

Community@NE66 Charitable Trust
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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Target audience: All visitors, staff, volunteers and Trustees.

Policy author: Hannah Moeini Nakhshbandi

1. Policy Context

Designated Safeguarding Person: Hannah Moeini Nakhshbandi

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1.1 Policy Objective:

The objective of this policy is to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of harm and abuse (as outlined in this policy) and promoting excellence in practice in how we treat and behave with them. Our goal is to create a safe environment in which children and young people can feel confident, listened to, nurtured, protected, respected, comfortable and secure at all times whilst accessing our services.

Community@NE66 works with children, young people and adults, some of whom are considered vulnerable. We recognise that we have a duty of care to all persons who work for, with and access our services.

1.2 Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults 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.
- And undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

1.3 *Children are defined as:*

Any person aged 0 to their 18th birthday.

1.4 *Vulnerable adults are defined as:*

A person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care

services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself/ themselves, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation

1.5 *Legal Framework and Guidance*

This policy aligns with the following national and regional safeguarding legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Northumberland County Council Safeguarding Adults Board & Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies

2. *Community@NE66 Safeguarding specific to Children*

2.1 *Types of Abuse*

There are 4 different types of abuse and they are defined as: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect.

2.1a Physical Abuse

“Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.”

Further information about this form of abuse is set out in the NSCB procedures.

2.1b Emotional Abuse

“Emotional abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.”

2.1c Sexual Abuse

“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 penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate

ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can their children.”

2.1d Neglect

“Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

All definitions taken from Working Together 2015

2.2 Signs of abuse by category

| Sexual Abuse | Physical Abuse | Emotional Abuse | Neglect* |
|---|--|---|---|
| Injuries to genital/anal area | Bruising/scratching | Poor concentration | Delayed physical &/or cognitive development |
| Aggression/withdrawn | Bruising to both eyes | Connection seeking behaviour | Stealing/hiding food |
| Acting out sexual activity | Aggressiveness or withdrawal | Obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking | Destructive tendencies |
| Sexual awareness inappropriate to developmental stage | Drowsiness from head injury or poisoning | Fear of new situations | Persistent head lice |
| Wetting, soiling, smearing excretion | Finger marks | May bully others | Dental decay/ poor dental hygiene** |
| Frequent masturbation | Injury to the mouth | Low self esteem | Low self esteem |
| Persistent discharge | Injuries to babies not yet mobile | Few friends/Difficulty in forming relationships | Infections slow to clear up |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Pain in passing urine or faeces | Difficulty in moving limbs | Fear of failure (lack of confidence) | Impairment of health |
| Bleeding from vagina or anus | Burns and scalds/ Cigarette* burns | Unwilling to join in | Persistently hungry |
| Self harm | Self harm | Self harm | Persistently dirty |
| Bruises, scratches, burns or bites | Bruises to eyes and ears | Poor self image | Frequently smelly |
| Eating disorders | Outline bruising e.g. belt, hand | Eating disorders | Slow growth |
| Unwanted pregnancy | Adult bite marks | Developmental delay | Chronic nappy rash |
| Sexually transmitted diseases | Flinching/ excessive hyper-vigilence | Poor concentration | Underweight and small stature or, overweight (or obese) |

| | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|
| | | Witnessing domestic violence | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|

*2023 Northumberland Children Services referrals 89% Neglect cases.

** Northumberland has the highest rates of child dental neglect in the UK

2.3 Specific forms of abuse within each category

2.3a Child Sexual Exploitation - Sexual Abuse

“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse (“child” being defined as anyone under 18 years of age). It is complex and can manifest itself in different ways. It involves children and young people receiving something – for example, accommodation, drugs, gifts, or affection – as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It can occur without physical contact, when children are groomed to post sexual images of themselves on the internet. In all cases those exploiting the child or young person have power over them, perhaps by virtue of their age or physical strength. Exploitative relationships are characterised in the main by the child’s limited availability of choice, compounding their vulnerability. This inequality can take many forms but the most obvious include fear, deception, coercion and violence.”

