

Staffordshire Children's Homes

Local Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

References:

- [Children's Home - Statement of Purpose](#)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board – Children Missing from care & home & vulnerable missing families \(joint with Stoke LSCB\)](#)
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures](#)
- [Children's Home Regulations 2015 – The protection of children Standard – Regulation 12](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [Children's Home – Local Missing From Care Policy](#)
- [Local CSE and CCE – Incorporating Safe Internet Use](#)
- [Children's Home– Local Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#)
- Staffordshire County Council Standard of Conduct for Employees

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1) Foreword and Policy Statement

We committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children and young people in our care. The provision provides a service that is built upon and promotes respectful, trusting relationships between staff and young people. We recognise that managing complex behaviours of vulnerable young people carries with it enormous responsibility.

The aim of the service is to help build resilience and stabilise the young person so that the young person is ready to move onto a longer-term placement, prepared for independent living or returns home to their family wherever possible and appropriate.

We make a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide a system to identify and safeguard young people who may be at risk whilst in placement, within the family environment and the wider community. As outlined in the Statement of Purpose, we have a philosophy of restorative approaches that recognises the importance of meaningful and effective partnership working. This includes work with children, young people and their families as well as a broad range of professional services. Our key objective is to help to build interventions and support based on individual assessed needs for young people at risk of becoming looked after.

The key aims of the service as stated in the Statement of Purpose will underpin this document:

- To listen to young people and families and take their views seriously utilising their strengths, acknowledging that they are the experts in their own family in order to build resilience
- To enable young people and families to make informed choices about their lives by offering a bespoke service that is able to meet the individual needs of the young person
- To offer all young people and families support where they feel safe, valued and supported.

This policy seeks to ensure that we take our responsibilities seriously regarding protection of children and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations

2) Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2014
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures
- Children's Home Regulations 2015 – The Protection of Children Standard – Regulation 12
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

The procedures as defined in the following policies also form the basis of this Local Safeguarding Policy. This policy is not intended to be used in isolation. All staff understand that more in-depth Policy and Procedures in regard to Safeguarding are contained in the following:

- Staffordshire County Council Standard of Conduct for Employees which include:
 - Integrity Policy
 - Local Code of Conduct for Employees and Standards of Conduct
 - Whistle Blowing
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board – Children Missing from Care and Home and Vulnerable Missing Families (joint with Stoke LSBC 2018)
- Local Missing from Care Policy

The protection of children standard (The Children's Home Regulations 2015 Regulation 12) is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.

In particular, we will ensure that staff:

- Complete an impact risk assessment on every young person referred in order to identify that we can meet the young person's needs and also to identify any safeguarding issues we need to be aware of.
- Assess whether the young person is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the young person's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.
- Help each child to understand how to keep safe.
- Have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm.
- Understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.
- Take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's safeguarding policies.
- That the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.
- That the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded.
- That the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; and that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.

3) Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children wherever possible. In contrast, child protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 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

- Staff who work with vulnerable groups, including children, must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place within a service not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, parents/carers and the general public.

Abuse is the act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect
- Financial (or material) abuse

Definition of a child - A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

4) Responsibilities

All staff are committed to providing young people with support and experiences which will enhance their future. Staff as outlined in Regulation 9 of the Children's Home Regulations 2015 will provide the young people the opportunity to:

- Take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.
- Ensure that they help each child to develop interests and hobbies
- Participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences.
- Make a positive contribution to the short breaks service, home, life and the wider community

- That each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies.

As stated in the Statement of Purpose staff will ensure that they:

- Focus on the child as a whole person
- Build authentic relationships between children, families and practitioners.
- Children, families and practitioners inhabit the same 'life-space'.
- Use reflective practice that underpins the professional task.
- Share in the practical aspects of children's daily lives.
- Embed and understand children's rights within practice.
- Work with the 'group' and family as a whole
- Emphasis teamwork and the wider contribution of families and communities.
- Ensure the centrality of relationships and the importance of listening and communicating.

Safeguarding will remain the single most important overarching principle to which staff adheres. All staff have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices. Staff will adhere to Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures:

- Section 2 – Strategic Arrangements for Safeguarding Children including:
 - Recruitment and Selection Procedures for All (Staffordshire only)
 - Organisational Whistle Blowing Policy to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (joint with Stoke LSCB)
- Section 4 – Promoting the Welfare and Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances - Managing Allegations of abuse against a person who work with children and the role of the LADO

5) Systems

We have systems within the service to ensure that:

- There is a named person or deputy with clearly defined roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, appropriate to the level at which s/he operates.
- There is a description of what constitutes child abuse available for all staff, and the procedures for how to respond when there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare or concerns about the actions of a staff member are clearly communicated.
- Relevant contact details for children's services, police, health, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) for E-Safety concerns and NSPCC helplines, Whistle blowing helpline for NHS and Social care staff and Ofsted are available and clearly displayed throughout the service.
- There is guidance on confidentiality and information sharing, legislation compliant, and which clearly states that the protection of the child is the most important consideration.
- There is a code of behaviour for staff and the consequences of breaching the code are clear and linked to disciplinary and grievance procedures.

