



# FUTURE LIVING

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### 1. POLICY OUTLINE

This policy and its accompanying procedure establish the position of Future Living Hertford (“FLH”) and its employees, trustees and volunteers (“the staff”). This document aims to clearly explain our policy and procedures for protecting those Children & Young People who come into contact with FLH from harm.

Changes in policy may be made from time to time to meet the operational needs of FLH, as well as legislative requirements and, where possible timely notice of these changes will be provided to the staff.

#### Policy Statement

FLH recognises that everyone has the right to protection from abuse and to be treated no less favourably than others, regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/beliefs, age, pregnancy/maternity and gender reassignment. We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe and we recognise that certain groups of people of all ages may have additional needs due to barriers and discrimination that they may suffer as a consequence, for example, of disability or race inequality.

The charity has a policy of ensuring that everyone, regardless of age, is listened to and treated with respect.

A signed copy of this Safeguarding Policy Statement is kept in the Chief Executive Officer’s (CEO’s) office and a copy may be requested by any individual or organisation at any time.

#### 1.1 Dissemination

This Safeguarding Policy and Procedure will be clearly communicated to the staff during their Induction process. All service users will be made aware of the policy during their initial Assessment interview or counselling session.

Whenever a major or procedural change is made to this policy or its accompanying procedures, all the staff will be notified and the new version distributed.

A list of up-to-date version numbers is maintained by the CEO’s office and is kept in the Policy and Procedures file.

Arrangements will be made for anybody who needs to access the procedures who may be visually impaired or have a learning disability.

FLH provides a mandatory training event to introduce the staff to our Safeguarding procedures.

Induction training also includes detailed guidance on the safeguarding process and our procedures, with an opportunity for the inductees to ask questions.

Further training is offered to all counselling volunteers and members of the staff who interact with service users through the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Boards.

## 1.2 Recruitment and Training

FLH's recruitment and selection procedure requires references, proof of identity and, in our care and support services, enhanced disclosure and 3 yearly re-checks for every member of the staff who works with service users.

FLH employment policies prevent barred persons from being employed in any position that involves working with service users.

All of the staff will work within the procedures that accompany this policy, and all of the staff are informed of the existence of the Safeguarding procedures and told how to locate a copy within the premises. Further, all members of the staff who work with service users are given a copy of the Procedure at Induction. Additionally, all of the staff will receive training on these procedures at Induction.

The application of this policy recognises the key principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 that sets out the right for everyone covered by the Act to make decisions and for any decision made on their behalf to be in their best interests. The staff will always act in accordance with the principles of that Act when they believe that someone is being abused and in determining how to report that abuse.

The procedures that deliver this policy complement local authority safeguarding procedures and will ensure that all members of the staff engaged in delivering our services:-

- Are alert to the possibility of abuse of a child within FLH services or of a child of a service user, applicant or visitor
- Are alert to abuse of a service user or applicant to FLH services
- Know how to recognise abuse
- Understand the need to share information about concerns with agencies that need to know
- Understand professional boundaries
- Identify risks associated with lone working by members of the staff they manage
- Know and use local authority guidelines (or FLH guidelines in their absence)
- Know how and where to report concerns
- Are aware of good practice

Serious Incident reporting procedures ensure that the Board is made aware of serious allegations involving members of FLH's staff.

FLH will provide users of its services for children with information about how and with whom they can share any concerns, complaints and anxieties.

FLH will inform users of its services for children of the policy and procedures on safeguarding children through the sign up procedure, and in the service handbooks. Safeguarding is a standard agenda item for service delivery team meetings and operational management team meetings. FLH procedures ensure that members of the staff know the arrangements and contact details for reporting concerns to local authority safeguarding teams.

All leaders of operational teams are aware of and read local child safeguarding board websites.

FLH will work with relevant agencies, on individual cases and reviewing best practice and new legislation so that FLH develop appropriate strategies for responding to the needs of the service users.

Please review and note the Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People which is included as an appendix to this document.

### 1.3 Digital Media

Those working with children (or families with children) should be aware that abuse may occur through digital media.

'Internet abuse' relates to four main areas of abuse to children:-

- Sharing and production of abusive images of children (although these are not confined to the internet);
- A child or young person being groomed online for the purpose of sexual abuse;
- Exposure to pornographic images and other offensive material via the internet; and
- The use of the internet, and in particular social media sites, to engage children in extremist ideologies or to promote gang-related violence.

Social networking sites are often used by perpetrators as an easy way to access children and young people for sexual abuse. In addition, radical and extremist groups may use social networking to attract children and young people into rigid and narrow ideologies that are intolerant of diversity: this is similar to the grooming process and exploits the same vulnerabilities.

Internet abuse may also include cyber-bullying or online bullying. This is when a child is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child using the internet and/or mobile devices. In the case of online bullying it is possible for one victim to be bullied by many perpetrators. In any case of severe bullying it may be appropriate to consider the behaviour as child abuse by another young person.

Sexting is a term used when a person shares or describes sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages. Sexting can be seen as harmless, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person under the age of 18 is breaking the law if they:-

- Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend;

- Share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age;
- Possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

The initial indicators of child abuse are likely to be changes in behaviour and mood of the child victim. Clearly such changes can also be attributed to many innocent events in a child's life and cannot be regarded as diagnostic. However, changes to a child's circle of friends or a noticeable change in attitude towards the use of computer or phone could have their origin in abusive behaviour. Similarly a change in their friends or not wanting to be alone with a particular person may be a sign that something is upsetting them.

