



# Child Safeguarding Policy

Purpose:	To ensure that all staff are aware of their legal obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and what process to follow should they require advice and guidance on any suspected or actual abuse
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References/Legislation:	Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018) Every Child Matters NSPCC Child Protection Guidance GDPR Worcestershire Get Safe Strategy
Scope of Policy:	This policy applies to all Worcester Community Trust staff (including employees, Board Members, agency staff, and volunteers)
Legal Framework:	The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004
Document Version:	2.0

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## **1. Introduction**

Worcester Community Trust believes everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe, and to practise in a way that protects them.

Effective child protection is essential as part of Worcester Community Trust's wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

All children and young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, sex, racial origin, religious beliefs, or sexual identity have an equal right to be safeguarded from abuse.

The needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. All children and young people with additional communication needs, such as speaking English as an additional language, learning disabilities, hearing impairment, autism, or being non-verbal have a right to have their needs met in the same way as a child or young person not facing the same barriers.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces (HM Government, 2011).

Challenging and tackling extremism needs to be a shared effort (HM Government, 2013). For this reason, the Government has given some types of organisations in England, Scotland and Wales a duty to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. However, all organisations that work with children and young people have a responsibility to protect children from harm. This includes becoming radicalised and/or being exposed to extreme views.

## **2. Policy Statement**

Worcester Community Trust uses the definition of a child given in *The Children's Act 1989* as a person under the age of 18. Worcester Community Trust has a duty of care to the children that we come into contact with, and the welfare of the child and

young person are paramount in our practice. Worcester Community Trust will ensure the safety and protection of all children and young people through adherence to the Child Safeguarding guidelines described in this policy.

### 2.1. Organisational Responsibilities

Worcester Community Trust recognises that protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare depends on a shared responsibility and effective joint working between different agencies. Worcester Community Trust aims to ensure that it builds constructive relationships between individual practitioners as effective sharing of information is pivotal for identifying abuse, assessment, and implementing necessary action.

In order to safeguard children, as an organisation Worcester Community Trust will:

- listen to children and respect them;
- appoint a child safeguarding lead and a member of the trustee board who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation;
- produce detailed safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- provide appropriate training on safeguarding and child protection procedures to all staff and volunteers;
- ensure that staff and volunteers are alert to potential indicators of abuse;
- ensure that staff and volunteers are alert to the risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- enable all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child safeguarding issues;
- ensure children, young people, and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern;
- that all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote children's welfare; and
- review information on safeguarding concerns regularly in order to improve practice.

### 2.2. Staff Responsibilities

Safeguarding is responsibility of all staff and volunteers. At Worcester Community Trust it is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to gather information and report concerns, not to decide whether or not abuse has occurred. Staff/volunteers are not

trained to make decisions about how best to manage safeguarding situations independently, concerns identified must be reported to the safeguarding lead.

All staff providing support or coming into contact with children or young people will ensure:

- they prioritise direct communication and positive and respectful relationships with children;
- that safeguarding children and promoting their welfare forms an integral part of all elements of the support and care that they offer;
- they work co-operatively with parents or guardians, unless this is inconsistent with ensuring children's safety;
- that appropriate record keeping is maintained at all times so that an assessment can be made of whether children are suffering or are likely to suffer harm; and
- that all concerns are reported to the appropriate child safeguarding lead.

### 2.3. Manager Responsibilities

Managers have additional responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. At Worcester Community Trust it is the responsibility of managers to support staff to identify safeguarding concerns, provide additional oversight of ongoing safeguarding concerns, and support the child safeguarding lead with multi agency work in relation to safeguarding children. Managers are not trained to make decisions about how best to manage safeguarding situations independently, actions must arise from consultation with the safeguarding lead.

All managers will ensure:

- they appropriately support and supervise staff;
- they support teams to reflect on best practice and identify areas for improvement;
- they identify gaps in knowledge, arrange training, and maintain training logs;
- they adhere to safer recruitment policies; and
- they maintain the safeguarding log accurately and in a timely manner.

### 2.4. Child Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

The child safeguarding leads are Sarah Mackay and Caroline Berry. The child safeguarding lead's contact details are:

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**Director of Operations**

**Telephone: 01905 453453 x 101**

**Mobile: 07713 200699**

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Email: [jo@worcestercommunitytrust.org.uk](mailto:jo@worcestercommunitytrust.org.uk)

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The child safeguarding lead has additional responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. The child safeguarding lead is the point of contact for anyone at Worcester Community Trust who is concerned about a child. They are responsible for leading on:

- receiving concerns about a child;
- advising staff on managing safeguarding concerns;
- reporting, storing and retaining child protection records following the organisation's policies and procedures;
- ensuring that the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures are fit for purpose; and
- ensuring that the organisation's training in relation to safeguarding is fit for purpose.

