

WAKEFIELD & DISTRICT
**safeguarding
children board**

**working together
to safeguard children**

**child protection procedures
for voluntary organisations**

July 2005

developed in partnership with

The Children's Fund



Voluntary Action
Wakefield District



CONTENTS

| | PAGE NO |
|--|---------|
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS..... | 3 |
| CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT..... | 4 |
| WHAT IS ABUSE..... | 6 |
| WHEN A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAKES AN ALLEGATION | 8 |
| CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE..... | 9 |
| GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS..... | 10 |
| UNDERTAKING POLICE CHECKS..... | 12 |
| COSTS..... | 14 |
| GOOD PRACTICE FOR STAFF..... | 16 |
| RISK ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN..... | 18 |
| USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS..... | 19 |
| SAMPLE ALLEGATION OF ABUSE FORM..... | 20 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACPC would like to thank the following people for their contribution in the production of this guidance: Peter Bradley, Rajindar Ubhi, Steve Carter, Jenny Price, John Crosse, Sue Northcote, Dr Jean Glass, Ian Robinson, David Haddrick, DS Lisa Atkinson

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

“No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

“Every child has a right to good food, shelter, education and play, the right to say what they think and be listened to, and the right to protection from abuse”

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The welfare and safety of all children and young people is central to

(Name of Organisation)

It is the responsibility of

(Name of Designated Officer for the Organisation)

to ensure all staff, members and volunteers are adequately prepared to enable them to respond appropriately to any situation where a child or young person is suspected to be suffering or likely to suffer harm due to abuse or neglect, or where allegations of abuse past or present are made. We have a duty to pass on any concerns about the welfare of children or young people to Social Services through contact with Social Care Direct.

Signature:

Date:

On behalf of (Organisation):

Child Protection

Your Organisation's responsibility

The Children Act 1989 gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquires made to safeguard his or her welfare.

It is the basic right of every child to pass safely from childhood to adulthood.

Children and young people are vulnerable. They rely on families for nourishment, comfort, safety, love and protection. All people who work with children have responsibility to respond to any allegations of abuse and neglect. Taking appropriate action is important in preventing further harm and promoting the welfare of the children and young people.

In working with children or young people the protection and welfare of the child or young person must always be the first priority. This being the unanimous view and unquestionable public expectation of all organisations, we must act when there is suspicion or concern that child/ren are being abused within the home, in school or elsewhere.

All organisations should have procedures for handling suspected cases of abuse of children or young people, but the responsibility for investigating such cases lies with Social Services and Police.

Organisations need to:

- Put in place procedures for handling cases of actual or suspected abuse (including allegations against workers and volunteers) which are consistent with those agreed by the local Area Child Protection Committee and easily available to all staff for reference
- Appoint a designated member of staff to co-ordinate action within the organisation and liaise with other agencies on cases of abuse and neglect.
- Ensure that the designated member of staff receives appropriate training and support
- Ensure that all staff are trained and alert to signs of possible abuse and know to whom to report any concerns or suspicions
- Make parents/carers aware of the organisations' child protection policy.

What is Abuse

It is not our responsibility within the Voluntary Sector to determine whether or not an incident is defined as abuse or not, our duty is to report our concerns.

There are many different forms of abuse, but for ease of use by agencies, these are combined into four major categories, the following definitions are taken from the Wakefield Child Protection Procedures:

1. **Physical Abuse:**

Physical Abuse is caused by an action, which results in physical harm being done to a child. The harm may be caused by the child being:

- Hit
- Shaken
- Thrown
- Poisoned
- Burnt or Scalded
- Drowned
- Suffocated

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as “factitious or fabricated illness” or “Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy” .

2. **Sexual Abuse:**

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

- Physical contact including penetrative acts (i.e. rape or buggery)
- Physical contact including non-penetrative acts (i.e. fondling)
- Non contact activities such as involving a child in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or in watching sexual activities
- Encouraging or forcing a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

3. **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve:

- A parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing
- A carer failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- The failure of a carer to ensure that the child has access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- A carer's neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs (e.g. nurturing, emotional security, reassurance, encouragement)

4. **Emotional Abuse:**

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Emotional abuse of a child may involve:
 - Conveying to the child that they are worthless, inadequate, unlovable or unloved.
 - Conveying to a child that they have value insofar as they meet the needs of another person and not as the person that they are
 - The imposition of age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on a child
 - Causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger
 - The exploitation or corruption of a child

When a Child or Young Person makes an Allegation

What to do if a child starts to tell you about abuse

To begin with, there are three important things to do:

The first is listen.

