



Nottinghamshire
SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN Board

**Working in Partnership to Safeguard
Children & Young People**

Guidelines for Developing Child Protection Policies and Procedures for
Voluntary Sector Organisations

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1 Introduction

This document is aimed at helping voluntary organisations to develop Child Protection Policies and Procedures. Contained within this document are statements and guidelines that provide Voluntary Sector organisations with a basic framework which can be built on and tailored to meet the needs of the specific services that the organisation provides.

The whole aim of an organisation having policies in place is to demonstrate the organisations values and commitment in a particular area and provide guidance for staff, volunteers, children, parents or carers about what to do in specific circumstances. Individual agency policies and procedures should be concordant with the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Child Protection Procedures which can be downloaded at www.nottscc.gov.uk/nscb

Within the area of child protection it is vital that all staff know what to do if they are concerned about a child. It is equally important that parents or carers and young people themselves are aware that the organisation takes the safety and welfare of children and young people into consideration in every activity that is undertaken.

It is advised that all organisations that work with or provide services for Children and Young People have a copy of "What to Do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused (2006) This booklet contains specific information that can be used within your organisation and it is strongly recommended that all staff have access to and have read this document. Copies are available for download at www.dfes.co.uk.

The first part of this document provides sample child protection policy statements followed by guidelines on how to develop your organisations own child protection policy and procedures. The final section provides an appendix which contains useful information that can be adapted to suit or copied for display purposes within your organisation. The most important thing to remember is that the key to robust child protection policy and procedures is that they are used, shared and work for staff and children or young people that attend your organisation and that it is reviewed annually. Furthermore, your child protection policy and procedures are not enough in themselves to cover the wider remit of safeguarding which is primarily about prevention. For more information regarding an organisations' safeguarding responsibilities, please refer to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006, Statutory Guidance on Making Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children under s11 of the Children Act 2004 (both documents are available from www.dcfes.co.uk and refer to the "Self Audit Tool" which has been developed to enable organisations to implement policies and procedures that compliment and strengthen those of child protection. This can be downloaded at www.ncc.gov.uk/nscb

If you need any help in developing your child protection policies and procedures please contact: NSCB Development Officer 0115 977413

2 Sample Child Protection Policy Statement.

Name of Organisation is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. *Name of your Organisation* acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

In implementing this child protection policy *Name of Organisation* will:

Communicate to all workers their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation

Communicate to all workers their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Child Protection Procedures and the need to work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice in protection of children

Ensure that all workers have undertaken basic child protection training provided by the NSCB (or other recognised provider with appropriate experience) and confirm with individual workers their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection

Ensure that the named person has undertaken basic training (as above) and level two training (Working Together to Safeguard Children) provided by the NSCB and that they understand his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Social Care)

Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner

Provide opportunities for all workers to further develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people

Facilitate opportunities for children and young people to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues in connection with the service they are provided with and to have access to the organisation's Complaints Procedure.

Facilitate involvement of parents or carers in the work of the organisation and to make child protection policies and procedures available to them

Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

3 Developing your Child Protection Procedures

Your organization's child protection procedures should detail the steps which will be followed where there are concerns that a child or young person could be experiencing abuse and/or neglect. The procedures should help to ensure a speedy and effective response for dealing with such concerns.

Section 1 - Introduction:

Your introduction should give a brief outline of the work that you do with children and young people. You should make it clear that your organisation is committed to the welfare and protection of children and/or young people within all the activities your organisation undertakes.

You should include the purpose of the procedures (i.e. to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people are effectively managed) and, the workers who are required to implement the procedures (i.e. all workers, both paid and volunteers) and not solely those who work with children and young people under the age of 18 years).

For example,

These procedures have been designed to ensure that the welfare and protection of any child and/or young person who accesses the services provided by **Name of Organisation**. The procedures recognise that child protection can be a very difficult subject for workers to deal with to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else's problem to deal with. **Name of Organisation** is committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all workers and volunteers to act appropriately to any concerns that arise in respect of a child/young person.

(There should be a clear reference to the organisation's commitment to equal opportunities including a reference to the recruitment of ex-offenders).

