Model Safeguarding Policy, Procedure & Guidance

For Public, Private, Independent, Voluntary, Community and Faith Sectors

2023

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1. **Background**

This policy, procedure & guidance is approved by the member organisations of Hampshire and IOW Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships.

This guidance also applies to all other organisations in Hampshire County Council and IOW Council area providing services to children and young people or their families.

The safeguarding standards in this procedure are consistent with Hampshire and IOWs Safeguarding Children Partnerships’ safeguarding procedures and the Government publications: ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children. Please note that this document is designed to complement and provide a context for the more detailed safeguarding Procedures and does not replace them. For more detailed information see: [Welcome | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (hipsprocedures.org.uk)](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/)

1. **Model Policy**

(*Group name)* believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

**We recognise that:**

* the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
* all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
* working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other organisations is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.

**The purpose of the policy is:**

* to safeguard children and young people who receive (*Groups* *name’s* )

services, including the children of adult members or users

* to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt if they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of (*Groups name*) .

**We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:**

* valuing them, listening to them and respecting them
* producing clear procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers

staff and volunteers

* recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
* sharing information about safeguarding procedures and good practice with children,

parents, staff and volunteers

* sharing information about concerns with organisations who need to know, and

involving parents and children appropriately

* providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

1. **Procedures**

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and be able to identify children who may be at risk or need support services.

* The setting should identify a names or designated member of staff who has a lead role for safeguarding children.

All staff must ensure that they understand the safeguarding procedures and know who the named or designated person is.

* In the some cases advice can be first sought from the Designated or Named person responsible for safeguarding support within the agency. However, this should not preclude a direct referral to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) particularly if there is any element of immediate risk. If there is immediate risk of significant harm please call 999 and ask for the Police.

Referrals must always be made to MASH using the [inter-agency referral form](https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en) if there are signs that a child under the age of 18 years, or an unborn baby;

* Is suffering or has suffered abuse and/or neglect
* Is likely to suffer abuse and/or neglect
* (With knowledge of a person with parental responsibility) would be likely to benefit from family support services.
* The designated or named person in your setting will support you in contacting the MASH to make a referral. They will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to advise you. The timing of referrals must reflect the perceived risk and should normally be within one working day of recognition. If, for any reason, you cannot contact the designated or named person in your agency you should contact the MASH directly.
* A referral should be made using the IARF [inter-agency referral form](https://forms.hants.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-7e6115a7-b0ba-484d-991f-084c1248ac72/AF-Stage-52cf8e73-0daf-47d4-bb55-0fdad856d3e6/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en)

## Do not share information with the suspected abuser if this could increase the risk to the child

## Do not share suspicions or information with any other person other than your line manager, Children’s Social Care and the Police. Information given to Children’s Social Care or the Police will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and shared only on a ‘need to know’ basis. If you have any concerns about an adult’s behaviour towards children or young people (not an employee or volunteer working for the agency):

* Do not ignore it – the service will take any concerns very seriously.
* Do not confront the adult but seek the advice of the Designated or Named person. If they are not available seek advice from your line manager or from the MASH

## Dealing with Allegations or concerns against any Employee or Volunteer Working for your Agency

Concerns for the safety and well-being of children could arise in a number of different ways and in a range of settings. It is essential to act quickly and effectively if an allegation is made, or if there is suspicion or concern about a professional or volunteer’s relationship with a child, young person or group of children/young people, particularly if they have:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to, a child; or
* Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with children.
* Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

If an allegation is made, or a concern arises, about a member of staff or volunteer, ensure that the Named person in your agency is informed immediately who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) using the [**initial enquiry form**](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id%3DtdiBPwfuF0yGnB20OQGNm3hCO_yf_9JNiASh9OheoihUQTlJRFM0SE0zUFE2Q1BPT0Y1SE5TTDMwVy4u&data=05%7c01%7cSally.Hickman2%40hants.gov.uk%7c697a7ad9cca24102460a08dadd11ce0e%7c3f81d8b5ee074c17869c1db439018d9b%7c0%7c0%7c638065365781708081%7cUnknown%7cTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7c3000%7c%7c%7c&sdata=er3sxA2WcXDjWdsqfI4Iv1Ow0E8/gQ17P747F9fkgdY%3D&reserved=0) The LADO is available to provide advice or support in any allegations process, including advising whether or not immediate suspension of the person concerned is required. Senior Managers must ensure that HR advice is sought at the earliest opportunity.

