[SAMPLE] Safeguarding (Children & Young People) Policy

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**PART One**

Introducing the Policy

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] works with young people through a variety of programmes and projects. [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION]believes that safeguarding and protecting children from harm should underpin all of our work with young people, to ensure they have positive experiences, not only when engaging with our services

but in their daily activities.

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] is required to fulfill its legal duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and fulfil statutory responsibilities set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2006). Therefore, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children must be an integral part of the services offered to all children and young people within [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION].

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] has a responsibility to continually review and monitor its safeguarding policy and procedures, gaining further advice and information wherever possible. All staff and volunteers should be aware of this policy and procedures in order to understand their individual responsibilities and help promote best practice.

Promoting children’s wellbeing and safeguarding them from significant harm depends upon effective information sharing, collaboration between agencies and understanding of the need to work in partnership with children and young people and their families.

The aim of this policy is to set out the responsibilities of [ENTER NAME OF RGANISATION] and its employees to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This guidance outlines what is unlawful and will not be tolerated, and how staff and volunteers can act professionally in all engagement with young people. It also outlines what is and is not appropriate behaviour from staff and volunteers. It is not exhaustive and staff should complete risk assessments for all events involving young people in order to help identify and manage any potential risks.

The [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] [POSITION] is the Key Safeguarding Officer for [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] and should be the first point of contact in relation to safeguarding issues. However, as the accountable officer, the Managing Director has overall responsibility for [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION]’s Safeguarding Policy and ensures

that the Board has effective arrangements and processes in place in order to secure compliance with statutory obligations and guidance.

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**PART Two**

Safeguarding Policy

1. **The Rights of Children and Young People**

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] is committed to protecting children and young people from harm. [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] believes that:

• The needs of the child are paramount and should reinforce all work with children.

• All children and young people have the right to grow up in a caring and safe environment.

• Children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse and to expect that

adults in positions of responsibility will do everything possible to protect that right

• The protection of children and young people from abuse should be seen as part of the

general responsibility of [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION]

• Responsibility for safeguarding children and young people must be shared to ensure that

young people will be protected effectively, with all relevant agencies and individuals accepting

responsibility and working together

• [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION]’s child and young people services should be delivered within an ethical and professional framework

**B. Roles and Responsibilities of [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] Staff**

**and Volunteers**

All staff working directly with children should ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of

young people is an integral part of their work

• Staff should treat all young people in a professional and respectful manner

• Staff should work in an open and transparent way in relation to young people

• Staff should discuss and/or take advice from their line manager about any incident which has

given them concern

• A written record should be made of any concerning incidents

• Staff should apply the same professional standards to all young people regardless of gender,

sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, religion and/or faith and age

• Staff should not give any personal contact details including home and mobile phone number

and personal email addresses to any young person

• Sexual or romantic contact with any young person or vulnerable adult is inappropriate and

may be illegal

• Staff should be aware that breaches of law and professional guidelines will be taken very

seriously

1. **Child Abuse**

For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 and also any person aged 18, 19 or 20 who has been in care (since the age of 16) or who has a learning disability (The Children Act 2004).

The Children Act 1989 recognises four categories of abuse, i.e. Physical abuse, Emotional abuse,

Sexual abuse and Neglect. Definitions of these categories are as follows:

• **Physical Abuse**

Physically hurting or injuring a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting,

scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also

be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to

a young person whom they are looking after. E.g. fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen’s

syndrome by proxy.

• **Sexual Abuse**

This is where a child is used by others to meet their own sexual needs. This could include

full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing

pornographic materials is also a form of sexual abuse. The age of consent for sexual activity

is 16 years. Any sexual activity involving persons when one or more of the persons involved

is aged 15 or under is unlawful. This is ‘underage sex’. Underage sex may involve child

abuse, and therefore require a referral to social services and the police.

• **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and

persistent adverse effects on the young person’s emotional development. It may involve

conveying to young people that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may involve

causing young people to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly yelled at, threatened

or taunted which may make the young person very nervous and withdrawn.

• **Neglect**

This is where a child’s basic physical and psychological needs are not met, which is likely to

result in the serious impairment of their health or development (e.g. failure to provide

adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or

failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment). It may also include

refusal to give love, affection and attention.