### **3. Principles**

Safeguarding is underpinned by 6 key principles. These principles are at the heart of the work we carry out with the children we come into contact with and are embedded into Worcester Community Trust's procedures and practice.

- **EMPOWERMENT:** We support and encourage people to make their own decisions and give fully informed consent.
- **PREVENTION:** Wherever possible we take early action early to prevent harm from occurring.
- **PROPORTIONALITY:** When we take action we make the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **PROTECTION:** We make sure that we support and advocate for those in greatest need.
- **PARTNERSHIP:** We create local solutions, work with communities, and build networks to help prevent, detect, report, and address neglect and abuse.

- ACCOUNTABILITY: We show accountability and transparency in safeguarding. We take responsibility, reflect, and improve our practice at every opportunity.

The purpose of all services, whether meeting the needs of all children, children who are vulnerable, or children in need, is to achieve the best possible outcomes for each child recognising each is unique. In order to achieve this, Worcester Community Trust's work with children is also underpinned by the outcomes for children and young people described in *Every Child Matters* (see [Appendix 1 – Summary of Every Child Matters Outcomes](#)).

#### **4. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

Worcester Community Trust recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

Worcester Community Trust's *Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy* and *DBS Policy* ensure safe recruitment policies and practices, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff, including agency staff, students and volunteers, working with children and young people.

The details of the procedures in place can be found in the *Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy* and *DBS Policy* but key points are outlined below:

- All potential staff and volunteers must complete an application form including a self-disclosure regarding previous convictions.
- Advice will be sought from the Safeguarding Officer if there is a criminal record and the offence does not relate to children or vulnerable adults before appointing.
- At least 2 references must be obtained and verified and essential qualifications verified before making appointments.
- Before appointment applicants must be asked for reasons for gaps or inconsistencies in employment and appointment must not proceed unless satisfied with the explanation given.
- A face to face interview must be carried out with at least two people.
- A member of the senior management team must meet with the applicant during the recruitment process.
- Identity must be checked during this process by looking at a birth certificate, driving licence, passport and/or other document with a photograph.
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks (enhanced) must be carried out on offer of a post and every year for all staff and volunteers working with children and young people.



- No unsupervised access to children and young people until a satisfactory DBS check has been received and references reviewed and verified.

## **5. Training**

Worcester Community Trust is responsible for ensuring their employees and volunteers are confident and competent in carrying out their responsibilities, and for ensuring employees/volunteers are aware of how to recognise and respond to child safeguarding concerns.

In addition to preselection checks, Worcester Community Trust provides on-going training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to analyse their own practice against established good practice, recognise their responsibilities, respond appropriately to concerns expressed by a child or young person, and work safely and effectively with children and young people.

All appointments to work with children are subject to a supervised probationary period during which there is a comprehensive induction. As part of the induction process, all staff are required to read the safeguarding policies and procedures within the first week and discuss Worcester Community Trust's approach to safeguarding with their manager. All new employees and volunteers will sign up to Worcester Community Trust Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding policy within their first week. Within their probationary period all staff are required to complete initial safeguarding training.

All staff are also required to attend an internal safeguarding workshop where they are supported to achieve the following:

- Understand their role
  - Where to get information
  - Where to get support
  - How to identify concerns
  - How to respond to concerns
  - How to learn from experiences
- Understand Worcester Community Trust's role
  - What colleagues do
  - What Worcester Community Trust's legal responsibilities are
  - What Worcester Community Trust's processes are and why
  - How to work together
  - How to learn from experiences
- Understand other roles
  - What statutory services do

- What other agencies do
- Who takes the lead when there is a concern
- How to work together

Worcester Community Trust recognises that staff and volunteers will have different training needs which will be dependent on their degree of contact with children and young people. Staff training needs in Safeguarding and Child Protection are reviewed in supervision and appraisals with particular attention paid to those working directly with children. Staff are offered appropriate additional training depending on their role and their learning and development needs throughout their time with Worcester Community Trust.

All staff are expected to undergo safeguarding training every three years, or sooner if major changes in procedures have taken place. Regular updates are arranged 'in house' and all staff working with children are required to attend Local Safeguarding Children's Board multi agency training.