Children often show us rather than tell us something is upsetting them. There may be many reasons for changes in their behaviour, but the staff are reminded to remain vigilant and to talk to a Safeguarding officer for advice whenever a combination of worrying signs are present.

## **2. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS**

This policy applies to all children at risk attending FLH's support services, applicants and visitors to FLH services, as well as any information FLH receives on family members or non-related children or adults at risk.

It supports the safeguarding processes of local authorities in whose areas FLH work.

The policy and its accompanying procedure and guidelines outline the responsibilities of the staff in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people using FLH services.

The policy recognises that the safeguarding of service users who attend FLH premises or access FLH services elsewhere is the responsibility of all the staff.

Safeguarding is the right of persons accessing the services to be protected from any form of abuse.

### **2.1 Definition of abuse (Source: Metropolitan Police)**

Child abuse is when anyone under the age of 18 is either being harmed or not being properly looked after. There are four main categories of child abuse:-

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

#### **2.1.1 Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is when someone hurts a child or young person on purpose.

Examples of physical abuse are:-

- Hitting, slapping, shaking or throwing

- Burning or scalding
- Drowning, suffocating or choking
- Pushing or kicking
- Inappropriate restraint or false imprisonment
- Disciplining a child using an implement such as a belt, stick or flex
- Misusing medication
- Fabricating or inducing an illness or ill health

Signs and symptoms of physical abuse in children can include:-

- Unexplained recurrent injuries, marks or burns
- Covering injuries with clothing, even in hot weather
- Fear of physical contact and shrinking back if touched

The above are just a few examples.

### 2.1.2 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when a child is enticed or forced to take part in sexual activities. This kind of abuse does not always involve a high level of violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening.

Examples of sexual abuse are:-

- Causing or inciting a child to watch or engage in sexual activities
- Encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- Involving a child in looking at sexual images or videos
- Involving a child in the production of sexual images or videos
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse in children can include:-

- Extreme reactions such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses or anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals or venereal diseases

The above are just a few examples.

Another form of sexual abuse is child sexual exploitation, where a person under 18 is given something, such as food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts of money in return for performing sexual activities or having sexual activities performed on them. It can also involve violence, coercion and intimidation, with threats of physical harm or humiliation.

### 2.1.3 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse happens in many different ways. It can affect how a young person or child feels about themselves, or how they fit in with friends, at school, or where they live.

Examples of emotional abuse are:-

- Being made to feel inadequate, worthless or unloved

- Being unfairly blamed
- Being bullied, including over the internet (cyber-bullying)
- Being made to feel frightened or in danger
- Witnessing the abuse of others, such as domestic abuse

Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse in children can include:-

- Reduced physical, mental and emotional development
- Continual self depreciation, e.g. 'I'm stupid', 'I'm ugly', 'I'm worthless'
- Inappropriate response to pain, e.g. 'I deserve this'
- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. rocking, hair twisting or self-mutilation

These are just a few examples.

#### 2.1.4 Neglect

Neglect is when a child or young person's basic needs are persistently not being met by their parent or guardian.

These basic needs include:-

- Adequate food, clothing and shelter
- Protection from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Adequate supervision (including not being left at home alone)
- Access to appropriate medical care including dental treatment

Signs and symptoms of neglect in children can include:-

- Constant hunger or tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor condition and cleanliness of clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships

#### 2.2 Safeguarding children

FLH believes that:-

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

FLH recognises that:-

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

### 3. **PRINCIPLES**

FLH's recruitment process for those working with young people is robust and includes checks on qualifications and an Enhanced DBS check as well as obtaining multiple references.

FLH will endeavour to:-

- Protect all those who use the services that FLH provides and anybody connected with the charity from harm and to promote their well-being and welfare. (This includes the service users, children of adult service users, and the staff)
- Provide parents of child service users and all members of the staff with information on the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

This policy statement applies to anyone working with or on behalf of FLH, including senior managers and the board of trustees, and all of the staff.

When working with children or young people under the age of eighteen, FLH will:-

- Ensure that parental consent is obtained before any young person engages with our services, including counselling. Counselling and other services cannot be offered to any person under the age of eighteen without parental consent.
- Allow a parent or guardian to accompany the child to any sessions they have with the charity, including counselling.
- Ensure that our insurance cover is sufficient to cover our work with young people
- Value, listen to and respect all young people

FLH will also:-

- appoint a designated safeguarding officer and backup safeguarding leads
- develop safeguarding policies and procedures which reflect best practice and that are in line with legislation and local authority guidelines
- use our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving service users, parents, families and carers appropriately
- create and maintain an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- develop and implement an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- share information about safeguarding best practice with children, their families, and the staff via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions as appropriate
- recruit members of the staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made including an Enhanced DBS check, and checking that counsellors are qualified to work with young people. Qualified CYP counsellors/play therapists are expected to hold a PgDip in Counselling Children (BACP) as well as Level 2 and Level 3 certificates in counselling skills and studies (CPCAB)
- provide effective management for all the staff through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- implement a code of conduct for the staff
- use our procedures to manage any allegations against the staff appropriately
- ensure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensure that we provide a safe physical environment for the service users and the staff, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

- record and store information professionally and securely in line with current GDPR requirements.

