthood which go beyond the age of 18 e.g. young people with disabilities or Children Looked After (CLA).
Child in need	Under Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989, a child is 'in need' if, without the provision of local authority services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development; • His or her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired; or • He or she has a disability.
Child protection	The process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It is a part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children.
Children's Social Care	Within local authorities, Children's Social Care staff (including social workers) act as the main point of contact for children with welfare concerns. They may be contacted directly by children, parents or family members seeking help, by concerned friends and neighbours, or by professionals and others from statutory and voluntary organisations. Where a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, children's social care staff have lead responsibility for undertaking an assessment of the child's needs, the parents' capacity to meet these needs and to keep the child safe and promote their welfare, and of the wider family and environmental circumstances.
Contextual Safeguarding	Is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families e.g. child sexual and criminal exploitation.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	There must be at least one person in each organisation who has responsibility for child protection issues and provides child protection advice to other staff and volunteers. (A variety of names have been used for this role including Nominated Safeguarding Person)
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)	The DBS is designed to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. The DBS carries out criminal record checks for all prospective staff (previously known as CRB checks).
Ealing Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCP)	A multi agency partnership bringing together the three Safeguarding Partners - the Local Authority, the CCG and the Police - together with representatives of other agencies that work with children, to make safeguarding arrangements which respond to the needs of children in Ealing.

Key Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Grooming	Grooming is “a process by which a person prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for the abuse of the child” (Craven, 2006). Grooming can happen anywhere, including: online; in organisations in public spaces (also known as street grooming). Children and young people can be groomed by a stranger or by someone they know – such as a family member, friend or professional.
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	A senior member of staff in the Local Authority Children’s Services who should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has: behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against children; behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children. The LADO helps co-ordinate information sharing with the correct people and provides guidance and advice on steps such as suspension or referral to the Barring Service.
Parent/Parental Responsibility	Parent or carer, including a person with a Special Guardianship Order or Residence Order. The term includes foster parents and the local authority for children in care.
Prevent	All schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
Adults who pose a Risk to children	Description of an adult (or child) who has been identified (by probation services /youth offending teams, police or health services, individually or via the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) as posing an ongoing risk to a child.
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	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 life chances.
Significant harm	A situation where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, a degree of physical, sexual and/or emotional harm (through abuse or neglect), which is so harmful that there needs to be compulsory intervention by child protection services. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold level that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
Staff	Any individual/s working in a voluntary, employed, professional or unqualified capacity, including foster carers and approved adopters.
Third sector	A term used for voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1. Model Safeguarding Children Policy statement

Introduction

(Name of organisation) provides (give brief description of organisation and activities you carry out).

Statement of commitment

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.

We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.

At [name of your organisation] we aim to create an environment that is safe, and we are committed to doing everything in our power to protect children, promote their welfare and support their families.

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Effectively safeguard children and promote their rights and welfare.
- Provide all staff and volunteers with clear rules to follow.
- Make all staff and volunteers aware of what is expected of them in terms of their approach, behaviour and actions.
- Evidence to [name of your organisation] users, parents and carers, the local community, partner organisations, the local authority and funding and commissioning bodies that [name of your organisation] is committed to safeguarding.

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all [name of your organisation] staff and volunteers, including trustees, sessional workers, students on work placements and anyone working on behalf of [name of your organisation].

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the process of:

- 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 life chances.

Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Legislative framework

At [name of your organisation] we recognise our legal responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare. We will therefore act within the framework set by the Children Act 1989 and The Children Act 2004. We will also follow the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance (and any updates). As our safeguarding procedures, we adopt the Ealing Safeguarding Children Guidance 2022 (the Yellow Book).