Section 2 - Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

It is important in this section to provide definitions of abuse under the umbrella headings of Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect. An additional appendix of the full revised definitions as outlined in Working Together to Protect Children (2006) should be attached. (See appendix 1) The organisation should advise that all staff need to familiarise themselves with these definitions. It is also important in this section that you reflect your organisations commitment to ensuring that all workers have a basic awareness of child abuse and how you will ensure this happens.

For example:

Name of Organisation will ensure that all staff members whether paid or unpaid, undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse (see appendix one).

It is equally important that your procedures provide some detail about how concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light. For example:

- a child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- a third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;
- a report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Section 3 - Named Person(s) for Child Protection

Every organisation that works with children or young people should have in place a named person who is responsible for dealing with child protection issues that may arise. A deputy must be made available in their absence. These individuals must be trained in child protection and their responsibilities clearly stated within your procedures. For example:

Name of Organisation has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with. The named persons for Child Protection within **Name of Organisation** are:

Named Person for Child Protection: _____

Work telephone number: _____

Mobile number: _____

Emergency contact no: _____

Deputy

Name of contact person: _____

Work telephone number: _____

Mobile number: _____

Emergency contact no: _____

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- > To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- > Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- > The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. These will be kept in a secure place

Section 4 - Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child

The following section should provide clear guidelines for workers to follow if they have concerns about a child or young person. It is a good idea to incorporate a flowchart outlining these stages which make it easier for staff to follow. (See Appendix 2) For example,

Name of Organisation recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However **Name of Organisation** believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will:

Stage 1

- > Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
- > Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- > Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a Child/young person makes a disclosure;
- > Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
- > Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection.
- > Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure; The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated.
- > Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

Stage 2

- > The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact the police and/or Nottinghamshire County Children's Social Care (see appendix 3) If a referral is made direct to Notts County Council Children's SC this must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.
- > The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern via the relevant duty team for Nottinghamshire Children's Social Care or via the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- > Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on 0800 096 7719.

Section 5 – Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

All organisations that come into contact with children must have procedures in place to ensure that any allegation made against a member of staff is dealt with appropriately. The procedures must reflect the organisations ethos of listening to children and young people and their parents/carers and taking any concerns seriously. They must also reflect the organisations commitment to ensuring that workers feel safe to express their concerns about the practice of others. For example,

Name of Organisation 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 the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - Clive Chambers who can be contacted via 01159773935) 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 should be contacted for discussion.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of 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, **Name of Organisation** will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.

Section 6 - Recording and managing confidential information.

This section should include:

- A pro-forma for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect should be attached to the guidelines. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma.
- A summary of the organisation's commitment to manage confidential information safely, how information is stored and, the circumstances under which information needs to be shared (Data Protection).
- A statement about the rights of children and young people to confidentiality unless the organisation considers they could be at risk of abuse and/or harm.

Section 7 – Disseminating/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

All organisations should have in place a system for disseminating and reviewing their overall policies and procedures. They should be reviewed annually, signed by Trustees/Governors and/or anyone within the organisation that has overall responsibility for the service being provided. Any changes/amendments need to be clarified and shared with staff and where significant changes appear these must be relayed to parents/carers. (Best practice guidelines advise the involvement of parents/carers and young people in developing policies that affect them)

Within this section you need to make it clear that there is a system in place for an annual review of policies and procedures, who will be involved and, how this will be undertaken.

Appendix 1

Definitions of Abuse as cited in: Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2006, Chapter 1, P:37-38)

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/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 persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