2.3b *Forced Marriage - Sexual, Physical & Emotional Abuse*

A forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the arrangement of the marriage and some elements of duress are involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced Marriage is an abuse of human rights and, where a child is involved, an abuse of the rights of the child. Forced Marriage is a violation of a person's human rights and cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds. If you suspect that a forced marriage has or is about to take place go directly to your designated person with the information.

2.3c *Fabricated or induced illness - Physical & Emotional Abuse* If there are concerns that illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child or there are concerns that the child's parent or carer may be fabricating or inducing illness in themselves and that this may cause harm to the child. Such concerns may also apply to unborn children. These must be taken directly to your designated person.

2.3d *Risk Outside of the Home*

Children and young people can be at risk in environments beyond the home, such as schools, peer groups, and online spaces. Key areas of concern include:

- **Human Trafficking & Exploitation:** Victims may be forced into labour, sexual exploitation, or criminal activities.
- **County Lines & Criminal Exploitation:** Involvement in drug trafficking through coercion or manipulation.
- **Online Grooming & Exploitation:** Abuse through social media, gaming platforms, and digital spaces.

Response:

- Adopt a contextual safeguarding approach* by considering risks in wider environments.
- Work with multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASH) and Northumberland County Council services to intervene where required.
- Train staff to identify signs of exploitation and trafficking.
- Provide safeguarding education to children, young people, and families about external risks.

**Contextual Safeguarding has been developed by Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire over the past six years to inform policy and practice approaches to 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 feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.*

Therefore children's social care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

2.3e Child Criminal Exploitation: county lines - Emotional often including physical & sexual abuse

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;

- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

2.3f Human Trafficking

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive appropriate care. A trafficking case may involve a range of agencies such as the police, local authorities and charities and the NRM makes it easier for these agencies to work together.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999. If you receive information on a potential trafficker or you think a child is a victim of trafficking:

- Professionals: contact the Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)
- General public: contact the NSPCC to discuss concerns with one of our counsellors, or you can contact your local police or children's services (01670 534000).

2.3g Domestic Abuse

In April 2022, the Domestic Abuse Act 2022 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Definition:

The Domestic Abuse Act 2022 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are ;"personally connected"; to each other: (a) physical or sexual abuse;

- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are personally connected when they are, or have been married to each other or

civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person. (The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga>) Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

2.3h Honour Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA

Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBA. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) .

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

2.3i Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the

Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been

carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Team members must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the DSP and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the team member does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, team members should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Symptoms of FGM

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an ‘at-risk’ country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- spending long periods of time away from the classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl’s return
- reluctance to

undergo normal medical examinations.

- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

2.3j Forced Marriage - Sexual Abuse, including Physical & Emotional Abuse

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example).

Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Youth & Community Work can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. Team members can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk and more information can be accessed using the following link

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf

2.3k Position of Trust Offence - Sexual Abuse

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 sets out the law on sexual offences committed by those in positions of trust. Although the offences cover all children under 18, they are principally designed to protect young people aged 16 and 17 who, even though they are over the age of consent for sexual activity are considered vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation.

Where a child is under 16 and cannot give reasonable consent to sexual activity, the expectation is that any offences committed would be caught by ss. 9-13 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Once the person is 18, they cannot only consent but are considered adult – therefore, unless a sexual act has been committed without consent (such as rape or non-consensual sexual touching), then no offence occurs.

The 2003 Act's provision on "abuse of position of trust" provides specific roles and settings where sexual activity between a child and a person in a position of trust, responsibility or authority constitutes a criminal offence.

2.4 *Manifestations of abuse applicable to children and vulnerable adults**

**to be considered in addition to the specific Vulnerable Adults Policy listed below*

2.4a *Extremist Exploitation & Coercion & Counter-terrorism local strategy - Emotional Abuse*

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 highlights the statutory duty on 'specified bodies' including local authorities, schools (academies and independent schools, further and higher education colleges), health, penal bodies and the police to pay due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is 'the prevent duty', which became law on 1 July 2015.