- There are systems in place to ensure that all visitors to the service are monitored and supervised.
- The complaints procedure is open, well publicised and accessible to adults and children so they can voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children.
- Safeguarding and discussing safeguarding is discussed at every team meeting and within every supervision

6) Training and Support

Induction - All staff within the service complete an induction and probationary period. During this process staff are given guidance on and signposted to Staffordshire County Council Policies and Procedures. They attend a Staffordshire County Council County Induction Day and receive Child Protection Level 1 training.

Induction paperwork and probationary paperwork are kept on individual personnel files and is used as evidence of a formal assessment of new staffs competence and knowledge when applying safe practices. Staff supervision for new starters is once every 2 weeks for the first six months of employment and once per month thereafter. This along with the induction and probationary period ensures that all staff receive ongoing support and guidance from one of the management team.

Training

All staff will receive safeguarding training at an appropriate level. Sources and types of training will include:

- Child protection Level 1
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation
- Drug Awareness
- Sexual Health
- Radicalisation workshop
- E-learning equality and diversity
- E-learning data protection
- SSCB plan for personal safety
- SSCB suicide/self harm
- SSCB lite-bite missing children
- Level 3 or 4 Residential Care (Apprenticeship Level from 2020)
- Proact Scipr
- How to raise concerns in the work environment e.g. Whistle blow

The delegated training officer will in conjunction with the management team identify training requirements and ensure that there is a training matrix available which evidences training undertaken by staff, training booked and training renewal dates.

Support

The staff are supported in numerous ways which include but is not exclusive to:

- Team Meetings
- Supervision
- 1-1 discussions
- We Talk Conversations

Implemented June 2016, Reviewed June 2017, June 2018, June 2020 and 19/4/21 , 25/3/22

- Debriefs
- Training
- Staffordshire County Council Think Well Service
- The provision of a clear and effective reporting procedure

7) Reporting

Step 1: In the first instance staff should contact Designated Child Protection Officer – Any safeguarding concerns will be shared with the parents (only when safe and appropriate to do so) using their preferred methods as identified within the short breaks care plan (and at this stage). The designated Officer in turn will contact the First Response Team within 24 hours of any situation arising at 0800 1313 126 and the allocated Social Worker.

If the concern is in relation to the Designated Child Protection Officer or Service Manager to them or if they are not available, please contact Liz Kelay County Manager Prevention and Placements.

In the unlikely event that there is no one available to report directly to please contact the First Response Team directly at 0800 1313 126

Step 2: The First Response Team will ensure that the matter is passed promptly to the allocated social worker or duty officer in the social work team and or in instances where there is concern regarding the conduct of an adult working or volunteering with children, the Staffordshire LADO Duty Officer and assist in initiating any additional safeguarding activities.

There are statutory obligations relating to when it is necessary to refer concerns to the LADO, the details of which, including the local referral procedures, can be found at Part 7 of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Inter-Agency Procedures.

From 2 January 2014, to report a concern or allegation to the Staffordshire LADO that an adult working or volunteering with children:

- Has or may have harmed a child
- May have committed a criminal offence related to a child and / or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

If the concern or allegation is urgent and outside of office hours telephone: 0845 6042 886 (Emergency Duty Team).

This single referral point will provide a responsive and inclusive service for all children's workforce sectors, focus the advice and support where it is needed most and enable the team to continue to work effectively with partners.

Whistle Blowing

We have a culture of openness and transparency where all teams members are valued, feel safe and are openly encouraged to speak up and critically challenge one another practice and is routinely embedded in our staff meetings, handovers, supervision, debrief etc.

It is important that any concerns are raised at earliest point of identification in order to prevent poor practice manifesting, prevent any wrongdoing and to minimise risk to children and young people, their families and staff.

All staff should have the “Freedom to speak up” (Francis Report), in the first instance any concerns should be raised with the manager however in some circumstance it may be appropriate to raise this with a senior manager – **Sarah Lunn/Liz Kelay**.

If staff feel that they require independent advice facilitated outside immediate line- management structures the following options are available: -:

- Contact Union Representative
- Contact HR Representative
- Complaints and Representation Service
- Ofsted
- Whistle Blowing Helpline for NHS and Social Care Staff – 0800 7245 725

Whichever route staff choose to raise their concerns, Brunswick Place will value their actions and integrity, it is important for staff to feel supported through out the process, whether or not the concern is substantiated.

8) Confirmation of Reading

Key Contact List

Name	Position	Telephone No.	Mobile No	E-mail address
Sarah Lunn	Residential Lead		07815826973	sarah.lunn@staffordshire.gov.uk
Liz Kelay	County Manager Prevention, Placements and Residential Services	01785 277091	0300 111 8000	liz.kelay@staffordshire.gov.uk
EDS	Director on Call	0845 604 2886	07624 314950	
Ofsted Concerns		0300 123 4666		enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Ofsted General		0300 123 1231		enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Whistle Blowing	Families and communities representative	01785 277200		
Customer feedback and complaints team		0300 111 8000		complaints&customerfeedback@staffordshire.gov.uk
CEOP	e-safety	0370 496 7622		https://www.ceop.police.uk/Contact-Us/ communication@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk
NSPCC	Advise and support	0808 800 5000		help@nspcc.org.uk

