

Child protection and Safeguarding- England and Wales



Approved by: Trustees	Date: September 2026
Trustee: Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead	Oliver Harrison
Committee Governance	Board of Trustees/SLT
Sub-Committee Responsible	Children's Service Sub Committee
Lead Member of Staff: Director of Operations	Jenny Ray
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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Jenny Ray	Mobile: 07805065473 Jenny@honeypot.org.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mathew Barber	Office: 02380 890 002 Mobile: 077 9597 8974 mathew@honeypot.org.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mark Phillips	Office: 01686 622773 M: 07940569036 mark@honeypot.org.uk
Social services	Hampshire Children's Services	Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm, phone 0300 555 1384 Email: childrens.services@hants.gov.uk Out-of-hours service, phone 0300 555 1373 Or complete online form (HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN ONLY)
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Southampton	Telephone: 023 8091 5535 Mobile: 07500 952 037 lado@southampton.gov.uk
Social Services	Wales	Front Door Email csfrontdoor@powys.gov.uk Telephone 01597 827 666 (office hours) Telephone 0345 054 4847 (out of hours) or complete the online form https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/8155/Report-a-concern-about-a-child
Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead-Trustee	Oliver Harrison	oliver@honeypot.org.uk
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264

Purpose of Policy

Honeypot Charity is committed to keeping children safe and secure on site. This policy relates to all staff, volunteers and trustees of our charity and provides them with the framework they need to do this successfully whilst informing parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

The Charity's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy sets out the arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who access Honeypot's services. The policy reflects applicable safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in England and Wales. Honeypot has also adopted relevant elements of Keeping Children Safe in Education as safeguarding best practice where appropriate to its services.

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually in line with relevant legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements and emerging safeguarding risks and will be updated to reflect any significant changes in safeguarding policy, procedure or practice.

1. Aims

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff, volunteers and trustees understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns. Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- Safeguard the welfare of all children, irrespective of their social, economic, cultural or religious background, and provide opportunities for children to discuss issues and report concerns affecting their safety and wellbeing.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the charity, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
- To develop a structured procedure within the charity that will be followed by all members of the charity community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To ensure that all adults within our charity who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability and that safer recruitment practices are followed. This includes other community users of our facilities.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy reflects the safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements applicable to Honeypot Children's Charity in England and Wales.

Honeypot Children's Charity is not subject to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) as statutory guidance because it is not a school or college. However, Honeypot has chosen to adopt relevant elements of KCSIE as recognised safeguarding best practice where these are appropriate to its services.

In England, this policy is principally informed by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and local safeguarding arrangements.

In Wales, this policy is informed by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard People and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

This policy has been reviewed against current safeguarding guidance and reflects safeguarding expectations relating to online safety, artificial intelligence (AI), information sharing, harmful sexual behaviour, violence against women and girls (VAWG) and other emerging safeguarding risks.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which supports organisations and practitioners to protect children and vulnerable people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against individuals on the basis of protected characteristics and supports Honeypot's

commitment to ensuring all children can access services safely, fairly and without discrimination.

Other guidance in addition to above are available:

- Online abuse learning. <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse>
- Bullying <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying>

Child protection <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Local safeguarding arrangements are the multi-agency arrangements through which organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Honeypot will follow the relevant safeguarding arrangements, referral pathways and procedures applicable to the location where a safeguarding concern arises.

In England, this includes local safeguarding partner arrangements and local authority procedures.

In Wales, this includes the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and local authority safeguarding arrangements.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees in the charity and is

consistent with the relevant local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures applicable in England and Wales.

5.1 All staff

- Honeypot has adopted relevant elements of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education as safeguarding best practice. Staff will read and understand the safeguarding guidance required by Honeypot for their role and will confirm annually via ELMO that they have read and understood the relevant safeguarding documents.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online) – Also See Online Safety Policy.
- Provide a safe space for children who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs, the staff code of conduct, behaviour expectations, online safety arrangements including filtering and monitoring, and the safeguarding response to children whose welfare may be at risk.
- The process for identifying emerging concerns, accessing early intervention and support, liaising with the DSL and sharing information with relevant professionals where appropriate.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation, serious violence, violence against women and

girls (VAWG), misogyny, harmful sexual behaviour, AI-generated abuse, deepfake imagery and other emerging online harms.

- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, in education settings, community settings and online. The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Our DSLs across the charity are: **See table above**

The DSLs take lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in accordance with this policy, relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

The on-call DSL will be available during the breaks for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns- [see protocol below](#)

The DSLs will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- If required to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Make sure that staff have appropriate Prevent training and induction
- Keep appropriate staff at the charity informed of any issues.
- Keep the CEO informed of any issues.

The DSLs will also:

- Liaise with the appropriate authority's case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the Charity's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual

violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support

- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- The full Safeguarding responsibility of the DSL including filtering and monitoring processes, is outlined as part of their roles and responsibilities.

5.3 The Trustee board

The Board of Trustees/SLT will approve this policy at each review and hold the Director of Operations to account for its implementation. The Board of Trustees will appoint a trustee to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full Board of Trustees/SLT. Our safeguarding trustee is Oliver Harrison. The Board of Trustees will also receive assurance that safeguarding training, online safety arrangements, filtering and monitoring controls, and safer recruitment requirements remain effective and compliant with current statutory guidance. The chair of trustees will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the CEO or any other Director, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and our charity's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- Reviewing the charity's filtering and monitoring arrangements and seeking assurance that appropriate controls and safeguards remain effective.

Make sure:

- The DSLs have the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the charity's approach to safeguarding and related policies
- The DSLs have lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
- The Charity has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including agency staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on registered HoneyPot Children):

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the charity about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the charity premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

All trustees will receive safeguarding information and training appropriate to their governance responsibilities and will maintain awareness of safeguarding guidance adopted by HoneyPot as best practice.

5.4 The Operations Managers/Director of Operations

The Operations Managers/Director of Operations are responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of this policy as part of their induction.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicate to parents/carers as required that the charity has a safeguarding and child protection policy in place.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, as well as online safety training and updating the content of the training regularly.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)

6. Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality and data protection, our charity adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 as follows:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk

- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child's best interest.
- If a victim asks the charity not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
 - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
 - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- Concerns relating to confidentiality must never prevent the timely sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the safety and welfare of the child will always take precedence over normal expectations of confidentiality. If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in

section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to children who may require early intervention, additional support or safeguarding action, including a child who:

- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
-
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), developing inappropriate relationships online, or experiencing harm through artificial intelligence (AI), digitally manipulated content, deepfake imagery, image-based abuse or online exploitation. Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is missing education or not receiving appropriate education.

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral but this is best carried out with the support of the DSL** (see section 5.2). If you make a referral directly tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The following is a link to the GOV.UK webpage for reporting child abuse to your local council: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation (***on the Safeguarding form- Appendix 5***) as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place, or a child is at risk of FGM

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. FGM is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting and harmful consequences. It is also known as female genital cutting, circumcision or initiation. Possible indicators that a child has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a child may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **child under 18** should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for staff/adults mentioned above does not apply in cases where a child is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine child/children.

Any member of staff who suspects a child is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures. FGM is illegal in the United Kingdom – it is also illegal to take a British National or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this. The maximum sentence for carrying out FGM or helping it to take place is 14 years in prison.

Call the FGM helpline if you're worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM.

FGM Helpline:

Telephone: 0800 028 3550

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Email: fgmhelp@NSPCC.org.uk

The government has published the following guidance and legislation:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/573782/FGM_Mandatory_Reporting_-_procedural_information_nov16_FINAL.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation>

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 below, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

- Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.
- If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Early intervention and support Where early intervention, family support or multi-agency support is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and coordinating support arrangements. Staff may be required to provide information to support assessments and interventions. Honeypot will work collaboratively with children's social care and partner agencies to identify concerns and support children and families at the earliest opportunity.