The Northumberland Counter Terrorism Co-ordinating Group is about stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. If you are concerned about someone being drawn into terrorism contact:

Ian Billham

Strategic Community Safety Manager

Tel: 01670 623731

Email: Ian.Billham@northumberland.gov.uk

2.4b *Bullying - Physical & Emotional Abuse*

Bullying is defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (DfE definition).

It can be inflicted on a child by another child or an adult. It can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- **Physical** - for example, hitting, kicking, shoving, theft
- **Verbal** - for example, threats, name calling, racist or homophobic remarks •

Emotional - for example, isolating an individual from activities/games and the social acceptance of their peer group Cyber bullying is defined as "the use of Information

Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else" (DfE definition).

Bullying & Harassment often starts with apparently trivial events such as teasing and name calling which nevertheless rely on an abuse of power. Such abuses of power, if left unchallenged, can lead to more serious forms of abuse such as domestic violence, racial attacks, sexual offences and self-harm or suicide.

If you have concerns around bullying talk to the Project Manager or Safeguarding Trustee or access our Bullying & Harassment policy in the Team Member Handbook (available on your drive).

2.4c E Safety - Emotional Abuse

As technology develops, the Internet and its range of content services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, text messaging and mobile camera phones as well as computers and game consoles. As a consequence the Internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent/pseudo photographs and video clips of children and young people.

Internet chat rooms, discussion forums and bulletin boards are used as a means of contacting children with a view to grooming them for inappropriate or abusive relationships, which may include requests to make and transmit pornographic images of themselves or to perform sexual acts live in front of a web cam.

Contacts made initially in a chat room are likely to be carried on via email, instant messaging services, mobile phone and text messaging. There is also a growing cause for concern about the exposure of children to inappropriate material via interactive communication technology e.g. adult pornography and extreme forms of obscene material.

For further reading, go to the Child Exploitation and On-Line Protection Centre (CEOP) which can be found at the CEOP website - www.CEOP.police.uk The CEOP is a partnership between government, law enforcement, NGO's (including children's charities) and industry, with the common aim of protecting children. It works to protect children, families and society from paedophiles and sex offenders - in particular those

who seek to
exploit children sexually online.

For more information see [Community@NE66 E Safety and Social Media Policies](#).

2.4d *Child-to-Parent Abuse (CPA) - Physical & Emotional Abuse* Child-to-Parent Abuse (CPA) is a form of domestic abuse where a child or young person uses controlling, violent, or abusive behaviour against a parent or carer. Signs of CPA may include:

- Verbal threats, physical violence, property destruction
- Coercive control over a parent's actions
- Emotional manipulation and intimidation

Response:

- Acknowledge CPA as a safeguarding concern requiring intervention.
- Provide support to parents/carers experiencing abuse and signpost them to specialist services.
- Where necessary, involve social services, early help teams, or domestic abuse support services.

2.4 *Specific manifestations of abuse*

2.4a *Self-Harm*

The phrase 'self-harm' is used to describe a wide range of behaviours. Self-harm is often understood to be a physical response to an emotional pain of some kind and can be very addictive. Some of the things people do are quite well known, such as cutting, burning or pinching. However there are many, many ways to hurt yourself, including abusing drugs and alcohol or having an eating disorder. Self-harm is often seen as fashionable or "faddy" but should always be taken seriously.

2.5 *Child risk-taking behaviors - potential link to sexual abuse*

2.5a *Relationships under the age of consent*

Cases of underage sexual activity which present cause for concern are likely to raise difficult issues and should be handled particularly sensitively. A child under 13 is not

legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Cases involving under 13's should always be discussed with the nominated child protection lead in the organisation. Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence. Where it is consensual it may be less serious than if the child were under 13, but may nevertheless have serious consequences for the welfare of the young person. Consideration should be given in every case of sexual activity involving a child aged 13-15 as to whether there should be a discussion with other agencies and whether a referral should be made. The professional should make the assessment using the considerations below;

- The age of the child. Sexual activity at a young age can be a very strong indicator that there are risks to the welfare of the child.

