



## **Safeguarding Children Policy**

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# Safeguarding Children Policy

## 1.Introduction

Communityworks exists for the benefit of the communities of Otley Road and Undercliffe. The community includes children and young people. The following policy and procedures reflects the commitment of Communityworks to work effectively in promoting children's welfare and safeguarding them from harm with particular regard to protection from abuse and neglect. This includes all children and young people participating in Communityworks activities.

As Communityworks staff/volunteers all have regular contact with children and young people, this policy applies to all people working in the organisation whether in a paid or a voluntary capacity. In order to protect young people from both potential and actual child abuse it is important that all concerned have a basic understanding of the issues involved.

Communityworks is committed to creating an environment that enables children and young people to learn, develop and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. Parents/carers trust us to look after their children, to care for them, to give encouragement and to keep them safe. We need to ensure that we honour their trust.

### 1.1 Aims of the Policy

The policy recognises that safeguarding children covers a range of issues that require close attention including:

- Communityworks recognises that anyone working with children and young people owe a duty of care to safeguard and protect children and that this should be done in full partnership with other agencies.

- In order to safeguard children and young people Communityworks will address the needs of children across the whole organisation including those where children are not the primary users.
- Communityworks will pay close attention to the safe recruitment and selection of staff / volunteers.
- Communityworks will be guided by current legislation relating to safeguarding children and will regularly review policies to ensure continuous improvement in safeguarding children.

The policy aims to ensure that the procedures in place are understandable and easy to implement by anyone providing a service to young people at Communityworks. Communityworks will ensure that all centre staff/volunteers are aware of this policy and know how to recognise and refer any concerns. A flow chart of the procedure to follow in cases of child protection is included in this policy. This will also be displayed throughout the centre.

All people using Communityworks will be given information about the limits of confidentiality. All users will be informed that it is our responsibility to report any concerns to the police and /or The Bradford Partnership (formerly known as Bradford Safeguarding Children Board).

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

Child abuse is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all that provide services for young people. People may feel uncomfortable with the subject. It is not easily recognisable and individuals often fear reading too much into a situation or making an incorrect judgement. Many young people experience minor accidents causing injuries, but there may be occasions where you are concerned over the nature and frequency of injury. This document contains information on some of the signs that may give cause for

concern. This document is based on the principle that:

**“It is not your responsibility as members of Communityworks to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is your responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.”**

## **1.3 WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE**

**Do not ever think that you could never be placed in the position of reporting child abuse.**

The term ‘child abuse’ is used to describe ways in which young people are harmed by someone in a position of power. There are many different ways in which children can be harmed, all with a common factor that the child feels under-valued and worthless. Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child.

## **1.4 TYPES OF ABUSE**

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse includes hurting or injuring a child. It might also occur if a child is forced to do something beyond their capabilities. Bullying is likely to fall under this category.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia where FGM is concentrated. FGM is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity. This could also occur through unnecessary or inappropriate

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physical contact or through suggestive comments or verbal innuendo. Indications of sexual abuse may include: Emotional or behavioural changes, for example a normally quiet child may become loud and aggressive, or a boisterous child may suddenly become quiet and passive. Such examples are sexually explicit talk and behaviour that is inappropriate to the child's age, uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts.

## **Emotional**

Emotional abuse occurs when a child is not given love, help, encouragement and attention and is constantly deprived or ridiculed or perhaps even worse, ignored. This can also occur when a child is over protected. It can be present in the unrealistic expectations of teachers and parents over what children can achieve. The use of abusive language of any sort constitutes emotional abuse and it can be a feature of bullying. The child may have extreme difficulty in forming friendships, thus becoming a 'loner'. The child may frequently be being used as a 'scapegoat' by other children. The child may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack confidence.

## **Neglect**

Neglect usually means failing to meet children's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, medical attention etc. It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm. The child may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed.

## **1.5 Effects of Abuse**

The effects of child abuse can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not have the support to cope with that abuse. Indications that a child may be being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Signs of FGM - procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical

reasons.

- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.

## 2. Safeguarding Practices

**Communityworks has 3 named Child Protection Officers. These are:**

Jane Lees: Communityworks CEO

Tel: 01274 200589

Email: [jane.lees@communityworksbradford.org.uk](mailto:jane.lees@communityworksbradford.org.uk)

Sandra Walker: Nursery Manager

Tel: 01274 200589

Email: [sandra.walker@communityworksbradford.org.uk](mailto:sandra.walker@communityworksbradford.org.uk)

Sue Mearns: Safeguarding Board of Director

Tel: 01274 200589

Email: [sue.mearns@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sue.mearns@hotmail.co.uk)

The procedures contained in this document attempt to provide staff with a practical guide on how to record a concern about a child. Communityworks will ensure all staff/volunteers are familiar with and follow the policy and procedures for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and know who to contact within Communityworks.