## **6. Information Sharing**

In order to safeguard children, Worcester Community Trust follows the guidance in Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018), which states:

"Sharing information is an intrinsic part of any front-line practitioners' job when working with children and young people. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. It could ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevent a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet. At the other end of the spectrum it could be the difference between life and death".

Each situation should be considered on a case-by-case basis but the following information sharing principles underpin Worcester Community Trust's safeguarding procedures.

- **NECESSARY AND PROPORTIONATE:** When taking decisions about what information to share, you should consider how much information you need to release and the impact of disclosing information on all those involved. Any information shared must be proportionate to the need and level of risk.
- **RELEVANT:** Only information that is relevant should be shared with those who need it to allow everyone to carry out their roles effectively and make sound decisions.
- **ADEQUATE:** Information should be adequate for its purpose, and be of the right quality to ensure that it can be understood and relied upon.
- **ACCURATE:** Information should be accurate and up to date and should clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. If the information is historical then this should be explained.

- **TIMELY:** Information should be shared in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of harm, related to the urgency of the situation. This is key in emergency situations and it may not be appropriate to seek consent for information sharing if it could cause delays and therefore harm to a child.
- **SECURE:** Information should be shared in an appropriate, secure way in line with Worcester Community Trust's *Data Management Policy*.
- **RECORDED:** Information sharing decisions should be recorded. If it is decided to share, reasons should be given and what information has been shared and with whom. If it is decided not to share, reasons should be given and discussed with the requester.

Worcester Community Trust's *Data Management Policy* requires that the people we work with are informed about confidentiality, how we manage their data, and when that data will be shared and with whom. A referral should not be seen as a betrayal of trust but as a necessary and responsible way of safeguarding children.

All staff should seek consent where people may not expect their information to be passed on and wherever possible share information with the informed consent of the child or family involved, where it is safe to do so.

The *Data Protection Act (2018)* and its implementation of *UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)* regulate information collection, processing, and sharing. Worcester Community Trust has a comprehensive *Data Management Policy*, *Code of Conduct*, and *Confidentiality Guidance* which must be adhered to at all times. However, these are not barriers to justified information sharing as where there is a clear risk of significant harm to a child. Where there are concerns about sharing information without consent in order to safeguard a child this should be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead and they will make a decision or recommendation.

## **7. Local Authorities**

All safeguarding referrals should be followed up in writing using the relevant local processes detailed below. Formal acknowledgement of the referral should be received within three working days of receipt of the written referral – if this is not received the referring worker must re-refer the matter.

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership oversees and leads the arrangement to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children. Information about Worcester Safeguarding Children Partnership can be found at:

<https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>.

Worcestershire Children's Social Care provide children's services in Worcestershire. More information about Worcester Children's Social Care can be found at:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrenreferral>.

If there is a concern about a child in Worcestershire, staff must follow the procedures in this policy. If a referral needs to be made then the Worcester Children's Social

Care should be contacted on 01905 822666 Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Outside of these hours, or on weekends and bank holidays, please contact the Emergency Duty Team by phoning 01905 768020.

## **8. Identifying concerns about a child's welfare**

Children may not disclose abuse for a wide range of reasons. There are two areas that Worcester Community Trust focuses on to help identify and prevent abuse: identifying concerns about children's welfare and escalating those concerns appropriately, and developing supportive services that encourage disclosures.

To enable the identification of abuse without children needing to disclose, Worcester Community Trust provides all staff with training on how to identify concerns about a child's welfare, both as part of their induction and supervision process. Worcester Community Trust also has frameworks for record keeping and information sharing, both internally and with other agencies to ensure that patterns are identified and concerns shared.

The NSPCC guidance for professionals who work with children on how to recognise the signs of child abuse provides basic information on indicators of abuse which is available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf> and staff should use this guidance to support the provided training.

The NSPCC report *No-one Noticed, No-one Heard* identified six themes as key factors that promoted disclosure:

- intervention by others
- developmental changes, particularly learning about healthy relationships and sex education
- emotional needs
- changes in nature of abuse
- protecting others
- remembering forgotten abuse

Staff are able to intervene by noticing changes in children that they work with and discussing those changes appropriately with children or with other professionals. Building trust with children requires staff to take notice of them, spend time with them, and create a history of reliability.

Staff are also able to intervene by directly asking a child if they are being abused. There is sometimes a concern that this can be damaging to a professional relationship with a child or their family, but it is important to create the opportunity for a child to disclose and to make sure that they are aware that staff are paying attention to them and will listen.