- The level of maturity and understanding of the child.
- The child's living circumstances or background.
- Age imbalance, in particular where there is a significant age difference.
- Overt aggression or power imbalance.
- Coercion or bribery.
- Familial child sex offences.
- Behaviour of the child e.g withdrawn, anxious.
- The misuse of substances as a disinhibitor.
- Whether any attempts to secure secrecy have been made by the sexual partner, beyond what would be considered usual in a teenage relationship.
- Whether the methods used are consistent with grooming; and
- Whether the sexual partner/s is known to professional agencies.

“Under 16” Brook Advisory Service

2.5b Sexual activity involving a 16 or 17 year old,

though unlikely to involve an offence, may still involve harm or the risk of harm. Professionals should still bear the factors above in assessing any risk and should share information as appropriate. It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them. It is an offence for a person 18 or over to intentionally engage in sexual touching of a child under 16. A person also commits an offence if the touching involves consensual penetration of the vagina or anus of another person with a part of their body or anything else.

2.6 *The role of the local Advisory Board*

Northumberland Children's and Adult's Strategic Safeguarding

Partnership (NCASP) previously Local Safeguarding Board

Role and Function

The overall role of Northumberland Children's and Adult's Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) is to coordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to ensure the effectiveness of what the member organisations do individually and together.

Specific objectives of the NCASP are to:

1. Develop and agree inter-agency policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, consistent with Working Together to Safeguard Children, including:

- i. The action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
- ii. Training of those working with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- iii. Recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children; iv. Investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children; v. The safety and welfare of privately fostered children;
- vi. Cooperation with neighbouring children's social care services authorities and their Board Partners.

- Participate in the planning of services for children in the local authority area; ● Communicate the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child; ● Develop procedures to ensure a coordinated response to unexpected child deaths;
- Monitor the effectiveness of what is done to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Undertake reviews of serious cases and ensure lessons are understood and acted

upon;

- Collect and analyse information about child deaths.

As part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Function of the **NCASP**, there is a requirement for the LSCB to ensure appropriate links exist with any secure settings in its area and to be able to scrutinise the use of restraint, and incidences and injuries.

2. Scope of the Role

In order to fulfil its statutory functions, an **NCASP** should use data and, as a minimum, should:

- Assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help;

- Assess whether **NCASP** partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations; •

Quality assure practice, including through joint audits of case files involving practitioners and

identifying lessons to be learned; and

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Children's Safeguarding Performance Information

Framework provides a mechanism to help do this by setting out some of the questions a **NCASP** should consider.

The Board can be contacted on: 01670 623979 / 01670 822386 (out of hours)

3. Safeguarding Specific to Vulnerable Adults

Community@NE66 has adopted the following policy context and definitions of abuse from Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Protocol Framework so that we can ensure best practice.

As with any concerns regarding vulnerable adults these must be recorded and passed on to the designated person as soon as possible. The recording and reporting procedure is the same for adults as it is for children.

3.1 Context to safeguarding adults.

What do we mean by the terms 'safeguarding' and 'adult at risk'? In practice the term 'safeguarding' is used to mean both specialist responsive services where harm or abuse has or is suspected to have occurred, and other activities designed to promote the wellbeing and safeguard the rights of adults. In its broadest sense it is everybody's business: the public, volunteers and professionals. This procedural guide sets out to describe the specific action we need to take to ensure that people who have (or may have) experienced harm or abuse are enabled to protect themselves or are involved in decision making to safeguard them. This will include making sure that people who lack capacity are supported through advocacy and other measures so that their best interests can be pursued. It also includes ensuring that justice is facilitated where vulnerable adults (adults at risk) are the victims of crime.