Honeypot will work with relevant safeguarding agencies and local authority services in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so (see section 7.1). The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded. If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

Note that this is not for use in emergency situations. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

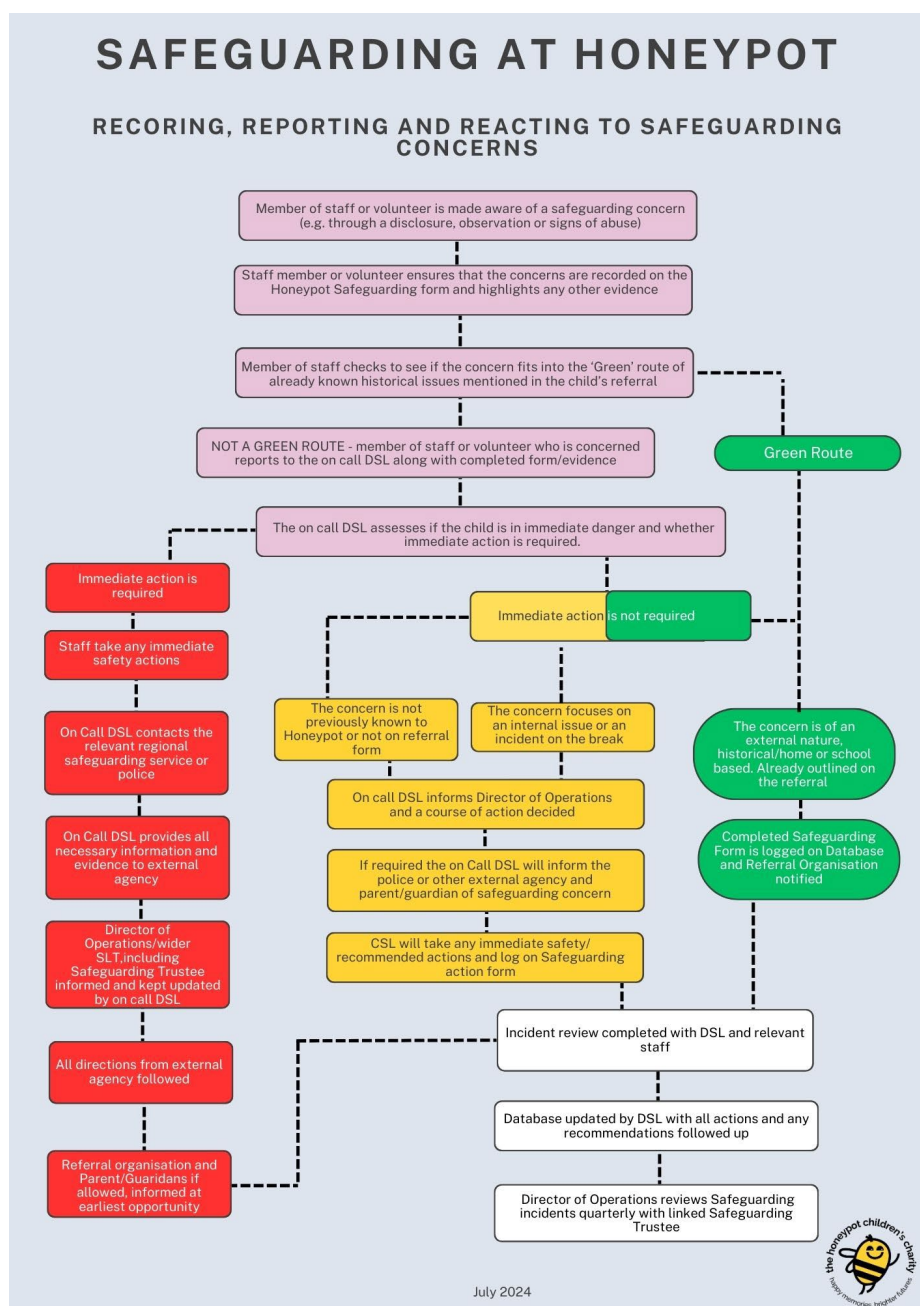
7.6 If you have a mental health concern

Mental health concerns may be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation. This includes self-harm, suicidal ideation, emotionally harmful online influences, significant behavioural changes and indicators of emotional distress. Mental health concerns should always be considered alongside wider safeguarding assessment and referral processes.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4. If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Staff should refer to relevant national guidance, local support pathways and Honeypot procedures relating to children's mental health and wellbeing.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, visiting teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including bank staff, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a bank staff, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Operations Managers/Director of Operations as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the Operations Managers/Director of Operation's speak to the CEO/chair of trustees.