## **9. Guidance and Decision Making**

If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk, they must take action without delay and contact the emergency services.

If any member of staff or volunteer has reason to believe that a child is being abused or has been abused, they must discuss this without delay with the Safeguarding Lead who will make a decision on action to be taken in line with this policy. If the safeguarding lead believes or suspects that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm then this should always be referred via a Safeguarding Alert to the local authority children's social care services.

If any member of staff or volunteer has any other concerns about a child's safety and welfare, they must discuss this with their line manager and escalate to the Safeguarding Lead if there are safeguarding concerns identified.

Additional guidance and information can be sourced from the local safeguarding team, NSPCC, police, and NHS community services following the agreement of the Safeguarding Lead.

## **10. Barriers**

Worcester Community Trust recognises that abuse thrives on secrecy and needs to be handled in a sensitive, accepting way. To achieve this staff and other adults involved may have to overcome certain barriers when dealing with concerns.

Worcester Community Trust recognises that there may be barriers to children telling anyone about abuse; the power of relationships between adults and children will not be underestimated nor should the deliberate and skilled way that abusers target their victims. Barriers to children disclosing abuse include:

- fear because they have been threatened;
- a belief that they will be taken away from home or their parent/carer;
- a belief that they are to blame;
- a belief that the abuse is normal or that it happens to all children;
- feeling embarrassed;
- feeling guilty;
- not wanting to get the abuser into trouble;
- communication or learning difficulties;
- not having the vocabulary to say what happened;
- fear they won't be believed; and
- a belief that they have told someone, maybe by dropping hints, but have been ignored or disbelieved.

These issues will be covered with children who use Worcester Community Trust's services in inductions, customer handbooks, support sessions, and in specific

awareness raising sessions. Where young people have varying communication needs these will be met as is required on a case by case basis to ensure a consistently high quality child centred coordinated approach. Where there are other opportunities to educate children and young people about abuse, risks and dangers these will be utilised appropriately and sensitively. These might be group sessions, or one to one support.

There are also barriers to adults taking action. Worcester Community Trust understands that these barriers have to be actively broken down and staff supported to understand why they cannot be reasons not to respond to concerns. This issue is covered with staff in inductions and supervisions as well as specific safeguarding sessions, and some specific barriers are addressed.

- Adults not having the necessary information on what to do or who to contact – all staff are provided with information on how to manage concerns and where to seek advice as part of induction, through policies and procedures, and training.
- Adults finding it difficult to believe what a child is saying – staff are supported to understand that all allegations must be taken seriously and looked into carefully to ensure that abuse is identified and prevented and to ensure that staff are trusted by children to take future disclosures seriously.
- Adults fearing ‘getting it wrong’ – Worcester Community Trust supports staff to have an open and accountable culture where people make decisions within frameworks and everyone can learn from mistakes. Staff are also specifically supported to understand the impact of doing nothing.
- Adults fearing that action may make things worse for the child – staff are supported to understand the impact of doing nothing, how to work with other agencies to promote children’s best interests, and how to hold themselves and other accountable.
- Adults believing that the services dealing with concerns are stigmatising – staff are supported to understand the impact of doing nothing, how to work with other agencies to promote children’s best interests, and how to hold themselves and other accountable.

## **11. Procedure for responding to disclosures of abuse**

A flowchart to support this procedure can be found in [Appendix 2 – Flowchart for responding to a child safeguarding concern.](#)

### **11.1. Receiving a disclosure**

When a child makes a disclosure it is an opportunity to prevent abuse from continuing. It is also an opportunity to provide a child with holistic intervention that supports them and has a positive impact on their life beyond the ending of a specific abuse.

It's important not to ask leading questions or pressure the child to give more information, as this can disrupt the child's disclosure, affect safeguarding investigation, and could compromise any criminal investigation. This is extremely important with allegations of sexual abuse, in no circumstance should staff question a child about sexual abuse. Questions that are asked should be very general e.g. "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

There are three key principles staff should follow for receiving a disclosure to make the most positive impact:

- believe the child making the disclosure
- take action in response to the disclosure
- secure emotional support for the child

Keeping these principles in mind when taking decisions and actions should improve the positive impact of the disclosure, but there are some specific ways that they can be applied.