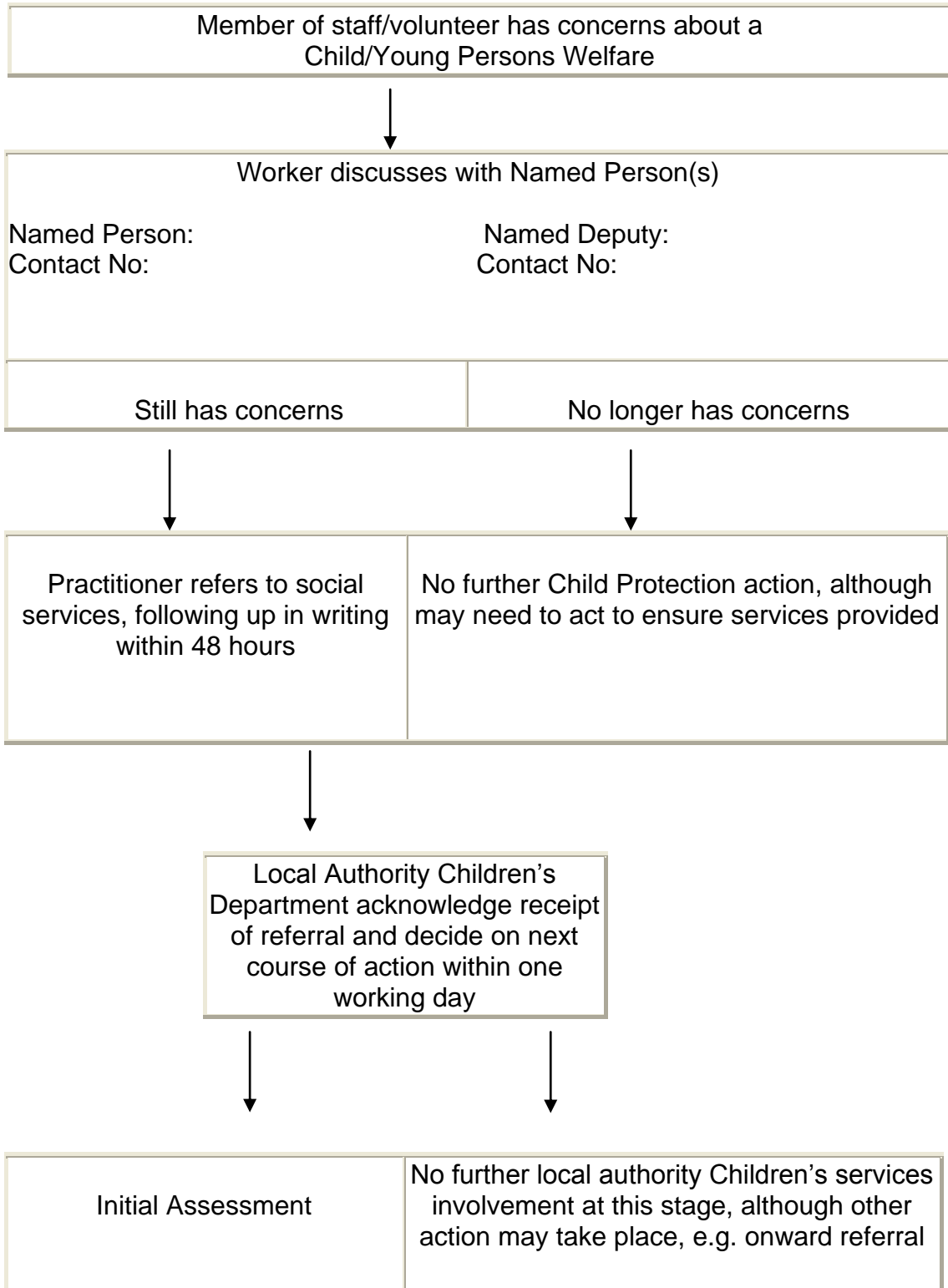
SEXUAL ABUSE: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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 as a result 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 care-givers)
- 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 – Flow Chart



Please note that if Children's Social Care do not become involved following your referral but you remain concerned and feel that their involvement is necessary, you should escalate your action to further communicate your concerns in accordance with Nottingham City and NSCB Child Protection Procedures

Appendix 3

Useful Contacts/Support Organisations

If you have concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

You need to ensure that you speak to the appropriate organisations who can listen to you and record your concern, and then take appropriate action.

In Nottinghamshire, these are the numbers that you can ring and speak to the Children's Social Care Duty Team for advice and to make a referral:

- Ashfield 01623405300
- Bassetlaw 01777716161
- Broxtowe 01159175800
- Gedling / Rushcliff 01158546000
- Mansfield 01623433433
- Newark & Sherwood 01636 682700
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999

Additionally, the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 - Email:

help@nspcc.org.uk