Underlying principles and practices

At (name of your organisation) we will safeguard children by:

- Following the Yellow Book in our day-to-day work.
- Appointing a Designatde Safeguarding Lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding.
- Listening to children and young people and respecting and valuing them at all times.
- Challenging discrimination and promoting the right to equal protection regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, faith, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social or immigration status or any other element of diversity.
- Providing effective management to staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring that all necessary checks are made and safe recruitment good practice guidelines are followed.
- Responding to both child protection and non-child protection concerns immediately.
- In cases of doubt, questions or need for guidance, always seeking advice by calling ECIRS (**020 8825 8000**), or, in cases involving staff/volunteers, the Ealing Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on **020 8825 8930** or **asv@ealing.gov.uk**
- Working in partnership with children, their parents and carers, members of the local community and local statutory and voluntary organisations.
- Adhering to the attached Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers at all times.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

Details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their Deputy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for [name of your organisation] is:

Name: _____

Job/role title: _____

Contact tel.: _____

Email: _____

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for [name of your organisation] is:

Name: _____

Job/role title: _____

Contact tel: _____

Email: _____

Review arrangements

(Name of your organisation) will review this policy annually. In cases of relevant legal or procedural changes, we will review this policy accordingly.

This policy statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees/Executive Committee (delete as appropriate) on: (Date).

This policy was last reviewed on: _____ (date)

Signed: _____

(this should be signed by the most senior person with responsibility for safeguarding in your organisation, for example the safeguarding lead on your board of trustees).

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2: Safeguarding Checklist

1) Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Has a DSL been appointed in your organisation?				
Has a Deputy DSL been appointed in your organisation for when the DSL is unavailable?				
Do the DSL and Deputy DSL meet the eligibility criteria?				
Are contact details for the DSL and Deputy DSL included in your Safeguarding policy document and displayed in staff and service user areas?				
Is it clear to all staff and volunteers who the DSL is and what their role is?				
Does the DSL/Deputy DSL have a clear understanding of and implement all safeguarding matters following local (Yellow book) and national guidance?				
2) Policy, Procedures and Training	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Does the organisation have a Safeguarding / Child Protection policy statement?				
Does the organisation have a Code of conduct/behaviour for staff and volunteers?				
Does your organisation have a Health and Safety Policy in place?				
Does your organisation have a Whistleblowing Policy in place?				
Does your organisation have a Bullying Policy in place?				
Are staff and volunteers familiar with the Yellow book and other key safeguarding guidance?				
Are these easily available?				
Have all staff and volunteers completed an 'Introduction to Safeguarding/Child Protection' Training?				
3) Safeguarding friendly environment	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Is safeguarding included in all staff and volunteer inductions?				
Is safeguarding regularly discussed in team meetings and supervision?				
Do you have arrangements in place for staff and volunteers to undertake further safeguarding training to ensure they develop their knowledge and skills?				
Is information about sources of support for children and families in Ealing available in your organisation's service user areas? (e.g. leaflets and posters)				

4) Children & young people	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Is the ethos of your organisation one in which children and young people are always valued, respected, listened to and taken seriously?				
Do staff and volunteers create and use opportunities to encourage children and young people to communicate about issues that concern them?				
Is appropriate support available to children and young people, including any who are at particular risk or who have disclosed abuse?				
5) Information to parents/carers	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Is information about the organisation's role in safeguarding children/young people available to parents/carers?				
Are concerns about children/young people shared and discussed with parents/carers (unless doing so would place a child/young person at risk of harm)?				
6) Record Keeping	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Is there a system for staff to log their concerns and incidents with the DSL?				
Does the DSL have an established system for recording and storing confidential safeguarding information?				
7) Recruitment and selection of staff	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Does your organisation have procedures for safe recruitment including DBS checks? (see Chapter7)				
8) Allegations against staff and volunteers	Yes	If Yes, give date last reviewed	No	If No, what action are you going to take to address the gap and by when?
Are procedures in place regarding what to do when an allegation of abuse has been made against a member of staff or volunteer?				
Is it clear who Ealing's LADO is and when and how they should be contacted?				
Has your organisation been pro-active in making arrangements to reduce the likelihood of allegations against staff, for example through appropriate policies on physical intervention, intimate care and professional behaviour?				