The second is listen.

The third is listen.

And there are a number of important things you must try not to do. **You must not:**

- Show disbelief or horror
- Give an interpretation
- Give or suggest information that the child has not offered
- Agree to keep a secret
- Make promises that suggest that you can stop the abuse
- Investigate any allegations
- Ask probing questions

Then there are some important things you can say. You can:

- Say things that show you are listening
- Say things that reassure
- Ask for clarification about things that don't seem clear to you
- Keep questions to a minimum and encourage the child to use their own words. Child abuse cases can be dismissed if it appears the child has been led or words and ideas suggested to them.
- Say that you will have to tell other people, in order to stop what is happening.
- Ask if you can agree together what should be done next

Enclosed with this pack is a sample Allegation of Abuse Report Form.

Organisations/groups can adopt it as part of their own recording mechanisms, or use it as a prompt to create their own. The enclosed form identifies the information that may be required or asked for, when making a referral or reporting concerns of abuse to Social Care Direct, and can be used for reporting allegations made against individuals both within and external to the organisation/group.

Child Protection Procedure

In all cases where abuse or neglect is suspected or allegations are made, it is the duty of all staff, members or volunteers to report this information to the designated officer/manager .

- All official referrals to Social Services **should** be made with the parent's knowledge **unless to do so would put the child or worker at further risk of significant harm.**
- The designated officer should refer cases to or discuss them with Social Care Direct, according to the procedures established by the local Area Child Protection Committee. Any referral of abuse or neglect **must** be followed up in writing within 48 hours of the referral.
- If the designated officer is unsure about whether a case should be formally referred or has a general concern about a child's or young person's health or development, he or she can seek advice and support from Social Care Direct. It is important to say if you are seeking advice or making a referral.
- Where the designated officer is not the organisation's manager, there should be an agreement regarding who will liaise with Social Services and how the officer will keep the management informed of the case.
- When making a referral to Social Care Direct, be sure to ask the name of the person who you speak to. You can expect Social Care Direct to inform you of what decisions are made and what action, if any, is to be taken. If this does not happen, do not be afraid to phone back and seek further information.

A member of staff, either the designated officer or the member of staff who knows the child or young person best, should be prepared to contribute to future strategy discussions.

Social Care Direct (First Point of Contact) 01924 303456 (24hrs)

Guidelines for the Safe Recruitment of Staff or Volunteers

- Always seek two references for the individual, at least one of which should relate to previous work or experience they've had with children or young people in the past.
- If the individual has no previous experience of working with young people, a reference stating their suitability should be sought from an appropriate member of the community.
- All references should be followed up, a simple and brief phone call will confirm the identity, address and validity of the reference.
- All applicants should be encouraged to share their reasons for wishing to apply for the post, or as a volunteer and what previous experience they have working in this area. This should ideally take the form of a face-to-face interview but information could be asked for in an application form/letter.
- Current forms of identification should be sought from all individuals, showing a photo of the applicant with their address and signature (passports & the new driving licenses are ideal), or where not available a combination of the above.
- Criminal Records Bureau checks should be sought for all staff, members and volunteers. (See Criminal Records Bureau)
- All individuals should undertake appropriate Child Protection training. For further information contact a member of the training pool co-ordinators (see Useful Telephone Numbers)
- No one should work with or have unsupervised contact with children or young people until their references have been checked (it is sometimes not feasible due to delays to wait for the CRB checks but where this is the case, it is vital that no one should have unsupervised contact with children or young people)
- If you would like help in the safe recruitment of staff or volunteers for your organisation, or any advice on volunteer management good practice please contact:

Voluntary Action Wakefield District (VAWD)
11 Upper York St, Wakefield.
WF1 3LQ. Tel: 01924 367418

Undertaking Police Checks

When do I have to 'Police Check' Staff or Volunteers?