1. **Indicators of Abuse**

Indications that a young person 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

• Deliberately avoiding social services for fear of the child being received into care

• An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent

• The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her

• Someone else expresses concern about the welfare of another young person

• Unexplained changes in behaviour

• Inappropriate sexual awareness

• Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour

• Distrust of adults with whom a close relationship would be expected

• Trouble with making friends

• Displays variations in eating patterns including loss of appetite or overeating

• Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt

This is not an exhaustive list. It is important to remember that each circumstance is unique and that

the presence of one or more of these indicators is not necessarily proof that abuse is taking place.

**E. Bullying**

Abuse can also take place between peers in the form of bullying. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour where it is difficult for the people being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can include:

• Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking and theft)

• Verbal (e.g. name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic taunts, threats,

graffiti and gestures)

• Emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring)

• Sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)

Indicators of bullying:

• Behaviour changes such as reduced concentration, becoming withdrawn, depressed,

emotionally unstable, reluctance to go to school

• Disengagement with activities that were once exciting/fulfilling

• Physical indicators including headaches, stomach aches, trouble sleeping, bedwetting,

bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing, for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol

**F. Who is Responsible for Investigating Incidences of Child Abuse?**

There are only three agencies with the statutory right to undertake a child protection investigation.

They are:

• Local authority social services

• The police

• National Society for the Protection of Children (NSPCC)

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] staff and volunteers are not responsible for diagnosing or investigating abuse. Their responsibility is to be aware and alert to signs that might signs that might indicate that not all is well with the child or young person. Not all concerns will relate directly to abuse, there may be other explanations given a child’s individual circumstance.

There should never be a delay in making a referral if it is felt a child or young person is at risk of

significant harm. The decision to make a referral is an individual’s decision, and should never be

overruled by another staff member or manager

It is important to remember that our responsibility is to report, not to investigate.

**G. Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations**

**Actions to take when responding to disclosure:**

The person receiving disclosure should:

• React calmly

• Tell them that they are not to blame and that they are right to tell

• Take what is said seriously

• Use open-ended questions – it is very important that you do not appear to be leading the

young person in any way

• Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of

what has been said

• Reassure the young person but do not make promises of confidentiality

• Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible

**Actions to avoid:**

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

• Panic

• Demonstrate shock

• Ask for more information

• Speculate or make assumptions

• Make promises or agree to keep secrets

• Approach the alleged abuser

• Make negative comments about the alleged abuser

**H. Keeping Records**

After a child makes a disclosure the next course of action is to record the details of what was said

and any actions taken. It is important that these records are kept securely. Any safeguarding

records kept by [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] must be:

• Typed

• Complete

• Written immediately or within a reasonable time of the disclosure

• Signed and Dated

• Stored safely and confidentially

• Able to distinguish between fact, opinion and third party information

1. **Sharing Information**

Any information disclosed by a child or young person must be treated confidentially and only shared with the staff member’s manager, other relevant members of staff and social services.

If [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] staff decides that information does need to be shared with the local authority, the following should be considered:

• Explain to the young person what you will share and why, and seek their agreement unless

this would put them or others at increased risk.

• Consider the safety and welfare of the young person when deciding to share information.

Where there are concerns of significant harm, their safety and welfare is paramount.

• Where possible, respect the wishes of young people who do not consent to share

confidential information.

• Seek advice where you are in doubt from an organisation such as NSPCC.

• Always record the reasons for your decision - whether it is to share information or not.

**J. Storing Information**

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] has access to personal information about children and young people through our Youth Services programmes. The following guidelines should be followed when storing this information:

• No personal data about any young person should be stored publicly.

• Information should be stored confidentially and only those who need to access the

information for their work should have access.

• Personal data about children and young people should not be left on your desk when you

are out of the office.

• Personal data about children and young people should not be kept for any longer than it is

needed and should be disposed of responsibly.

• Under the Freedom of Information Act young people have the right at any time to view any

information we hold about them by requesting to view it.

• Mobile phones containing young people’s phone numbers must be locked using a security

pin.

**K. Photography and Filming**

If [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] wants to use photographs or films of children and young people in any external or internal materials, the following guidelines should be followed:

• Staff must be able to explain clearly to young people how and where their images will be

used before the photographs or film are taken. This means that young people must have a

genuine and full understanding of where it will appear.

• Individuals must give consent using the [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] Image Consent Form – see Appendix 1.

• Consent must be given in order to use the person’s real name attached the photograph or

video.

• Consent of the individual must be sought for people over 18.

• If the individual is under 18 the consent must be sought from them as well as a parent,

guardian or carer before taking and using photographs or video if the person is under 18.

• Photographs or video should never be taken of young people in one-to-one situations.