All counsellors who work with children and young people are required to be a registered member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) or similar body and must adhere to their Ethical Codes of Conduct and Competence Framework for working with children and young people (CYP).

FLH utilises its membership of the BACP to advertise and recruit for specialist/qualified counsellors to work with CYP. We require two professional references.

In addition, all of the staff working with children and young people are required to undertake additional CPD training provided by FLH, including but not limited to:-

- Safeguarding
- Induction into the counselling role at FLH
- Mental Health awareness
- Working with Domestic Abuse
- Working with Addictions
- Facilitator training
- Working with young people in the therapeutic role

### 3.1 Implementation

- The welfare of the child at risk of abuse is of paramount consideration.
- FLH will not tolerate abuse in any circumstances. Doing nothing is not an option.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs and sexual identity have a right to protection from abuse.
- All children at risk of abuse have a right to intervention, support and/or information which could make life better and/or safer for them and be involved in decisions that are made about them.
- We will promote the empowerment, wellbeing, security and safety of children at risk of abuse consistent with their rights, mental capacity and personal choices.
- We aim to minimise the risk of abuse by being sensitive to cultural, gender and individual needs in our service delivery.
- We will maintain a culture and standards that prevent the development of poor care and support practices.
- FLH recognises that inter-agency co-operation is essential if children are to be protected effectively from abuse. We will work closely in partnership with key agencies and professionals, sharing information and developing appropriate strategies to respond to the needs of the service users.
- All of the staff will be aware of, and comply with, local guidelines in relation to reporting concerns about children at risk. Where no such local procedures exist externally, FLH will provide its own.
- FLH will report instances of disclosed or suspected abuse to the appropriate social services contact in line with local authority guidance, alerting the police or other emergency services as required. Where appropriate, FLH will report concerns to the Disclosure Barring Service or the Care Quality Commission.
- FLH actively encourages and supports reporting of concerns and will protect members of the staff disclosing malpractice from the risk of victimisation provided the disclosure is made in good faith.



- FLH will review new legislation as it arises and continually review our working practices to ensure that they are fit for purpose and in line with local authority and legislative requirements.

#### **4. Responsibilities**

- All children have the right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everybody within the charity
- Working in partnership with relevant agencies, in conjunction with local safeguarding procedures, has demonstrable results

All of the staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and its associated procedures. This is made clear during the induction process.

Failure to report suspected harm or abuse in line with the procedure that accompanies this Policy may be regarded as colluding with the harm or abuse and may be subject to an internal investigation.

#### **5. COMPLIANCE**

It is the responsibility of FLH's Board, Executive and Strategic Leadership Team to ensure compliance and the effectiveness of the procedure accompanying this policy.

Safeguarding Leads and the Safeguarding Officer are responsible for maintaining, updating and delivering appropriate procedures to deliver policy objectives, and to ensure that these are available and understood by all members of the staff.

It is the responsibility of managers of all front-line members of the staff to ensure that all the staff understand the importance of this policy and related procedures and receive training at induction and in their on-going personal training plan.

This policy and its accompanying procedures are reviewed annually.

##### **5.1 Application**

FLH deliver the principles of this policy through the application of a safeguarding procedure that clearly distinguishes between the requirements to safeguard children at risk of abuse.

The procedures recognise that FLH has responsibilities as an employer of the staff who work with children at risk and also that any member of the staff may identify potential abuse in their daily work.

#### **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out in December 2018 in connection with the development of this policy. No individual, or groups of individuals, were identified as being knowingly disadvantaged by this policy.

## **7. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect vulnerable adults and children in England.

We comply with relevant legislation and regulation, including:-

- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children Act 1989, 2004
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023
- 'Every Child Matters' Department of Health 2007
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 2000
- Local Safeguarding Child Board and Joint SW Child Protection Procedures
- Department of Health 'No Secrets' 2000
- SP QAF

FLH works within the framework and guidance provided by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Childrens Partnership. (Local Authority: Hertfordshire).



## **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**IMPORTANT: All of the staff should be aware that whenever a service user mentions a change in contact details such as changing a telephone number or moving home, that the service user be asked for these new contact details immediately.**

**Any new contact details should be handed to the CEO or Safeguarding Officer.**

**THIS PROCEDURE MUST BE READ IN ITS ENTIRETY. THE APPENDICES AT THE END CONTAIN ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT GUIDANCE FROM THE NSPCC.**

### **PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE**

#### **1. Context**

It is important that children and young people are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or a threat has been identified that may result in emotional or physical harm.

- 1.1 FLH's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures are available to all of the staff and can be viewed by other interested parties, including service users and local authorities, upon request. The Procedure includes a section on recognising abuse.
- 1.2 All of the staff who work with service users will have undergone checks to ensure their suitability to work with our service user. Should any DBS check reveal that any volunteer member of the staff is unsuitable for work with vulnerable groups or young children their contract will be liable to immediate termination. For paid members of the staff or Trustees, all service user contact shall cease immediately pending investigation by the Board of Trustees.
- 1.3 All members of the staff who work with service users will have been trained in safeguarding the groups with which they will be working (children and young people or vulnerable adults) either through training provided by our local authority or their educational establishment.
- 1.4 All service users of FLH undergo a formal assessment process prior to working with the charity. We utilise the DASH Risk Assessment process to do this.