The major test for deciding whether a member of staff or volunteer needs a 'Police' or 'CRB' check lies in the nature of their contact with children or young people. The nature of this contact is of major importance and, anyone who will have regular or unsupervised access to children and young people must obtain either a 'Standard' or 'Enhanced' disclosure from the CRB.

It should be noted that any convictions against children are never considered as 'spent' under the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

What is Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) ?

The CRB is an important government initiative. Its purpose is to help all types of organisations in England and Wales make more informed recruitment decisions.

Purpose

The CRB achieves its purpose by providing a service called Disclosure. This is a carefully regulated one-stop shop service that enables many more organisations to gain access to important criminal records and other information for recruitment and licensing purposes.

Performance

The CRB helps organisations to perform better by screening out candidates who may be unsuitable for certain kinds of work. In doing this it particularly helps to provide protection for children and other vulnerable members of society.

Why is it necessary?

Enabling wider access to groups and organisations to criminal records information, helps to reduce the risks of abuse, making it more difficult for unsuitable people to work with children and vulnerable adults, this is called the **Disclosure Service**.

Disclosure Service:

Provides a regulated 'one stop' service for England and Wales offering access to records held by the police, together with those held by the Department of Health (DH) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

The Disclosure service enables organisations to make more thorough recruitment checks, particularly for positions that involve regular contact with children and vulnerable adults.

The Disclosure service is available to organisations that have registered with the **CRB**. It is also available to organisations that have not registered by using an Umbrella Body to obtain their Disclosure.

The Standard Disclosure

These are primarily for positions that involve working with children or regular contact with vulnerable adults. They will also be issued in other circumstances such as for those providing health services and for those entering certain professions such as accountancy. These are some of the excepted professions, offices and employments referred to in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Standard Disclosures contain details of all convictions on record (including 'spent' convictions), plus details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings. For positions involving 'working with children', the Standard Disclosure will also give any information contained on government department lists of people considered unsuitable to work with children. These lists are held by the DfES and Department of Health.

The Enhanced Disclosure

These are for those regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults. Enhanced Disclosures will also be issued in respect of other positions such as those seeking judicial appointments, and certain statutory licensing purposes.

All Enhanced Disclosures involve an extra level of checking with local police force records in addition to checks with the Police National Computer (PNC) and the government department lists held by the DfES and DH, where appropriate. Local police information can be contained on both copies of the Disclosure. It is up to the Chief Constable of the relevant police force or forces to decide what, if any, information is disclosed. Chief Constables can decide that some information may be relevant to the position but do not wish the prospective employee to see the information. This information will be sent separately to the person who countersigned the application only.

Costs:

The fee for Standard and Enhanced levels of Disclosure is £12.00, until 1st July 2003, when new charges come into force.

Enhanced disclosure =£29.00

Standard disclosure = £24.00

This fee will be requested at the point of application. Standard and Enhanced Disclosures for volunteers in sensitive positions i.e. working with children and with vulnerable adults, will be issued free of charge.

If your organisation is not registered with the CRB (registration fee £300, one off payment, + £5 per countersignatory) you can apply for a disclosure through an 'Umbrella Body', who may charge an additional administration fee.

Umbrella Bodies you can use to apply for a Disclosure:

Please see the WDSCB or Children's Fund website for information relating to CRB checks.

Good Practice for Staff, Members & Volunteers

Having a Child Protection Policy in place does not in itself protect children, Child Protection is about adopting methods of working that safeguards not only the children and young people but also your staff and volunteers too.

If your organisation receives information that indicates an individual presents a risk to children or young people and believes that person may be in contact with children, Social Services must be informed.

By taking steps to protect yourself, you are also protecting the young people with whom you work

Simple Steps you should consider adopting into your own / organisations practice:

- **Never be alone with a child!** (This statement is absurd except in an ideal world, where funding would be available for adequate staffing 24hrs a day. So if you are working one-to-one with a young person, never work behind closed doors and always tell someone what you're about to do, so they can periodically check. When organising transport to and from a venue always try and organise a central pick-up and drop-off point, it's always nice to be able to drop a young person at home, but unless there are two members of staff/volunteers, this will always mean you end up with just one young person in the vehicle with you, on your own).
- Ensure that everyone in your organisation has a '**Police Check**' (now known as '**Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure**') appropriate to their position in the organisation, including volunteers. If a new member of staff or volunteer has started but is still awaiting Disclosure, they must not be allowed unsupervised access to any of the young people. Always carry out Disclosure on new people - even if they say they had one for their previous job, never take the risk, anything they show you might be forged, referees primed etc.
- **Risk Assessments** are crucial in Child Protection and in today's blame culture, you should evaluate and plan for all the potential dangers involved in any activity or pursuit that is organised. Make sure any activities you undertake are run in line with any National or Regional guidance (contact your local authority for guidance if you're not sure) and always make sure that you have sight and take a copy of any licenses or insurance an activity provider assures you they have. Never be afraid to stop an