Believe the Child	Stay calm and listen carefully: When children go to an adult for help they need to be reassured that that they were right to disclose what happened, that the disclosure is not placing a burden on anyone, that the abuse is not their fault, and that no matter what happens the person hearing the disclosure will not be angry with them.
	Accept the information: When children go to an adult for help they need to know they will be believed and supported, not challenged about their statements or discouraged from making future or linked disclosures.
	Escalate appropriately: When children make a disclosure, we have a responsibility to not present their disclosure in a way that minimises the significance or accuracy of the information. It is not the role of someone receiving a disclosure to make judgements about the plausibility of the disclosure.
Take Action	Report disclosures: All disclosures need to be reported to the safeguarding lead.
	Be consistent: All staff need to take the same steps when receiving disclosures. Although the way we speak to children will be different according to their needs, all staff need to behave consistently in terms of actions to avoid confusion and develop trust.
	Care and communication: Children should be kept appropriately informed about what is happening and their wellbeing considered and asked about at every stage.
Emotion	Build trust: Being able to talk about their abuse with someone they trust helps children to feel supported.

	Be honest and informative: Discussing options realistically and helping children to understand what will happen can make the process less frightening, and helps them to make informed decisions.
	Advocate: Being supported to make formal disclosures and advocating for their best interests helps children to have the confidence to continue and reassures them that people care about them and are there to support them.

### 11.2. Collecting information from a disclosure

The information disclosed must be recorded fully and should clearly state what was said by everyone as precisely as possible.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's address and telephone number
- The nature of the allegation (include dates, times, any special factors, and other relevant information)
- The account that was given by the person making the disclosure
- If the child was not the person who reported the abuse, whether the child has been spoken to and, if so, what was said by staff
- If the child was not the person who reported the abuse, whether the child has been spoken to and, if so, the child's account of what has happened
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- Anyone else who has been consulted
- Anyone who has been alleged to be the abuser
- It may also be helpful to record perception of emotional and physical presentation

### 11.3. Reporting a disclosure

Following a disclosure a staff member must take action as outlined in Section 9: Guidance and Decision Making:

- contact the emergency services without delay if they have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk
- discuss the disclosure without delay with the Safeguarding Lead
- make a safeguarding alert to the relevant local authority children's social care services if it is believed or suspected that a child may be suffering, or is likely



to suffer, significant harm following the processes detailed in [Section 7: Local Authorities](#)

#### 11.4. Record Keeping

Record keeping is a vital part of safeguarding children. Staff must always:

- record in writing concerns about a child's welfare
- record in writing discussions had about a child's welfare
- reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken at the close of any discussions
- record actions taken and feedback from other agencies
- retain copies of safeguarding alerts
- retain copies of correspondence with statutory agencies

### **12. Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse**

A flowchart to support this procedure can be found in [Appendix 2 – Flowchart for responding to a child safeguarding concern](#).

#### 12.1. Identifying concerns

Staff may identify concerns about children in the course of their work with them.

All interactions must be recorded as part of the child's support logs and staff working with a child should routinely review logs to identify concerns. Safeguarding must be discussed as part of team meeting and supervision and staff should raise any minor concerns about children with their manager as part of their day to day work.

Where a staff member identifies a child may be experiencing or at risk of experiencing abuse they should collate information about the concerns.

#### 12.2. Collating information about concerns

The information in relation to the concern must be recorded fully.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time that a concern is identified, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's address and telephone number
- The nature of the allegation (include dates, times, any special factors, and other relevant information)
- The indicators that led to the concern

- Whether the child has been spoken to and, if so, what was said by staff
- Whether the child has been spoken to and, if so, the child's account of what has happened
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- Anyone else who has been consulted
- Anyone who has been alleged to be the abuser

### 12.3. Reporting a concern

Following a disclosure a staff member must take action as outlined in Section 9: Guidance and Decision Making:

- contact the emergency services without delay if they have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk
- discuss the disclosure without delay with the Safeguarding Lead
- make a safeguarding alert to the relevant local authority children's social care services if it is believed or suspected that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm following the processes detailed in Section 7: Local Authorities

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- retain copies of safeguarding alerts
- retain copies of correspondence with statutory agencies

## **13. Procedure for responding disclosures or concerns about staff or volunteers**

Where a staff member receives a disclosure from a child about abuse by Worcester Community Trust staff or volunteer, or a staff member identifies concerns about other Worcester Community Trust staff or volunteers, the procedure to be carried out by that staff member is the same as for any other disclosure or concern. Staff should therefore follow either Section 11: Procedure for responding to disclosures of abuse or Section 12: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse as appropriate.

Worcester Community Trust will fully investigate any concerns raised about staff or volunteers in relation to the abuse of children. It may be necessary to suspend staff or volunteers while an investigation is carried out in line with the Disciplinary Policy. If an investigation suggests that a criminal offence appears to have been committed or a child has been harmed by or is at risk of harm from a staff member or volunteer, the matter will be referred to the police and a referral about a person in a Position of Trust (POT) made to the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team.