Harm and abuse can happen in any setting, and may additionally occur through neglect. People may be harmed at home, in their communities, in a care home, at hospital, in college or at work, at day and community centres or other places where people spend their time or receive services.

People who abuse or harm adults at risk are a very diverse group. They largely fall into four main categories:

- paid staff members or support workers
- unpaid family members, partners or carers (who can sometimes harm unintentionally)
- neighbours and members of the community and
- other adults at risk.

For further information and guidance please contact Northumberland County Council (NCC) Safeguarding Adults Team through **OneCall: Tel 01670 536400** who will also:

- Investigate cases involving death or serious injury as a result of abuse/neglect, multiple/institutional abuse, rape, serious financial abuse.

- Act as a single point of contact for Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust inpatient services in Northumberland
- Manage PREVENT referrals
- Provide advice and coordinate research for MAPPA and MARAC meetings
- Liaise with the Coroner's Office about abuse/neglect-related deaths •

Manage Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards procedures

A safeguarding concern can centre on a single act or repeated acts of suspected, disclosed or witnessed abuse or neglect. It may be:

- **physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual exploitation or acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- **neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating;
- **discriminatory abuse**, including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion, Anyone who wishes to raise an alert
- **organisational abuse**, including everything from individual acts of very poor professional practice to pervasive ill treatment, gross misconduct and systemic failure across a service.
- domestic violence, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and “honour” based violence.
- **modern slavery**, encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **self-neglect***, this covers a wide range of behaviours, including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.
- **radicalisation**, the abusive process whereby adults with care and support needs are radicalised.

**Self neglect is identified as a significant issue in Northumberland. Community@NE66 has the following guidance;*

Self-neglect is recognised under the Care Act 2014 as a form of abuse requiring intervention. It includes neglecting personal hygiene, health, nutrition, and living in unsanitary conditions. Indicators may include:

- *Poor personal care and hygiene*
- *Hoarding and unsafe living conditions*
- *Refusal of medical treatment or care*

Response:

- *Staff should report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). ● Where there is immediate risk, emergency services should be contacted. ● Cases should be referred to Northumberland County Council Adult Safeguarding Team for assessment.*
- *Multi-agency collaboration is essential to balance safeguarding with an individual's right to self-determination.*

Where an 'adult at risk' is in immediate danger, steps should be taken to protect their safety, e.g. by calling 999

3.2 Referral routes for concerns relating to Vulnerable Adults

Karen Wright - Senior Manager, Safeguarding Adults

Email: karen.wright01@northumberland.gov.uk

Referral forms: [Northumberland-Safeguarding-Adults-Multi-agency-Enquiry-Form-update...](#)

If you are worried about an adult's welfare who lives in Northumberland contact;
One call: 01670 536400

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF

Tell: 01670 623979

Tell: 0345 600 5252

Client who is an immediate danger to themselves and will remain in the premises (and does

not pose a risk to others) the NHS Crisis team will be contacted; 0303 123 1146 if support can not be offered within a responsible time frame (i.e. the amount of time workers are able to stay with the client) an ambulance (999) would be called.

Clients who are an immediate danger to themselves and will NOT remain in the premises contact Northumbria Police (999) and state you have urgent concerns for the clients life.

Client who presents a risk whilst on the premises or to staff; Will be asked to leave with an explanation as to why, if violent/ or escalation/ or refuses to leave call Northumbria Police (999)

4. Reporting and responding to concerns and or, disclosures

4.1 Reporting suspected abuse

Where Practitioners or Volunteers consider they have cause to suspect abuse, including neglect or emotional treatment, they must report their concerns.

This can be done in 3 ways depending on the situation.

1) If the young person attends school and you have links with that school, you can report your concerns to the designated member of staff in the school. This arrangement should be agreed with each school individually in advance of any reporting (usually only applicable to team members delivered in school settings or in partnership with schools). Following this you should inform Community@NE66 Charitable Trusts designated person that you have done so.

2) You should report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Person or Assistant Designated Safeguarding Persons.