## 2. RECOGNISING ABUSE

(Source: Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board)

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership in their safeguarding training courses 2019/2020 defines the recognised types of child abuse as follows:-

### 2.1 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect can be:-

- Medical
- Emotional
- Nutritional
- Educational
- Physical
- Lack of Supervision

#### 2.1.1 Potential warning signs of Neglect

- Regularly hungry, inadequate or poor nutrition
- Always dirty, underwear never changed
- Wears inappropriate clothing
- Regularly forgotten to be picked up, poor attendance, no interest by parent in child's progress
- Regularly miss appointments
- Untreated/managed medical conditions, including dental health
- Poor parent motivation or parental behaviour of concern
- Pale, listless and underweight, or obese
- Neglect often presents with less tangible and more diverse indicators which makes it harder to identify

Should a member of the staff have any suspicions that a child they see or hear about during their work with FLH is suffering neglect they should discuss their concerns with a FLH Safeguarding Officer.

It is important to remember that neglect occurs across all sectors of our society, not only in low-income households; socially privileged parents can also be neglectful parents.

### 2.2 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child (including Female Genital Mutilation and Breast Ironing). It may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### 2.2.1 Recognising physical abuse

The challenge of raising concerns about possible physical abuse are exacerbated by difficulty in being able to interpret with absolute certainty that it has been deliberately inflicted. Signs of abuse may be confused with normal childhood injuries, such as bruises, scratches or scrapes.

Bruising that may indicate child abuse:-

- Babies and children who are not mobile
- Multiple clusters of bruises
- Multiple bruises of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint
- Bruises to face, back, abdomen, arms, buttocks, ears and hands

Should any member of the staff suspect that a child is being physically abused they should seek advice from a Safeguarding Officer.

### 2.3 Emotional abuse

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

#### 2.3.1 Potential warning signs of emotional abuse

A member of the staff should consider talking to a safeguarding officer if they hear about, or are working with, a child who is displaying the following behaviours:-

- Withdrawn
- Suddenly behaves differently
- Anxious
- Clingy
- Depressed
- Aggressive
- Problems sleeping/falls asleep in class
- Eating disorders/change in eating habits
- Soils clothes
- Misses school
- Obsessive behaviour
- Self-harm
- Suicidal ideation
- Lowering of academic grades
- Changes in activity and mood – more aggressive or less engaged
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness, loss of hope
- Increased risk-taking behaviour – substances, unprotected sex etc.

- Giving away possessions

## 2.4 Sexual abuse

Whilst most professionals understand that ‘sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening’ (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018), all of the staff must also be alert nowadays to issues involving new technologies (online grooming, child sexual exploitation, sexting etc.)

‘... we cannot expect children to disclose abuse in order for it to be acknowledged and responded to. We need to ensure that professionals with responsibility for safeguarding children and wider communities have the knowledge, confidence and support to be professionally curious and act appropriately in order to safeguard and support children where there are concerns of sexual abuse’ (Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse)

### 2.4.1 When to suspect sexual abuse

- Over-attention to adults of a particular sex
- Displaying unusual interest in the genitals of others
- Acting out adult sexual behaviour with adults, dolls or other children
- Open displays of sexuality, for example, repeated public masturbation
- Precocious knowledge of sexual matters
- Promiscuity, repetitious sexually precocious behaviour

### 2.4.2 What is sexual grooming and how do we spot it?

- Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking
- It is not always easy to spot, but we can look out for:-
  - Children being secretive, including about what they are doing online
  - Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
  - Have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can’t or won’t explain
  - Have access to drugs or alcohol

FLH has a broad service user-base but was originally founded to offer support services to domestic abuse survivors and those in recovery from addictions and so all of the staff should remain vigilant for the signs of new or ongoing abuse, with regard to protecting children and young people in these types of situations, whether working with children and young people or not.

It is important to recognise that children and young people may be the victims of Domestic Abuse or Addiction behaviours by their caregivers, or be affected by it occurring within their household. This is likely to have a serious effect on their physical and mental wellbeing.

All of the staff who work directly with children and young people will have undergone specific training for this, which should include how to recognize signs of abuse.

### **3. RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE**

- 3.1 In the event of an incident or disclosure, you will need to remind the service user of your duty of care towards them and their family.

(The service user should already be aware of FLH's requirement to act to protect the service user, their family, or any other person known to be at risk, through (a) having been through an initial assessment, and (b) during counselling contracting if they are a counselling service user)

- 3.2 The member of the staff to whom a disclosure is made should follow the Reporting Procedure (Section 4 of these procedures), noting the following rules when talking with the service user or person reporting the abuse:-

#### **DO**

- Make sure the individual is safe
- If required, take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts, including whether other agencies, schools, health or social services are aware of the situation.
- When making notes after the session, ensure that you include all of the facts and the reason you believe this to be a safeguarding concern. Make careful notes and, where appropriate, obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Evaluate whether there is an immediate risk – e.g. on disclosure of suicidal thoughts, serious self-harm, concerns about risk of harm to children etc., where no other authority is aware of the situation, you may need to remind the service user of your need to discuss the issue they have brought with a Safeguarding Lead, breaking confidentiality only within the bounds of the specific safeguarding concerns mentioned. (Refer to the FLH Safeguarding Training and Section 4 of this procedure for further guidance on this).
- immediately speak to a Safeguarding Lead or, if they are unavailable, the Officer for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for ongoing support.