Irrespective of the findings of the social care or police inquiries, Worcester Community Trust's Safeguarding Lead will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Safeguarding Lead will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child and young person will remain of paramount importance throughout.

Any staff member or volunteer who in good faith reports their concerns that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or children will be fully supported and protected, in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.

#### **14. Procedure for reporting incidents you are involved in**

Where any of the following incidents happen staff should follow the Incident Management Policy and report the incident immediately to their manager and the Safeguarding Lead.

- A child is accidentally hurt by a staff member
- A child appears to be sexually aroused by a staff member's actions
- A child interprets something you have said or done as inappropriate

Depending on the exact nature of the incident it may be necessary to suspend staff or volunteers while an investigation is carried out, in line with the Disciplinary Policy.

#### **15. Procedure for responding to concerns about or disclosures or concerns about another child**

Where a staff member receives a disclosure from a child about abuse by another child, or a staff member identifies concerns about abuse by another child, the procedure to be carried out by that staff member is the same as for any other disclosure or concern.

However, staff also have a duty to safeguard the child that is alleged to or suspected of carrying out abuse. It should be considered whether the concerns identified indicate that this child has also experienced abuse and, if so, the procedure detailed

in Section 12: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse should be carried out.

#### **16. Procedure for responding to bullying**

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure will be followed as set out in Section 12: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse.

#### **17. Procedure for responding to child sexual exploitation concerns**

If child sexual exploitation is suspected, the same procedure will be followed as set out in Section 12: Procedure for responding to concerns about abuse. However, Worcester Community Trust has a separate Child Sexual Exploitation Policy which supports staff in identifying and managing child sexual exploitation concerns.

#### **18. Procedure for managing ongoing concerns**

##### **18.1. Internal procedures**

A flowchart to support this procedure can be found in Appendix 3 – Flowchart for managing a child safeguarding concern



## 18.2. Children on Child Protection Plans

Where Worcester Community Trust is made aware that a child in one of its services is subject to a Child Protection Plan, this will be recorded through notifying the Safeguarding Lead.

When working with a family, if there has been a change to the risk management plan of a child subject to a Child Protection Plan, this fact will be communicated to the project manager, although the details of the new risk management plan will only be recorded in the appropriate risk management documents.

## 18.3. Child Protection Conferences

Worcester Community Trust recognises that multi-agency protection conferences are a key part of the child protection process. Where staff are involved in supporting a child or family subject to Child Protection proceeding staff will be actively involved in attending conferences and supplying appropriate and timely information.

Staff involved will contact the social worker before the child protection conference takes place to announce their involvement with the family, to ask for copies of reports, and to request an invitation as staff have relevant information about the child and/or carer(s).

If staff believe they have information that will be valuable to the conference, they should contact the conference chair in advance and ask to be invited.

#### 18.4. Advocacy

Children have a right to understand the statutory processes that are taking place and a right to complain where statutory processes are not taking place. Staff supporting children who are receiving statutory services should be able to identify where services are not being provided in line with statutory requirements and children should be supported to access advocacy organisations if they wish to make a complaint.

### **19. Procedure for responding to missing children**

If a child is missing, the same procedure will be followed as set out in Section 12. However, Worcester Community Trust has a separate Missing Persons Policy which supports staff with the practicalities of how to respond to a missing child.

### **20. Procedure for storing child protection records**

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- the Project Manager/Director of that department/Safeguarding Officer
- the person making the allegation
- social services/police

Information must be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

## Appendix 1 – Summary of Every Child Matters Outcomes

### Stay Safe

- Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
- Safe from accidental injury and death
- Safe from bullying and discrimination
- Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
- Have security, stability and be cared for

### Be Healthy

- Physically healthy
- Mentally and emotionally healthy
- Sexually healthy
- Healthy lifestyles

### Enjoy and Achieve

- Choose not to take illegal drugs
- Ready for school
- Attend and enjoy school
- Achieve stretching national educational standards

### Make a Positive Contribution

- Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation
- Engage in decision making and support the community and environment
- Engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school
- Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully or discriminate
- Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges

### Achieve Economic Wellbeing

- Develop enterprising behaviour
- Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school
- Ready for employment
- Live in decent homes and sustainable communities
- Access to transport and material goods
- Live in households free from low income





### Appendix 3 – Flowchart for managing a child safeguarding concern