- activity, even if you're not running it, should you have any concerns regarding the treatment or safety of children and young people.
- ◆ For every environment in which we work with Children or Young People, inside or out, a risk assessment should be undertaken.
The structure of a risk assessment is very simple:
 1. Identify real or potential hazards
 2. Decide who might be harmed and how
 3. Assess the risk and take appropriate action to remove them or reduce them as far as possible.
 4. Record the findings
 5. Check the risks regularly to assess further preventative measures
- If you feel that you are unable to reduce the risks enough to make the activity safe, find somewhere else, or postpone the activity until appropriate measures to reduce the risk can be taken.
- **Communication** is key within any organisation; information has no power if it's not shared. If you have concerns or suspicions regarding a young person or a colleague, you won't help anybody by keeping it to yourself - encourage regular discussions and feedback about the young people you work with. A simple planning session prior to the arrival of the young people and a quick review at the end, once they've gone, will soon identify any recurring problems, or put your mind at ease.

STAY SAFE! If you're going to meet someone or be involved in detached work away from your usual base of operations, make sure someone knows where you're going, who you're going to see and why, and more importantly, organise a procedure of telephoning someone just before you go and then again upon your return, making sure to inform them if the session runs over the agreed time.

RISK ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

| Activity / Situation / Hazard | Action Required | Target Date |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Assessment & Action Plan prepared by:

Date:

Next Assessment Date:

Useful Telephone Numbers

SOCIAL CARE DIRECT: 0845 8503503
Email: Social_Care_Direct@wakefield.gov.uk

CHILD & PUBLIC PROTECTION UNIT (Police) 0845 6060606
OSSETT POLICE STATION

TRAINING CO-ORDINATORS:

BECKY WAKEFIELD 01924 367418
VOLUNTARY ACTION WAKEFIELD DISTRICT
ALSO KNOWN AS VAUD
11 UPPER YORK STREET
WAKEFIELD WF1 3LQ

ROSIE FAULKNER 01924 302625
CHILD PROTECTION UNIT (WMDC)
SPRINGFIELD GRANGE
FLANSHAW, WAKEFIELD WF2 9QP

EMILY CASTLE 01924 380165
CHILDREN'S FUND
FELL HOUSE, MARKET STREET
WAKEFIELD WF1 1DF

Sample Allegation of Abuse Report Form

Name of Young Person:

Name of Officer / Volunteer to
Whom the allegation was made:

Date of allegation:

Time of allegation:

Venue (where did the allegation take place)?

Young Person's address:

Postcode:

Who else, if anyone, was present?

| Name | Young Person / Adult | Relationship to young person |
|------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Who did you initially report the allegation to?

Record of allegation:

(Please write as much as you can remember of the conversation you had with the young person, it is important that you use the same words the young person used to describe the abuse, their feelings or body parts).

Cont'

Use more sheets if necessary, please ensure you number, sign and date the bottom of each extra sheet used.

Allegation Summary:

Who are the allegations against?

What is their relationship to the young person?

What are they alleged to have done?
(physical, sexual, neglect or emotional)

When did, or is, the alleged abuse taking place?

**To your knowledge, is there more than one victim?
YES / NO / DON'T KNOW**

**To your knowledge is there more than one alleged perpetrator?
YES / NO / DON'T KNOW**

What evidence have you seen to support the allegations (bruises, burns overt changes in behaviour etc)?

Additional Information: (Please use this space to share any other information you may feel is relevant to the disclosure, that has not already been identified within this report).

Signed

Date

You must now take and keep a copy of this form for your records and give the original to the designated Child Protection Officer for your organisation or group and ensure that they contact the relevant outside agencies.