#### **DO NOT**

- Promise confidentiality
- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion

- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume Information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional protection agencies, following a referral from the designated FLH Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officer and/or Safeguarding Trustee.

- 3.3 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to either a Safeguarding Lead or, if that person is unavailable, the Safeguarding Officer or, if neither are available, the Safeguarding Trustee, that working day where possible.

**IF IN DOUBT, TALK TO A MEMBER OF THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM !**

**We foster a collaborative environment and it is never wrong to report any concerns you have.**

- 3.4 Any incidents reported to a Safeguarding Lead shall be discussed with the Safeguarding Officer (or Safeguarding Trustee should the CEO be unavailable) before telephoning and reporting the matter to the appropriate local social services duty social worker or seeking advice from the appropriate Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board where necessary. (Should the matter be reported to the Safeguarding Officer directly, the matter will be reported to the appropriate authorities as detailed above, and the Safeguarding Trustee informed that a new safeguarding case has been referred). This step is to ensure that the charity has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, not one individual, and aims to ensure that a discussion takes place to clarify that the best interests of the service user and/or person being safeguarding are being served.
- 3.5 The nominated Safeguarding Lead shall, where appropriate, telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local social services duty social worker, seeking advice from the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board where necessary. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made by the Safeguarding Lead and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority Social Services department within 24 hours.
- 3.6 Responding to a suspicion or allegation of abuse when working online or via telephone



When working with service users online or via telephone, the reporting procedures remain the same as they are for face-to-face work, with the following exceptions:

- 3.6.1 All members of the staff who are working with service users should keep their email open whilst they are working so that should they have any concerns whilst talking to a service user can email the Safeguarding Officer for advice. Should they not receive an immediate response they should text and request a response to their email, or a call back from the Safeguarding Officer.

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Should the Safeguarding Officer not respond then the alternative reporting structure (see Section 4) should be followed.

At any stage in this process, should you feel that you need further advice, or wish to seek further information or clarification from a third party you should call the NSPCC Helpline to speak to one of their counsellors:-

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

0808 800 5000

You may also refer to the NSPCC guidance on their website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

- 3.6.2 Should the member of the staff be concerned about an imminent threat of harm then the procedures in Section 4 of this procedure should be followed (i.e. contact the emergency services and then inform the Safeguarding Lead of the action that has been taken).

**IMPORTANT: IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 999 STRAIGHT AWAY!**

As soon as you have established that the child is safe from immediate threat, notify the Safeguarding Team and inform them of the actions you have taken.

- 3.6.3 When working via the telephone with service users who are using a mobile telephone, all members of the staff should check at the beginning of the call that the service user is at home. Should the service user be somewhere other than their home environment, the member of the staff should ask for details of their location so that in the event that a situation arises where the staff member becomes concerned for the welfare of the service user, then appropriate measures can be taken.

Service users cannot be forced to reveal their location, however it should be stressed to any resistant service user this is simply a precaution, to ensure that they are safe, and that their welfare is paramount.

- 3.6.4 All of the staff that are working with service users in a counselling capacity will have undergone training recognised by their regulatory body to prove their competency in this area.

#### **4. REPORTING**

<b>C.E.O. (Safeguarding Officer/Lead):</b>	<b>Emma Fleming</b>	<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>07939 066179</b>
			<b>07939234886</b>
<b>Safeguarding Trustee:</b>	<b>Amanda Thurston</b>	<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>01992 537344</b>
<b>Safeguarding Lead:</b>	<b>Miriam Bassidi-Ahmad</b>	<b>Telephone:</b>	

N.B. Report first to a Safeguarding Lead; if that person is unavailable, report to the Safeguarding Officer. If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, call the Safeguarding Trustee.

- 4.1 Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.
- 4.2 On identifying a safeguarding concern, it is important to understand how imminent or serious the threat is, and whether other agencies or authorities have been informed. FLH provides training to all of the staff who are likely to be informed of a disclosure. This will determine the type of action that will be taken by the person receiving the information.
- 4.3 Reporting where there is **NO imminent risk, or where authorities have already been informed**

- 4.3.1 Should the risk be such that there is NOT an imminent danger to the service user or a person they are discussing, then the member of the staff to whom the disclosure has been made should continue with the session, making mental notes of the details so that factual notes can be made after the session, including everything of relevance, as revealed to them.
- 4.3.2 The person to whom the disclosure has been made should then complete the Safeguarding Form (see Appendix) and hand it to a Safeguarding Lead for review (noting the above reporting chain should the Safeguarding Lead be unavailable).
- 4.3.3 The Safeguarding Lead (or Safeguarding Officer/Safeguarding Trustee) will then review the report and may request further details from the person making the report (in which case, access to appropriate sections of service user notes may be required). At this stage, the Safeguarding Lead (or Safeguarding Officer/Safeguarding Trustee) may make contact with the child – if the child has made the disclosure, or if the child is an FLH service user, or their caregiver is and they are the person who has raised the concern – and complete the DASH Risk Checklist (Young Peoples Version) with them.
- 4.3.4 The Safeguarding Officer will keep a record of all safeguarding reports. This record will conform to current GDPR requirements and will be made either at the time of the initial report or in a reasonable timeframe (within 24 hours) of being reported. The current reporting system is the DASH database system which is currently used only by keyworkers and the CEO (Safeguarding Officer) of FLH. The report will include the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information, including:-
- the date of the report
  - the time of the incident
  - the place where the alleged abuse happened
  - the name of the complainant, the names of people the incident has been reported to and the names of others present and, where different, the name of the child or young person who has allegedly been abused
  - the nature of the alleged abuse
  - a description of any injuries observed
  - the account which has been given of the allegation