The Operations Managers/Director of Operations or trustees will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, Including consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in England, or following the relevant Wales safeguarding procedures and local authority arrangements in Wales.

Hampshire: LADO Mark Blackwell/Barbara Piddington – Tel: 01962 876364 or Email: child.protection@hants.gov.uk

Southampton: LADO Jemma Swann - Tel: 02380 915535/ 07500 952037 or Email: lado@southampton.gov.uk

Wales: Front Door

Email csfrontdoor@powys.gov.uk telephone 01597 827 666 (office hours) telephone 0345 054 4847 (out of hours) or • complete the online form <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/8155/Report-a-concern-about-a-child>

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other children (child on child abuse)

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Honeypot recognises that harmful attitudes towards women and girls can emerge during childhood and adolescence. Misogyny, sexist language, sexual harassment, coercive behaviour, image-based abuse, harmful gender stereotypes and behaviours associated with violence against women and girls (VAWG) may constitute safeguarding concerns. Such behaviours will be challenged, recorded and addressed appropriately, with safeguarding action taken where necessary.

Most cases of children hurting other children will be dealt with under our charity’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put children in the house at risk
- Is violent
- Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another child:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow their advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will support the charity to put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed at the charity.
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation

Creating a supportive environment in the houses and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards girls, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure adults through our interventions and support throughout their stay can help to educate children about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure children are able to easily and confidently report abuse to one of the adults on duty in the house.
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in the houses, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”

That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:

- Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
- A friend may make a report
- A member of staff may overhear a conversation
- A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong

That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation

That a child harming another child could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it

That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our charity from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is a suggested approach based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it
- Ask the child/children who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child/children it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the child/children that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a child/children
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the children involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual

- Whether to contact parents or carers of the children involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any child in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the Director of Operations and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101 and speaking to them for guidance.

Referring to the school

If it is necessary to refer an incident to a school, this will be done directly to the headteacher or DSL of the school.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

7.10 Reporting systems for our children

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring children feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Make it clear to the child that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our charity aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of children, staff, volunteers and trustees
- Protect and educate the whole community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole charity
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual

and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, artificial intelligence, deepfakes, image-based abuse, emerging online harms and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.
- All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once a year
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to site for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when children are not present
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of children on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all staff, volunteers and trustees aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet on our sites, use of the charity's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Where concerns arise regarding a child's device, staff should seek advice from the DSL and follow the charity's safeguarding procedures and relevant guidance.
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the charity's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by the sites. The Board of Trustees will receive assurance that these arrangements have been reviewed and remain effective. Provide regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our Charity's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our staff hub.

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, children and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

The Charity recognises that AI has many uses, including supporting learning, communication and safeguarding activities, and in helping to protect children.

However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose children to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

The Charity will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully children in line with this policy and report to the appropriate organisation. The Charity recognises that AI-generated content may also be used to create sexually explicit, abusive or exploitative images, including "deepfake" and digitally manipulated imagery. Children may be harmed even where content is wholly or partly artificially generated. Any concerns relating to AI-generated sexualised content, image-based abuse or online exploitation involving a child will be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported to the DSL without delay.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers, as well as if appropriate the child's school. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team and the school if appropriate before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved and their schools, as well as the young carer organisation they came from.

10. Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children

- The potential for children with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

We would liaise with schools and other agencies to ensure the children are offered extra pastoral support.