• With regard to young people under 18, consent will mean that the photography and/or

video can be used for up to two years without confirmation of continued consent being

sought.

• In exceptional cases, a child aged 16 or 17 may be able to give consent to partaking in

photography or filming without seeking additional consent from a parent, carer or guardian.

In these circumstances it is vital that:

o The materials are only used for internal purposes

o The child aged 16 or 17 is made fully aware of how and where the photos and/or

video will be used and any future implications

o A framework based on Frasier Guidelines is used to assess the child’s ability to make

an informed decision about consenting to being photographed or filmed

• Where circumstances exist that would make it impossible for a child aged 16 or 17 to gain

additional consent these must be assessed on a case by case basis by the [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] Youth Services Team before final authorisation for photography or filming of the child will be sought from the Managing Director. In these circumstances the [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] Youth Services Team and all those involved in the decision making should thoroughly assess whether it is in the best interest of the child to be photographed or filmed and whether or not the child is fully capable of making an informed decision

• The safety and best interests of the child should always underpin any decisions made about

when it is appropriate to photograph or video a child aged 16-17.

• All consent must be given in writing using an appropriate consent form which must be

signed by the participant and, if appropriate, a parent/carer/guardian.

**L. Safe Recruitment and Selection**

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] will adopt a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment in order to ensure that those recruited to work with children and young people are suitable.

[ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] will take care at every stage of the recruitment process to eliminate candidates who are unsuitable to work with children and young people. This includes:

• Checking for any unexplained gaps in employment history.

• Checking references carefully.

• Taking great care in the preparation of the person specification to ensure key requirements

are tested

• Fulfilling Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks (although not relying on them), and

• `Not offering a post until all checks have been completed satisfactorily.

**M. Further Reading**

**M1. Websites**

http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/resourcesforteachers/resourcesforteachers\_wda48932.html

**M2. Sources of Evidence**

Children Act 2004. London. HMSO.

**M3. Legislative Framework**

**Children Act 2004**

• The legislative basis for the reform of children’s services following the death of Victoria

Climbie and the subsequent recommendations of the Laming enquiry and the Green Paper,

Every Child Matters.

• A duty is placed on the local authorities to promote cooperation between agencies to

improve children’s wellbeing.

• The PCT as a key agency has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to

participate on the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

• The Act gave provision for a national data base containing basic information about all children to enable better information sharing – Contact Point (however as of 6 August 2010 Contact Point is no longer in operation)

**Children Act 1989**

• Placed a duty on Local Authorities to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in need

in their area.

• The primary focus of legislation about children in need is on how well they are progressing

and whether their development will be impaired without the provision of services (section

17 of the Act).

• The Local Authority carry the lead responsibility for ensuring that services provided are

appropriate but does not require the LA themselves to be the provider of such services.

• Under section 47 of the Act the PCT and other agencies must assist the Local Authority in

its enquiries as to whether or not a child is at risk of significant harm.

• Revisions to the 1989 Act made provision in respect of private fostering which must be

reported to the Local Authority.

**APPENDIX 1**

Image Consent Form

This consent form is to give permission for [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] to use your image in promotional materials for our projects. This could include your image (photograph or video) being used on materials such as reports, websites, pamphlets, leaflets and/or other materials to promote [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] and the work that we do.

The consent will last 2 years and cover worldwide usage, after which time we will attempt to

contact you to find out whether it is ok to continue to use your image/video. If we cannot get in

contact with you using the details you supply above we will assume that we still have your consent

to use your image.

You can call us any time to withdraw consent or update your contact details.

**Your details**

**First Name: Surname:**

**Date of Birth:**

**Home Address:**

**Postcode:**

**Mobile Number:**

**Home Phone Number:**

**Email Address:**

**Permissions**

Do you also give us permission to use your **first name** in relation to your image/video?

Yes / No

I give permission for [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] to use photographs and/or video of me for their promotional materials.

Signature of Participant:

Date:

For participants under the age of 18 a parent, carer or guardian will need to sign to give consent in

addition to the participant.

I give permission for [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] to use photographs and/or video of

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (participant name) for their promotional materials.

Name of parent / carer / guardian (delete as appropriate):

Signature:

Date:

**Contact Us**

If you have any questions of wish to contact [ENTER NAME OF ORGANISATION] for any reason our contact details are as follows:

Address: [ENTER NAME and ADDRESS OF ORGANISATION]

Telephone: [enter details]

Email: [enter details]

Web: [enter details]