The record will be factual and will not include impressions or assumptions.

- 4.3.5 The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the Safeguarding Officer (or the Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the Safeguarding Trustee) to decide whether the safeguarding process should be instigated or if other support/services are appropriate. It is the CEO's responsibility to either make contact with other agencies/authorities as appropriate, or to authorise the Safeguarding Lead to do so. Feedback will be given to the person who raised the safeguarding alert, who will be advised on what (if anything) to say to the service user.
- 4.3.6 Information will usually be provided to the individual by the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer. This could be about other sources of help or information that could enable them to decide what to do about their experience, enable them to recover from their experience and enable them to seek justice.

#### **4.4 Reporting where there IS imminent risk, or where authorities have not already been involved**

- 4.4.1 Once the member of the staff has established that a child is involved in the safeguarding concern and no authorities (e.g. school, local authorities, doctor) have been made aware of the situation/risk, then the member of the staff receiving the information should evaluate the level and immediacy of the risk. Should it be necessary, the member of the staff may need to terminate the session, telling the service user that they are concerned about a safeguarding issue, and seek immediate advice from the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer.

**Should the risk be immediate and life-threatening then the member of the staff may need to call the emergency services prior to involving the FLH Safeguarding team.**

In instances where there is imminent risk (e.g. threat of suicide where the person has indicated they are currently suicidal and in danger of harming themselves) then that person should not be left alone. The person receiving the information should ask them to accompany them to see the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer and should ensure that the person at risk is accompanied at all times through the building.

- 4.4.2 The member of the staff will need to complete a Safeguarding Form but in this instance it may need to be completed with the Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Trustee present.
- 4.4.3 Steps 4.3.3 to 4.3.6 above will then be performed and documented by the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer.
- 4.5 In all instances where a safeguarding need is suspected, the member of the staff should complete a Safeguarding Form and inform the Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, the Safeguarding Officer or Trustee. This should be completed, even when the member of the staff is uncertain of whether the matter is actually a safeguarding concern – the Safeguarding team will review and advise on this. If in doubt, the practice is that an initial Safeguarding Form should be filled in.
- 4.6 The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for maintaining a list of all safeguarding cases that have been logged (i.e. a Safeguarding Reporting Form has been completed), along with details of which have been referred and, for cases that haven't, a reason that they have not been.
- 4.7 From time to time FLH will run special events, programmes and initiatives for children. When these are run, there will be clear guidelines issued to the staff or volunteers involved. An example is the Sugarfoot Boxing initiative (see Appendix for the guidance issued to volunteers on this project).

## **5. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER**

FLH will ensure that any allegations made against members of the staff will be dealt with swiftly.

Where a member of the staff is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

The Safeguarding Lead will liaise with local authorities to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that the FLH's disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

FLH has a whistle blowing policy and all the staff are aware of this policy. The staff will be supported to use this policy.

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 6.1 Child protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all. FLH is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding issues will be shared only with those who need to know.
- 6.2 All of the staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children and young people at risk of harm with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and children's services.
- 6.3 Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.
- 6.4 All personal information regarding all FLH service users will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines.
- 6.5 If a service user confides in a member of the staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of the staff tells the service user sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.
- 6.6 Within that context, the service user must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.
- 6.7 Where possible, consent must be obtained from the service user before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the child or young person is the priority.
- 6.8 Where a disclosure has been made, the member of the staff must let the service user know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.
- 6.9 The member of the Staff must assure the service user that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The service users involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

## **7. THE ROLE OF KEY INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES**

### **7.1 The Police**

The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding with cases involving alleged criminal acts. It becomes the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence. Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

## 7.2 The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP)

The partnership does not deliver services directly to children, young people or their families but works to ensure that all agencies and organisations who work with children and young people work together to keep them safe.

The joint leaders of the partnership are:-

- Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group
- Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group

## **8. ROLE OF DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS**

8.3.1 The role of the FLH Safeguarding team is to deal with protection issues that arise within the organisation. They will respond to all concerns and enquiries.

8.3.2 The role of the CEO(Safeguarding Officer) is to:-

- Be the first point of contact for all safeguarding enquiries
- To support the Safeguarding Leads with the fulfilment of their duties, and advise where necessary
- To take responsibility on behalf of the charity for informing authorities external to the charity
- To report all cases of safeguarding concerns raised with authorities to the Trustees

8.3.3 The role of the Safeguarding Leads is to:-

- Support the CEO (Safeguarding Officer) with any safeguarding enquiries or actions that need to be taken, as directed by the Safeguarding Officer
- To assist with logging safeguarding concerns onto the DASH Risk Checklist
- To fulfil the duties of the Safeguarding Officer should they be unavailable (taking advice from the Safeguarding Trustee where necessary)

8.3.4 The role of the Safeguarding Trustee is to fulfil the duties of the Safeguarding Officer (CEO) should they be unavailable. This will include providing support and advice to the Safeguarding Leads and authorising contact with local authorities and external agencies.