3) Where Practitioners or Volunteers feel that emergency action may be needed to

safeguard a child and a designated member of staff cannot be contacted, staff should contact the Social Services Duty Team or the Police directly. Record of any action taken must be passed to your designated person as soon as possible.

4.2 Recording a disclosure

A young person may choose to confide in or talk to an adult about their experiences of child abuse, this is called a disclosure. The disclosure may take the form of a direct statement or indirect statement, in writings and drawings, role play or stories, or come from information from a third party.

4.3 Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality is about your privacy, meaning that any information you tell us will be kept between the youth workers and you.

Community@NE66 Charitable Trust provides: information, advice, guidance and support to children, young people and other community members on a wide range of issues. In most cases what we discuss with you is confidential, however in certain situations we need to involve others in order to ensure you are safe from harm. We will try to talk to you first but there may be occasions when we will need to involve others if we are concerned that you or other people may be at risk.

4.4 Responding to a disclosure

If a Young Person discloses any information to you, your role is to enable them to freely recall significant events by:

- Receiving the information, by listening carefully to what the young person is saying.
- Reassuring the young person by telling them they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Reacting to the situation by doing something about it and explaining what will happen next.
- Recording what the young person has said as soon as possible, using the young person's exact words, and making diagrams of any physical marks associated with the allegation.
- Reporting the disclosure using the same process as outlined previously in the

reporting suspected abuse section.

- Support the young person by giving them your time and creating a safe place for them to talk, away from others.
- Take care of yourself by talking to someone who can support you in this process. Be careful not to talk to anyone who does not need to know and maintain confidentiality.

In the case of a disclosure:

- Do not: Promise to keep the disclosure a secret – you will have to report it.
- Do not: Rush off to find someone else to listen or to find a pen/paper. • Do not: Display shock or disapproval, anger or disgust.
- Do not: Ask direct and/or closed questions such as Why? When? Who? Where? How? You may ask the child to repeat a statement or say 'Is there anything else you want to tell me? Or "Would you like to talk about it?"
- Do not: Investigate any allegations as you are not qualified to interview children and may mislead them.
- Do not: Make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser and; • Do not: Talk to the parents before discussing it with the designated person. In the case of an allegation against a member of staff, DO NOT talk to the member of staff before discussing the allegation with the Project Manager.

4.5 Recording Information

When there is a concern about a child, the information should be recorded in a way that is:

- Clear – specific about the exact concerns for the child.
- Factual – show clearly what is fact and where there may be opinion expressed.
- Complete – all known, relevant information which is available.
- Unambiguous – not open to interpretation but stated in a clear way. Here is the link to our incident recording form https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScuHjp4XZIAUODjx3mjgLGQNFZxPGg6VpdKoMUNI-EPtaMKyA/viewform?usp=sf_link

This form does not act as a reporting tool, you must contact the DSP directly in person, via telephone or email listed above. **It is the responsibility of the person who is raising the concern or was the initial point of disclosure to complete this form.** All information is stored securely in an electronic format and with limited access.

The flowchart in Appendix 1 shows what happens after you pass information on to your designated member of staff.

4.6 The right to be heard & respected

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

Community@NE66aims to provide an environment in which:

- Young People are treated as individuals with particular needs and aspirations
- We aim to develop positive relationships between young people and between young people, youth professionals and volunteers. We seek to achieve an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Young People are encouraged to have a voice and know they will be listened to.