11. Children with a social worker

Children who have social workers due to safeguarding or their welfare needs; the DSL's and all members of staff will work and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a child has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and supporting their educational and wellbeing outcomes.

12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff at our houses are aware of the children who come to us if they are looked-after children or were previously looked-after children, so they are able to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding to keep them safe. The appropriate staff will liaise with the referring organisation or outside agencies to respond quickly and effectively to any safeguarding concerns.

13. Complaints and concerns about the charity's safeguarding policies

13.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

13.2 Other complaints

Any concerns should be raised with the DSL who will respond to complaints as a matter of urgency or as outlined in the charity's complaints and procedure policy.

13.3 Whistleblowing

Please refer to the separate Whistleblowing Policy which covers concerns regarding poor or unsafe practice, safeguarding failures or concerns about the conduct of individuals working on behalf of the charity.

14. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the charity. Our safeguarding record-keeping arrangements are as follows:

- All concerns are recorded on a form and handed to DSL immediately.
- We liaise with the referring Organisation to ensure we have the latest information to support the child/children's visit to the house.
- Any paper records are held in the Operations Manager's office in locked filing cabinets.
- The records will be retained in accordance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and the charity's records retention schedule.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

15. Training

15.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training and online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the charity's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will reflect current safeguarding legislation, national guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. Annual safeguarding updates will include emerging safeguarding themes and risks, including online harms, artificial intelligence (AI), deepfake imagery, image-based abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, violence against women and girls (VAWG), mental health concerns, information sharing and relevant changes to statutory safeguarding guidance. Volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding training relevant to their role.

15.2 The DSLs (Operations Managers and Director of Operations)

The DSLs will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually. DSLs will ensure they remain informed regarding emerging safeguarding risks, including artificial intelligence, online abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, mental health concerns and developments in statutory safeguarding guidance. (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent awareness training every 2 years.

15.3 Board of Trustees

All trustees are aware of safeguarding or have received safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions, understand their responsibilities and provide effective oversight of safeguarding, online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements.

15.4 Recruitment – interview/appointment panels

At least one person conducting any interview for any post at the charity will have undertaken safer recruitment training. (to be updated every three years) This will cover safer recruitment principles, safeguarding responsibilities and relevant safeguarding guidance adopted by Honeypot, including appropriate elements of Keeping Children Safe in Education as best practice.

See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

Safer recruitment trained:

Personnel Manager HR – Elaine Hiskett

Director of Operations – Jenny Ray

15.5 Staff who have contact with children and families

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Jenny Ray – Director of Operations/DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the safeguarding trustee

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour Policy

Staff code of conduct

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Health and safety

Online safety

Mobile phone use

Diversity and Equality

Whistleblowing

Privacy notices

These appendices support the implementation of Honeypot's safeguarding arrangements and are informed by current safeguarding legislation, national guidance and local safeguarding procedures in England and Wales. Honeypot has adopted relevant elements of Keeping Children Safe in Education as recognised safeguarding best practice where appropriate to its services.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

- 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 limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

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

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

Appendix 2: Safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

Recruitment and selection process

- To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
- We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

- When advertising roles, we will make clear:
- Honeypot Children's Charity's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

- Our application forms will:
- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

- Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:
- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:

- If they have a criminal history
- Whether they are included on the barred list
- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true
- We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

- We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.
- When seeking references, we will:
- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where a referee works within an organisation providing services to children, we may seek confirmation from an appropriate senior manager regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children and any relevant disciplinary investigations.
-
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

- When interviewing candidates, we will:
- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

- We will record all information on the checks carried out in the charity's safer recruitment record.
- Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.
- **New staff**
- All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:
- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK.

These could include, where available:

- For all staff: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
- For all staff: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to work with children.
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children within a charity, educational setting or other regulated environment; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.
- The charity will ensure that all individuals undertaking regulated activity with children have undergone the appropriate safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS and barred list checks where required, in accordance with current safeguarding legislation and guidance.

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more
- We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

If necessary, we will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the sites has had the appropriate level of DBS check.