8.3.5 In cases of emergency, i.e. imminent threat to life/harm, then the Safeguarding Lead or person taking the report/receiving the information may act to alert the emergency services without obtaining prior consent from the CEO (Safeguarding Officer) or Trustee.

## **9. ROLE OF THE LINE MANAGER**

- 9.1 The role of the line manager is to support the member of the staff involved with the incident, and to ensure that their welfare needs are considered. Should a line manager not be available then the Safeguarding Officer or CEO will act in this capacity.

## **10. TRAINING**

During the Induction process, all of the staff are made aware of the importance of these procedures and are given their own copy to review so that should an occasion occur that requires a safeguarding concern to be highlighted to the safeguarding team, or acted upon without them, they are aware of how to proceed without seeking guidance.

Specialist training will be provided for the FLH Safeguarding team and to all of the staff who are working with children and young people and they will be made aware of the need for them to receive safeguarding training which is appropriate for the service user work they will be performing.

FLH has also developed a safeguarding course which will be delivered to all of the staff, ideally before they start to work with service users, and which gives details of how to apply the Safeguarding procedures within the charity and how to identify whether a safeguarding issue should be reported on immediately, by stopping a service user session, or whether it can wait until the session has finished (and be referred to the Safeguarding team for advice without the service user being named at this stage).

## **11. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The organisation has a complaints procedure available to all members of the staff.

## **12. RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

FLH operates procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of its service users and their families, including arrangements for appropriate checks on new members of the staff where applicable.

## **13. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION**

These procedures should be read in conjunction with FLH's:-

- Equalities and Diversity Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure
- Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Professional Boundaries Guidance
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Service user Complaints
- Data Protection Policy

- Recruitment Policy and Procedure
- Criminal Record Bureau Employees Checks
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Partnership Working Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Induction Guide (for staff) and Safeguarding Training

#### **14. COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW**

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually by the CEO or a delegated member of the staff. Where revisions are required these must be ratified by a quorate of the Trustees. The CEO will ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to all of the staff.

To ensure compliance to the policy one Trustee will be elected to oversee the planning process and ensure all planning is in line with the policy.

The Trustee currently elected to ensure compliance in this area is Amanda Thurston.



## **APPENDIX**

### **IMPORTANT GUIDANCE FROM THE NSPCC**

As well as receiving guidance from the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Boards, FLH has worked within NSPCC guidance in drafting these procedures.

The following guidance has been taken from the NSPCC website. It is essential reading as supporting information for our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedure.

See the NSPCC website for further information: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>

### **Spotting the signs of abuse**

Spotting the signs of abuse might be difficult and it can be difficult to know for certain if something is wrong. But if you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, contact our helpline to speak to one of our counsellors.

Call us on 0808 800 5000, email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or fill in our online form.

Abuse is always wrong and should always be reported. Some of the signs you may spot include:-

- aggressive or repeated shouting
- hearing hitting or things being broken
- children crying for long periods of time
- very young children left alone or are outdoors by themselves
- children looking dirty or not changing their clothes
- children being withdrawn or anxious.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour, but by contacting us we can help assess the situation.

By continuing to have a relationship with a child who may be vulnerable, you increase the chance of being able to spot any possible signs of abuse. Think about questions you could ask that will help you see what life's like for them. Ask open-ended questions like, "tell me about your day", "what are some good things that have happened today", "tell me about some sad things that have happened this week" and "what's life at home like". It's okay to ask similar questions - it can sometimes take time for a child to open up about what's happening. Talking about things like what they're watching, reading or playing, or what they've had for dinner, may help them feel more comfortable.

It's also important to support parents and carers. Ask them about how they're coping and any worries and concerns they have. Let them know you're there to support them if they need help.

### **What to do if a child reveals abuse**

It can be upsetting or scary when a child reveals abuse. You might not know how to respond and be tempted to take control of the situation. We recommend you:-

- Give children and young people the opportunity to talk about what's going on for them. It may take time for them to feel comfortable talking to you so keep in touch regularly. Talking about things like what they're watching, reading or playing, or what they've had for dinner, may help them feel more comfortable.

### **Listen carefully to what they're saying**

Be patient and focus on what you're being told. Try not to express your own views and feelings. If you appear shocked or as if you don't believe them it could make them stop talking and take back what they've said.

### **Give them the tools to talk**

If they're struggling to talk to you, show them [Childline's letter builder tool](#). It uses simple prompts to help them share what's happening and how they're feeling

### **Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you**

Reassurance can make a big impact. If they've kept the abuse a secret it can have a big impact knowing they've shared what's happened.

### **Tell them it's not their fault**

Abuse is never a child's fault. It's important they hear, and know, this.

### **Say you'll take them seriously**

They may have kept the abuse secret because they were scared they wouldn't be believed. Make sure they know they can trust you and you'll listen and support them.