## #2.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff/Volunteers

Communityworks will ensure the safe recruitment and employment of staff/volunteers and board members through appropriate routine checks. Any individual taking up employment/volunteering with Communityworks must agree to an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Check. This requirement will be made clear on all application forms for employment. It will also be stated as part of any interview process and will be a condition before any offer of employment can be confirmed. DBS checks will be updated every 3 years, this is in line with the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. All DBS details will be stored on the single central record. The single central record will be checked on a monthly basis by the Communityworks CEO and updated as necessary. (See SCR Policy)

Communityworks will always obtain at least two references for staff/volunteers prior to that person beginning employment.

In order to ensure staff can recognise, respond and report situations of possible child abuse and be aware of how to respond to a child disclosing information Communityworks will ensure all staff/volunteers and board members are trained in Basic Awareness of Child Protection, this is done as part of the induction process. The named child protection officers will undertake level 2 safeguarding courses available through The Bradford Partnership.

Staff/Volunteers will be kept up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role effectively. This will include training identified in supervision and updates on current legislation.

If Communityworks has a concern about a safeguarding issue relating to a worker/volunteer due to misconduct with children or young people, the *“What to do in the event of allegations of abuse against a member of staff”* policy will be followed. This will instigate a LADO referral and as a result that person will be referred to the police, social services and The Bradford Partnership.

### 3. Procedure

Any safeguarding concerns staff/ volunteers/ board members have should be acted on **immediately**. This is done by both informing a named person and completing an incident report recording form and passed to a named person. **This should take priority over any other work commitments.** The named child protection officer will decide whether or not to report the matter further and what action needs taking.

In the event of referral to Social Services, copies of all relevant correspondence, notes of dialogue, diagrams of any injury witnessed must be passed to the child protection officer for filing. It is very important that any concerns on a child's safety are logged.

### 4. Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

Communityworks will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The named person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving a named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be one of the other named persons or the Safeguarding board of director).
- The named person should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO - who is based at the Child Protection Unit) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should complete an incident report recording form outlining what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.



- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, Communityworks will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and reference to the operation of disciplinary procedures may be made. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependent on the nature of the incident.

## **5. Good Practice in the Care of Children**

### **Situations where abuse may occur can be minimised by:**

- Always being publicly open when working with children.
- Where possible parents should take responsibility for their own children.
- Where possible avoid taking children alone on car journeys, however short, unless there is no other option and the child's parents have given permission. This may be acceptable as a one-off, but very unwise to do on a regular basis.

### **Those working with children should never:**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

### **Guidelines for discussing suspicions with children:**

- Listen to the child rather than directly question them
- Do not try to interview the child
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events
- Make notes of the discussion, (use an incident recording form) as soon as possible afterwards, taking care to record the timing, setting, people present and what was said. Be as accurate as possible
- Never promise to keep a secret. For example you can say: *"Depending on what it is you tell me I may have to tell someone else so we can help you."*
- Any concerns should be reported to a named person and recorded on an incident report form.

**If you have any concerns regarding your own, a child's or other adults' behaviour please seek supervision. Any member of staff, volunteer or board member dealing with such instances will be given supervision.**

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## Useful Numbers

During office hours (8.30am – 5pm Monday to Thursday, 4.30pm on Friday) call Children’s Social Care Initial Contact Point on 01274 435600

At all other times, Children’s Social Care Emergency Duty Team on 01274 431010

**If you have reason to believe that a child is at IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM, contact the Police on 999**

**Website:** <https://saferbradford.co.uk>

**The Designated Officer (LADO) for Working Together to Safeguard Children – The Bradford Partnership can be contacted via the Duty Officer, on 01274 435600 or [LADO@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@bradford.gov.uk)**

OFSTED Helpdesk	0300 123 1231
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Police (Non Emergencies)	101

### Related Policies:

- What to do in the event of allegations of abuse against a member of staff
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- Incident Recording Procedure
- Health & safety
- Opening Up and Exiting the Building
- Behaviour management
- Special educational needs and inclusion
- Comments, Compliments and Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Emergency Procedures
- Recruitment and Selection
- Single Central Record Policy and Procedure