If the LADO is unavailable or the concern is raised out of hours you should contact the MASH or the out of hours service or, in an emergency, the police. Records should be secured and be strictly limited to relevant staff and external professionals on a need-to-know basis.

The member of staff or volunteer should be treated fairly and honestly . They should be helped to understand the concerns expressed, the process being followed and any outcomes of the process. **Senior managers should seek advice from the LADO and Social Care/Police before informing the person who is subject to an allegation.**

1. **Guidance**

## Responding to a Disclosure

If someone tells you that they, or someone they know, is being abused:

* Believe what the person is saying and take it seriously.
* Reassure the person who has made the disclosure to you that they have done the right thing.
* Give the child time to talk and do not probe or ask leading questions. Investigation is not your responsibility. Examples of questions you could ask include; Tell me more about that, explain the situation to me and describe that to me.
* Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
* Explain to the child that you will share this information with a senior member of staff who will ensure the appropriate procedures will be followed.
* E-mails or text/social media messages received detailing details of suspected abuse should be immediately responded to within 24 hours by contacting the young person by phone or face-to-face to obtain further information.
* Record the event in accordance with your safeguarding procedures
* All allegations, even those that appear less serious, need to be followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned. All allegations will be considered by the Local Authority Designated Officer, who will provide support and guidance.
* Advice on the storage of all documentation must be sought from your line manager who must ensure that access is strictly limited to relevant staff and external professionals.

Staff Conduct: **SAFE WORKING PRACTICE**

The safeguarding culture of any setting is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and children and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others

The following dos and don’ts provides a basic guide to safer working practice.

**“DO’s”**

* Read and follow the safeguarding procedures
* Report to the designated / named person any safeguarding concerns.
* Report to the designated / named person any concerns about the conduct of other staff or volunteers
* Record in writing all relevant incidents
* Work in an open and transparent way
* Discuss and report any incidents of concern or that might lead to concerns being raised about your conduct towards a child.
* Report to the designated/named person any incidents that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with you or taking an above normal interest in you.
* Dress appropriately for your role
* Only use e-mail contact with pupils via any authorised system
* Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children
* Ensure you understand the rules concerning physical intervention and restraint
* Where physical contact is essential for educational or safety reasons, gain the child’s permission for that contact wherever possible.
* Allow children to change clothes with levels of respect and privacy appropriate to their age, gender, culture and circumstances.
* Avoid working in one-to-one situations with children
* Avoid volunteering to accommodate children overnight
* Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved activity.
* Contact your professional association or trade union if you are the subject of an allegation
* Listen to children when they express concern (rumours) about staff which might appear to be just, and check facts v fiction.

## “DON’T’s”

* Take any action that would lead anybody to question your motivation and/or intentions
* Misuse your position of trust and influence over children
* Use any confidential information about a child to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child
* Engage in activities out of the workplace/setting that might compromise your position with children or young people.
* Establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils outside of the workplace or setting
* Accept regular gifts from children
* Give personal gifts to children
* Communicate with children in inappropriate ways, including social media and mobile telephones.
* Pass your home address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal details to children or young people.
* Make physical contact secretive
* Arrange to meet with children in closed rooms without other staff being made aware of this in advance.
* Use physical punishment of any kind
* show favouritism unless this is part of an agreed plan or policy
* Transport pupils in your own vehicle without prior management approval
* Take, publish or share images of pupils or other children without their parents’ permission.
* Allow boundaries to be unsafe in more informal settings such as trips out.

# Unaccompanied Children in Public Settings

There will be situations when young children visit public settings unaccompanied by their parent or carer. Whilst not wishing to discourage children from visiting places such as libraries, information centers and play or educational facilities, staff need to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the child and to inform parents / carers of their responsibilities. The way in which staff deal with unaccompanied children must be based on awareness of the responsibility of the parent or the loco parentis carer (i.e., the one taking the responsibility of parent), and the duty of care the service to all children on the premises. In no instance would staff be expected to take on parental responsibilities for children in these settings.