4.7 Additional contact information for passing on concerns

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you are worried about a child or adult's welfare who, lives in Northumberland contact One call: 01670 536400

If you know a child already has a social worker the contact them on these numbers;

- Central Locality 01670 536000
- North Locality 01670 629 400
- South East Locality 01670 629 600
- West Locality 01434 611499
- Disablee Children Team: 01671 516131
- 14+ Team 01670622930

High School Contacts

- Berwick Academy 01289 305083
- James Calvert Trust High School Amble 01665 710636
- Duchess's Community High School 01665 602166

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF

Tell: 01670 623979

Tell: 0345 600 5252

5. Community@NE66's Management & Organisational Procedures to ensure Safeguarding of Children & Vulnerable Adults

5.1 Allegations against Workers

Any allegation against a member of staff will be referred to the Northumberland Local Safeguarding Children's Board who will then conduct an investigation. The following protocol will then be followed:

The employer should inform the worker who is subject to the allegation as soon as possible, after consulting the NSPC and reporting to the LADO:

carol.gasper@northumberland.gov.uk

The subject of the allegation should be:

- Advised to contact his / her professional association / union / legal adviser
- Treated fairly and honestly
- Offered staff welfare services if available

Decision to suspend or temporarily re-deploy staff is made without prejudice and the decision rests with the employing agency.

Suspension should not be automatic, but it should be considered in any case where:

- Not to suspend may continue or increase the risk of significant harm for any child
- Not to suspend may hamper investigations
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

Referral - Allegations should be reported to the project manager in the organisation, unless that person is the subject of the allegation, in which case it should be reported to the Safeguarding Trustee and the NCASP. Professional judgement and common sense will be applied by the Safeguarding Trustee when considering the allegation. If the allegation meets any of the criteria for the Allegations Management Procedures (LADO will advise), it must be reported to the NCASP/First Contact within 1 working day.

Management are to take advice from the LADO if the DBS service are to be informed.

5.2 Code of conduct

All team members: staff, Trustees & volunteers to follow Community@NE66's Code of Conduct as stated in the organisations staff handbook.

5.3 Indecent Images shared with team members

As many professionals working within different organisations have increased access to the Internet or World Wide Web, cameras and phones, therefore the opportunity for misuse also grows. Upon the receipt of any information concerning a person or persons

suspected of this kind of activity, the department head should notify the Police (Child and Public Protection Unit) immediately. No downloading or distribution of any images should be completed, either internally or externally within the organisation, as this will leave the individuals responsible open to criminal investigation. The computer should be left and not used by anyone, allowing this to be seized as evidence for forensic examination by the Police. The details of all persons having access to the computer should be made available to allow a clear evidence trail to be established.

5.4 Safe Workforce

Community@NE66 Charitable Trust has a duty to safeguard and promote the children's welfare when employing or recruiting staff and volunteers. This includes ensuring that safe recruitment and selection procedures are adopted which deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuitable to work with them including the use of Enhanced DBS checks (for residential work workers must have Barring and Vetting checks and their outcomes must meet our recruitment criteria).

5.5 Partnership Working

Any organisation involved in delivering a project in partnership with Community@NE66 Charitable Trust or commissioned to provide services to young people must be required to comply with the safe recruitment, selection and supervision procedures set out by NSCB and any service level agreement or contract must contain a safeguarding statement which clarifies the standards expected. This must include a requirement that the organisation must not sub-contract to any personnel who have not been part of a safe recruitment process.

If an outside organisation uses Alnwick Community Centre building then they are not

necessarily covered by our policies. This should be made clear to all parties including young people. All lettings agreements for organisations working with under 18's should require a Safeguarding Policy being in place.

Where private or voluntary organisations come into contact with or offer services to children otherwise than under contract with a statutory or public body, in recognition of

their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, they should as a matter of good practice take account of this procedure and follow it as far as possible, although not under a statutory obligation to do so.

5.6 Training

It is essential that all staff receive safeguarding training to help them recognize potential signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and understand the appropriate actions to take if they have concerns.

- All community and youth work staff, administration and volunteers must complete face-to-face safeguarding training within the first six weeks of employment.
- New team members and Trustees will receive a mandatory safeguarding briefing during their induction, covering the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, positive handling policy, reporting and recording procedures, and contact details for the DSL.
- Staff working directly with young people must undertake annual safeguarding training, either through an online refresher course or a face-to-face session delivered by an NSCB-approved trainer.
- In line with NCASP recommendations, staff will receive annual safeguarding updates, with a comprehensive training program (online or face-to-face) at least every three years.
- The DSP and Assistant DSP will undergo annual safeguarding training, with subjects reflecting local and national priorities. Additionally, they will receive a refresher on their roles and responsibilities every two years.