APPENDIX 3: Incident / Concern Recording Log

Section 1: Details of the child and their parent/or carer/s		
Name of child/young person:		
Gender:	Date of birth:	
Ethnicity:	Religion:	Childs first language:
Name of parent/carer(s):		
Home address (including postcode) and address of parent/or carer/s, if different to child:		
Communication needs (interpreter/signer/other):		
Additional Needs/Disability:		
Sibling info:		
Section 2: Your details		
Your name:	Your position:	Date and Time of Incident:
Section 3: Your report		
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns	If responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name and position within the organisation:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else		
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates or other relevant information (such as a description of any injuries, whether you are recording fact, opinion or hearsay):		

The child / young person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how:

Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused the incident / injury including, where possible, their name, address and date of birth (or approximate age):

Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident(s):

Your signature:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) received information

Date:

Time:

DSL's signature:

Appendix 4: Model Risk Assessment Template*

Model Risk Assessment

What is the hazard / risk?	Who might be harmed or affected?	RAG rating   	What action is needed to remove or manage the risk?	Who is responsible for taking action and by when?	Tick, sign and date when action had been taken

Red Amber Green (RAG) rating

Probability	Impact	Probability + Impact = RAG rating
1 = Very Unlikely	1 = Insignificant	   1-3 Not Serious 4-6 Serious 7-8 Very Serious
2 = Unlikely	2 = Fairly Serious	
3 = Possible	3 = Serious	
4 = Likely	4 = Very Serious	

Date of Risk Assessment:
Date of review:

* This template will be provided in landscape format separately

APPENDIX 5: Health and Safety Template

Part 1: Statement of intent

This is the health and safety policy statement of:

Our health and safety policy is to:

Signed

Date

Print name

Review date

Part 2: Responsibilities for Health & Safety

This is the health and safety policy statement of:

1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety:

2. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice:

3. To ensure health and safety standards are maintained/improved, the following people have responsibility in the following areas:

4. All employees should:

- co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed above).

Appendix 6: Sample ECIRS Referral Form*



Referral Form



Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (ECIRS)

If you are a professional and are worried about a child and would like to discuss your concerns, you can contact the ECIRS Consultation Line to obtain help or advice.

ECIRS Consultation Line for Professionals Telephone: 020 8825 5236 Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm

If at any time you become concerned that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm – **call ECIRS immediately on 020 8825 8000 (24-hour number)**. After office hours calls to this number will go the Emergency Duty Team (EDT).

NB: Where there is an urgent and immediate need to protect a child, dial **999** to contact the Police.

Date Completion of Form

1) Child / Young Person Details

Forename Surname

DOB or expected date of delivery Gender Male Female Other Unknown

Address Postcode

NHS Number

Immigration Status (Right to remain in UK) Yes No Unknown Pending

Mobile Email

Interpreter Required Yes No First Language

School, Nursery or College name and Postcode

Does the child/young person have an additional need, disability or significant health issue?

Yes No Unknown If Yes add details below

Does the child / young person have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Yes No Unknown

Is there an Early Help Assessment and Plan (EHAP)? If yes attach the EHAP form to this referral Yes No Unknown

Is the child/young person a Child Looked After? Yes No Unknown

If Yes name of responsible authority

Child / Young Person Ethnicity

Asian or Asian British British Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Any other Asian background*

Black or Black British Caribbean African Any other Black background*

Chinese or other ethnic group Chinese not given Arab Any other ethnic group*

Mixed White & Black Caribbean White & Black African
 White & Asian Any other mixed background*

White White British White Irish Gypsy/Roma Traveller of Irish heritage
 Any other White background*

Not Given *If other please specify:

If at any time you become concerned that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm call ECIRS immediately on 020 8825 8000 (24-hour number).

* You can find page 2, 3 and 4 of the referral form here:

www.ealingscp.org.uk or by contacting ECIRS on **020 8825 8000** or email **ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk**

APPENDIX 7: Sample Bullying Policy

Sample anti-bullying policy statement

An example of the key points that should be covered in your organisation's anti-bullying policy.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

[Name of group/organisation] works with children and families as part of its activities.

These include: [insert brief outline of what your organisation does with children and families].

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of [name of group/organisation], including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

What is bullying?

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally

Find out more about bullying here: <https://www.stopbullying.gov>

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK.

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development
- in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place.

Our regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families will focus on:

- group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- practising skills such as listening to each other
- respecting the fact that we are all different
- making sure that no one is without friends
- dealing with problems in a positive way
- checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.

Responding to bullying

We will make sure our response to incidents of bullying considers:

- the needs of the person being bullied
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of any bystanders
- our organisation

We will review the plan we have developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

Diversity and inclusion

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
- welcoming new members to our organisation

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:

- Safeguarding Policy Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Others (Please add as relevant)

Contact details

Nominated anti-bullying lead

Name: _____

Phone/email: _____

Position: _____

We are committed to reviewing our policy and practice at least once a year.