A suitable notice should be clearly displayed, and staff should point to this poster when appropriate but especially if parents / carers are about to leave their children on the premises. For example:

**NOTICE**

**INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS**

Welcome. We hope you enjoy your visit.

Please remember, this is a community space, open to all.

Keep your child safe: please don't leave them unaccompanied.

Children under 10 must never be left unaccompanied.

Parents and Carers remain responsible for their children at all times.

A good practice response on discovering an unaccompanied child on the premises is to:

* Try to avoid being left alone with a child. Try to ensure colleagues are present when you are dealing with unaccompanied children.
* Try to establish whether the child is allowed by the parent / carer to come and go alone.

If you are satisfied that the child is allowed to come and go alone, then allow the child to leave. If you gather this information only from the child then you will need to use your judgement to ascertain whether the child is competent to leave alone.

Relevant factors may be:

* Whether the child exhibits signs of nervousness
* Whether the child appears to clearly understand your questions
* Whether the child seems physically capable
* Whether the child appears to know clearly and readily where he or she lives
* How far the journey is
* Whether you know of any particular hazards on the journey
* The child’s age and vulnerability

If you are in doubt, encourage the child to remain on the premises until you have been able to contact a parent or carer. Children under 10 years of age should not normally be allowed to leave alone unless you know that in the particular case the parent / carer allows it.

Ask the child if they are expecting to be collected by an adult. Even if the child is expecting to be collected soon, do not wait until closing time before taking the next step.

Try to contact the parent or carer. Ask the child for an address or telephone number.

1. **Training**

All staff must ensure that attend safeguarding training in accordance with the requirements and standards of their agency.

Training will be organised and delivered in accordance with the requirements of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. The training will be informed by the HSCP Workforce Development Group

Staff with responsibility for safeguarding training within individual organisations will monitor attendance at relevant training to ensure all relevant staff are aware of the procedures and have received relevant training.

1. **Safer Workforce**

# Recruitment and Selection

Advertisement of posts and application packs should make explicit reference to the commitment of the organisation to Safeguarding, including:

1. Compliance with Vetting & Barring regulations[[1]](#footnote-2)
2. Clear statements in the Job Description and Person Specification that explicitly reference the individual’s safeguarding responsibilities;
3. Providing information about Safeguarding Policy and Practices to applicants.

The selection process should:

* + Comply with vetting & Barring regulations
  + always use applications forms (CVs should not be accepted);
  + a minimum of two people should check for any gaps in employment history and explore these gaps during interview;
  + ensure at least one reference is from a previous employer and specifically asks if there have been any concerns or allegations about the applicants behaviour towards children; any disciplinary action; and confirmation of the applicant’s responsibilities. Compare this information with that provided by the applicant. Any inconsistencies or concerns regarding the information provided in a personal reference must be followed up directly with the referee;
  + ensure that any concerns arising from the applicant’s medical reference are followed up directly with the applicant and with the employing agency’s medical adviser.
  + seek to explore the applicants attitudes towards children and young people, their motivation for pursuing the role, and managing boundaries, at interview.
  + Always ensure that any other uncertainty or inconsistency about the information provided about the applicant is followed up and resolved.

If you need support with the process, seek advice on recruitment and selection from your HR advisors.

# Monitoring Arrangements

**This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually.**

Source Material:

Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton procedures

[Welcome | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (hipsprocedures.org.uk)](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/)

‘Working Together to Safeguard Children2018’, HM Government

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)

**Useful Telephone Numbers**

Children’s Social Care Professionals line 01329 225379

Children's Social Care Public line 0300 555 1384

Children’s Social Care (out of hours) 0300 555 1373

Local Authority Designated Officer 01962 876364

Hampshire Police 101/ 999

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Child-Line: 0800 1111

**ANNEX 1**

**Model Recording Form**

**Child’s Name:**

**D.o.b.**

**Date:**

**Name/title of person raising concern:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Details of concern | Action taken - To whom and organisation  (Has a referral to Children’s Social Care been considered?) | Outcome of action | Further actions required  By whom and when | Review  Date | Name and signature of person completing entry |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Name:**

**Designation:**

**copied to:**

1. http://www.isa-gov.org.uk/default.aspx?page=2 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)