### **Don't confront the alleged abuser**

Confronting the alleged abuser could make the situation worse for the child.

### **Explain what you'll do next**

For younger children, explain you're going to speak to someone who will be able to help. For older children, explain you'll need to report the abuse to someone who can help.

### **Report what the child has told you as soon as possible**

Report as soon after you've been told about the abuse so the details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly. It can be helpful to take notes as soon after you've spoken to the child. Try to keep these as accurate as possible.

If you work or volunteer with children, we have advice on responding to disclosures of abuse.

### *Supporting disabled children*

Disabled children and young people are 3 times more likely to be abused or neglected than non-disabled young people. And while they may be less visible to professionals and unable to communicate with you easily online or at all, it's important to make a greater effort to keep in touch.

Some children and young people will have access to video chat and tools like Makaton to communicate. Ask questions about how they are and how life at home is like. Ask open-ended questions like, "tell me about your day", "what are some good things that have happened today", "tell me about some sad things that have happened this week" and "what's life at home like".

When talking to parents and carers, ask after the children and how they're being cared for, whether they're receiving the support, medication and provisions they need.

### *Supporting babies, toddlers and younger children*

Very young children are particularly vulnerable as they're unable to share how they're feeling and are less likely to have access to other adults they can confide in. Ask after them in your calls to parents and carers to see how they're being cared for and whether they're receiving the support they need. Ask specific questions, like "what did you and baby do in the morning."

### *Support for children and young people*

Our counsellors are available to talk to children online or over the phone between 9am and midnight.

The Childline website is also available 24 hours a day. Whatever a child is going through, Childline is here to help.

### *Support for adults*

If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, you can speak to us about your concerns. Whether you want to report child abuse and neglect or aren't sure what to do, we're here to listen, offer advice and support and can take the next steps if a child's in danger.

Our telephone lines are open **Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm and 9am – 6pm at the weekend**. You can contact us online **24 hours a day, 365 days a year**.

CALL 0808 800 5000

APPENDIX

DASH RISK CHECKLIST – YOUNG PEOPLES VERSION

APPENDIX

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING FORM

## APPENDIX

### JOB DESCRIPTION: SAFEGUARDING LEAD

#### Future Living Hertford Safeguarding Lead Job Description

Reports to the Board of Trustees, via the C.E.O.

#### Purpose of the Role

The key role of the Safeguarding Lead is to take responsibility for promoting positive safeguarding procedures and practice within the charity.

This responsibility will be in addition to their existing or main roles and responsibilities.

Main duties are:

To receive information from, and offer advice to, staff, volunteers, service users and other relevant parties, e.g. families and/or carers, about concerns relating to adult or child protection issues, and to maintain secure records of this information

To assess this information promptly and take appropriate action

The Safeguarding Lead must be familiar with national and local safeguarding legislation and guidance, with procedures for referral to the local authority's children's or adult's services and police procedures for investigating abuse of children and adults at risk.

The Safeguarding Lead must know how to contact and establish links with the local

Safeguarding Children Boards, Adult's Safeguarding Board and the relevant people within children's and adult services or police. They will work closely with the C.E.O. in this capacity, notifying the C.E.O. and obtaining authorisation prior to contacting local authorities (except in emergency situations).

They will assess the safeguarding development needs of all staff and co-ordinate the training.

They will keep all staff informed of good practice and new legislation and guidance.

They will monitor the number of safeguarding concerns, keeping confidential records and feeding back to the C.E.O. for reporting to the Trustees on the quality of their safeguarding work. Reports shall also be generated on how many safeguarding concerns have been raised but not referred, and the reasons for this.

They will ensure that Future Living Hertford (FLH) policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding are kept up to date with any changes.



## APPENDIX

### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*This Code of Conduct has been written by the NSPCC and adapted for use by Future Living Hertford (FLH).*

#### Purpose

All members of the staff at FLH who work or come into contact with children and young people can be viewed as acting in a position of authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately.

#### Responsibility

You are responsible for:-

prioritising the welfare of children and young people

providing a safe environment for children and young people

- ensuring that any equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.

following our principles, policies and procedures

- including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and whistleblowing

staying within the law at all times

modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow

challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to your line manager or the CEO

reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our Safeguarding Procedures

- this includes behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

#### Rights

You should:-

treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination

understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs

respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation

challenge discrimination and prejudice

encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

## Relationships

You should:-

promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect avoid  
favouritism

be patient with others

exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people

ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work  
of the project you are involved in

ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with  
children and young people

- if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that  
you are within sight or hearing of other adults.
- if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other  
staff or volunteers know where you and the child are.

only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult  
present if possible

- unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and  
you have been trained to do this safely.

## Respect

You should:-

listen to and respect children at all times

value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities  
wherever possible

respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible.

- if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures,  
it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest  
opportunity.

## Unacceptable behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:-

allow concerns or allegations to go unreported

take unnecessary risks,<sup>2</sup> smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances

develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people

make inappropriate promises to children and young people

engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive

- including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.

let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account

act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive

patronise or belittle children and young people

make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

### Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave FLH. We may also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to your line manager or the CEO. If necessary you should follow our Whistleblowing Procedure and Safeguarding procedures.

End

Agreed by Trustees: 18/09/2024