However, we believe no contractor will work on the sites while children are there unless it is deemed the work that needs to be carried out there and then is essential to

the site and to keep the children and staff safe. In this case Operations Manager/Site Manager will always supervise the contractors.

If for any reason contractors need to be on site while children and staff are there then there will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- For self-employed contractors or other individuals providing services or activities for children on behalf of the charity.

Work Placements/Students

Where we have work experience or students, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Review volunteer deployment arrangements regularly to ensure compliance with current safeguarding legislation, regulated activity requirements and safer recruitment guidance.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

Board of Trustees/SLT

Trustees who have regular face to face contact with children on site will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Trustees who have regular face to face contact with children on site will also have the following checks:

- Identity

- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Appendix 3: Allegations of abuse made against staff

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including outside agency workers, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of an organisation.

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Operations Manager or the trustee, where the Operations Manager is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the organisation so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the organisation so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative location.
- If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the organisation and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the organisation is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care and notify the school.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the organisation and their contact details.

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in the organisation and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate. Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against staff (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a member of staff will be advised to seek legal advice.

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member).

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the organisation will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the organisation's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations agency staff and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the charity, such as a contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome

The safeguarding trustee will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the organisation, while the organisation carries out the investigation

We will involve the agency fully, but the charity will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required

We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week

If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, considering information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the charity ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their

services, the charity will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending our houses.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation needs help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the charity will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

The charity will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved

- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the charity will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the charity's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the charity that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including agency staff, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the charity
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the Charity may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the organisation's safeguarding system
- Operations Managers and DSL will work together in their process or procedure for confidentially sharing low-level concerns

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the Operations Manager will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The Operations Manager will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the charity policies. The Operations Manager will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the charity

- Where a low-level concern relates to agency staff or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our charity has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- o Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our charity’s approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn’t physical, as well as

witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to local authority children's social care.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a Child is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A child confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/child already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

- o A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
 - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a child may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 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.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the child about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the child about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk

Preventing radicalisation

- o **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence
- o **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
 - Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
 - Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
 - Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points
- o **Terrorism** is an action that:
 - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
 - Causes serious damage to property; or
 - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

We have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children accessing our services from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our children to stay safe online.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period. Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a child is being radicalised can include:

- o Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- o Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- o Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- o Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy
- o Converting to a new religion
- o Isolating themselves from family and friends
- o Talking as if from a scripted speech
- o An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- o A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- o Increased levels of anger
- o Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- o Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- o Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- o Possessing extremist literature
- o Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a child they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** act if they are worried.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns
- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within our sites that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

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If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our charity's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above)

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a child being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the sites who are visiting for a professional purpose will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite onto the site any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using our facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children or staff.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the break, we will contact all known contacts and the referrer if applicable and if no contact can be made social services for the area will be contacted and the safeguarding protocols followed. Staff will remain with the child until they are placed in safety of the family or the LA.

SAFEGUARDING – Report of a Concern

Child Name:		Break number and date:	
Date of birth:		Time:	
Name of reporter :		Role of reporter:	
Details of concern: <i>(Where? when? what? who? behaviours? Witnesses? Use child's words)</i>	<i>(Use body map if appropriate)</i>		

Reported to:		Role of person reported to:	
Signed:			
Date:			
If the child is in immediate danger, please contact: Police- 999 or Ambulance Services – Medical Emergency- 999 Where an urgent response is required, contact: Honeypot House (Hampshire): Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm, Tel 0300 555 1384, Tel 0300 555 1373 (Out-of-hours) Honeypot Pen Y Bryn (Wales) : Powys Front Door- Tel 01597 827 666 (office hours) Tel 0345 054 4847 (out of hours) Honeypot Dalleagles (Scotland): Social Work: Ayrshire Urgent Care Service Tel: 0800 328 7758			

Action taken:		Advice sought: <i>(from whom and what was advice given)</i>	
Concern / referral discussed with parent / carer?		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, note discussion with parent</i>	
Concern / referral discussed with referring organisation?		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, note discussion with Referring organisation</i>	