5.7 Information Sharing / Confidentiality

Staff will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubts about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or outside agency as required. The designated person will disclose any information about a young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

5.9 Contractors working on site

Community@NE66 checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity, if working when children, young people or vulnerable adults are on site.

5.10 Site security

Visitors to the Centre, including contractors, are asked to sign in which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents/carers who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe (Appendix 2). The Team on duty will exercise professional judgment in determining whether any visitors should be escorted or supervised while on site.

5.11 Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect pupils we will:

- seek parental/ guardian consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or

publications)

- use only the child's first initial with an image
- ensure children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

6. Appropriate levels of DBS and supervision

**To be considered in addition to our safer recruitment policy.*

6.1 Designated Trustee & Safeguarding Persons

Designated Trustee & Designated Safeguarding Persons take part in mandatory safeguarding training to ensure that they can 'assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective.'

6.2 Paid team members & Trustees

Due to the nature of our work team members are to have an Enhanced Child Workforce DBS with satisfactory clearance. Paid team members will supervise visitors and risk assess non-DBS adults on site. Performing ongoing risk assessments on a case by case basis with the minimum of no unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults at any time. Paid team members must have a minimum of a Level 2 NSCAB approved Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults training certificate.

6.3 Freelancers, trainees/students and partner projects workers To be given the Centre's Visitors Leaflet, which will be made available to them on their arrival. If the DSPs have not had site and approval of freelancers/trainees/ students and partner project workers associated Safeguarding Policies, photographic ID and confirmation of DBS check status and level they are to be risk assessed as non-DBS checked visitors and supervised by a team member at all times. Guidance on established relationships from the DBS to be adhered to.

6.4 Volunteers

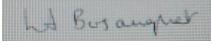
Volunteers, including Trustees will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the Centre (or associated outreach projects) and have contact with children and young people. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately

checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity. Volunteers to have an age appropriate induction to Community@NE66's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Adoption of Policy by Community@NE66 Charitable Trust Trustees

Chairperson

Print name: **Lalage Bosenquet**

Signature:  (approval noted in email 12.03.25)

Date: 12.03.25

Designated Safeguarding Trustee

Print name: Chris Friend

Signature: **C Friend** (approval minuted in Trustees meeting 10.03.25)

Date: 10.03.25

Manager and Designated Safeguarding Person

Print name: **Hannah Moeini Nakhshbandi**

Signature: 

Date: 12.03.25

Senior Youth Worker and Assistant Designated Safeguarding Person

Print name: Andrea Sherratt

Signature:

Date:

Project Development Worker

Print name: Jacqueline Brewster

Signature

Date:

Youth/ Play Workers & Assistant Youth/Play Workers

Print name: Isabella Liddel

Signature

Date:

Volunteer
Print name:
Signature
Date:

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Community@NE66: Visitor Safeguarding Guidance

What to Do If You Have a Concern
If you have concerns about a child, young person, or vulnerable adult's safety, follow these steps:

Report Immediately - Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or staff member.

Record Details - Write down what you saw, heard, or were told, including dates and times.

Do Not Investigate - Avoid questioning the individual or gathering evidence.

Confidentiality - Only discuss concerns with the DSL or relevant staff.

Escalate if Needed - If your concern is not addressed, report to senior management or authorities.

Working Safely with Children & Vulnerable Adults

Supervision - Stay within sight of staff.

Professional Conduct - Maintain boundaries; avoid inappropriate contact.

No One-on-One - Never be alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

No Photos or Sharing - Do not take photos or share information.

Respect Privacy - Keep personal details confidential.

Follow Emergency Procedures - Adhere to staff guidance.

Training - Regular visitors may need safeguarding training.

Following these guidelines ensures a safe environment at Community@NE66.