This policy was last reviewed on: _____ (date) _____

Signed: _____

[this should be signed by the most senior person with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in your organisation, for example the safeguarding and child protection lead trustee].

Date: _____

APPENDIX 8: Sample Whistle Blowing Policy

NAME OF ORGANISATION

	Person Responsible	Date
Development		
Reviewed		
Reviewed		
Signed off		
Next review		

Purpose

The Board and Senior Management must adequately manage risk and cultural issues within the **Name of Organisation**. This policy promotes a culture of compliance, honesty and ethical behavior within the **Name of Organisation**. The **Name of Organisation's** aim is to encourage staff to report any wrongdoing in good faith and in an environment free from victimisation.

Scope

This policy applies to all Staff members including directors, contractors, consultants, secondees, Trustees and volunteers working for or with the **Name of Organisation**. This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the **Name of Organisation** or our members.

Policy

Commitment

The **Name of Organisation's** Trustees and Management encourage all staff to report Wrongdoing. All staff should feel confident and comfortable reporting any Wrongdoing. The **Name of Organisation's** Trustees and Management are committed to protecting and supporting the dignity, wellbeing, career and reputation of anyone reporting Wrongdoing.

What is "Wrongdoing"?

Examples of Wrongdoing include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A breach of regulations or laws;
- A breach of the **Name of Organisation's** Policies and Codes;
- Dishonest or corrupt behavior, including soliciting, accepting or offering a bribe, facilitation payments or other such benefits;
- Fraudulent activity;
- Illegal activity (including theft, drug sale / use, violence or threatened violence and property damage);
- Impeding internal or external audit processes;
- Improper behavior relating to accounting, internal accounting controls, actuarial, or audit matters;
- An activity that poses a substantial risk to the environment;
- A serious impropriety;
- Conduct endangering health or safety;
- A substantial mismanagement of the **Name of Organisation's** resources;
- Conduct that is detrimental to the **Name of Organisation's** financial position or reputation;
- Concealment of Wrongdoing.

Reporting a Wrongdoing

A staff member can report Wrongdoing in one of two ways – to his or her direct manager, or anonymously.

1. Management

Depending on the nature of the Wrongdoing, the staff member is encouraged to first discuss their concern with their direct manager.

Any staff member that submits or receives a report must treat the matter confidentially. Such confidentiality is protected by following data protection guidelines.

If the staff member does not feel comfortable speaking with their manager, they can raise a Wrongdoing with the CEO unless it directly concerns the CEO in which case they should raise it with the Board of Trustees.

Reports of Wrongdoing are investigated using the **Name of Organisation's** Staff Grievance Procedures.

Staff who report Wrongdoing are protected. Name of Organisation will conduct an investigation into the alleged Wrongdoing in accordance with the principles of fairness and natural justice.

This policy does not prevent a staff member from reporting Wrongdoing to an external body applicable where in accordance with applicable laws or standards.

2. Anonymously

The **Name of Organisation** also recognises that staff may prefer to bypass their direct line of management in certain circumstances where, for example, they:

- Believe they may be victimised if they use the normal reporting method; or
- Prefer to make the report anonymously.

To ensure these staff can report Wrongdoing in such circumstances, the **Name of Organisation** encourages staff to report Wrongdoing on an anonymous basis to the CEO by written communication.

Investigating alleged Wrongdoing

Investigations of alleged Wrongdoing will be conducted in a manner that is confidential, fair and objective. The investigation processes will vary depending on the nature of the alleged Wrongdoing and the amount of information provided. For a report to be investigated, it must contain sufficient information to form a reasonable basis for investigation.

A staff member reporting anonymously should provide as much information as possible so as not to compromise the ability to fully investigate the report.

Where the report of Wrongdoing was not made anonymously, a Whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. In cases where the Investigator has not substantiated the allegations, an appropriate explanation will be made to the Whistleblower, subject to any privacy and confidentiality rights. Complaints should be investigated within 10 working days where practicable, and notification to complainants made within a further 10 working days of the complaint being investigated.

Trustees will be notified of all complaints and the outcome of any investigation.

