

Introduction

This policy outlines our approach to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and is written in accordance with the [Children Act 2004](#) and the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#) and with reference to [Working together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#)

It will be reviewed, added to, or modified from time to time and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements related to the work of Activities 4 U. Copies and subsequent amendments will be made available to all employees.

The success of this policy depends on the active support of all employees to achieve its objectives.

Activities 4 U recognises the need for a well-defined policy setting out the standards it aims to achieve for safeguarding children and young people within our care.

This Safeguarding Policy sets out the organisation and arrangements for achieving this aim including the detailed responsibilities for key staff.

The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person who is or may need community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Policy Statement

Activities 4 U believes that it is always unacceptable for a child, young person or vulnerable adult 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 or vulnerable adult is paramount
- ✓ All children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief or lack thereof, 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 agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- ✓ All our staff and volunteers need to be carefully selected and trained and accept responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults they come into contact with

The purpose of the policy is to:

- ✓ Protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Activities 4 U's services
- ✓ Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

This policy is mandatory for anybody working for or on behalf of Activities 4 U meaning all paid staff, including staff working on short-term contracts and permanent contractors and volunteers including the Board of Trustees and Advisers. The policy must be applied whenever there is a concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult or about the behaviour of an adult.

We will endeavour to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by

- ✓ Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- ✓ Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- ✓ Conducting robust recruitment and selection processes including the necessary safety checks in respect of references, declarations and DBS checks
- ✓ Sharing information about child protection and good practice with stakeholders
- ✓ Reporting to Social Services any suspicion that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has suffered, is suffering, or is at risk of suffering abuse
- ✓ Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training including guidance on what to do if an individual is worried about a child or young person

This Policy will be reviewed when needed or at least annually.

Organisation and Responsibilities

Within Activities 4 U, the person with responsibility for Safeguarding, Joy Brown, will chair the quarterly Safeguarding Committee where all of the above will be monitored. Joy Brown is also responsible for informing the LADDO of any serious incidents.

Directors

The Directors are responsible for

- ✓ The implementation, maintenance, monitoring and review of this Policy, across Activities 4 U
- ✓ Leading by example in actively promoting safeguarding practices in Activities 4 U

- ✓ Ensuring the Teams, they manage have implemented the Safeguarding Policy and have received the appropriate safeguarding training

Managers

Managers are the key to the success of this policy. They are accountable for the safeguarding standards within their area of control. Specifically, they are responsible for

- ✓ Ensuring the Safeguarding policy is communicated and implemented within their area of control
- ✓ Making sure they and their staff understand the safeguarding arrangements within Activities 4 U
- ✓ Informing, instructing, training and supervising employees
- ✓ Ensuring all incidents relating to safeguarding are reported to a Designated Safeguarding Officer, Joy Brown
- ✓ Reporting safeguarding issues which they cannot resolve to the Directors

All Employees

All employees are responsible for

- ✓ Making sure they understand the part they play regarding safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
- ✓ Co-operating with managers in following the safeguarding arrangements set out in this policy
- ✓ Reporting any suspicions of abuse or neglect to a Designated Safeguarding Officer
- ✓ Reporting any concerns about the behavior of any members of staff, volunteers or contractors towards children, young people or vulnerable adults

Chief Executive/ HR Manager

The Directors/ HR Manager is responsible for

- ✓ Informing the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding of any referrals to DBS
- ✓ Keeping records of concerns raised against a member of staff or volunteer on their staff file
- ✓ Making a referral to DBS

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Activities 4 U Designated Safeguarding Officer is Joy Brown, who is responsible for:

- ✓ Responding in a timely manner to any suspected abuse allegations
- ✓ Keeping written records in line with our Data Protection Policy
- ✓ Referring a case on to other agencies where necessary

Working in Partnership

Activities 4 U will cooperate and coordinate with all organisations it works in partnership with, to safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults it has contact with. General Arrangements for Implementing the Safeguarding Policy

Safer Recruitment

Safeguarding the children, young people and vulnerable adults who Activities 4 U have contact with are considered at the recruitment stage. All staff, volunteers and trustees are required to attend interviews and provide references, as detailed in Activities 4 U's recruitment, selection and induction procedures.

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will also be obtained for staff, volunteers and trustees recruited to certain positions. A repeat DBS check will be obtained every three years for all eligible employees, volunteers and trustees.

During interview all candidates will be questioned regarding their understanding of safeguarding and how that might be a consideration in the role they are applying for.

Safer Working

All staff and volunteers working for Activities 4 U have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults that they are working with to ensure their physical, sexual and emotional safety. To achieve this all staff and volunteers should follow some simple guidelines.

Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

- Do treat everyone with respect
- To ensure that your behaviour is appropriate at all times

Good Practice Guidelines for Working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

- Plan activities so that they involve more than one member of staff, volunteer, or other relevant accompanying (e.g., youth leader) adult being present, or are at least in sight or hearing of others
- When meeting with a child, young person or vulnerable adult this should take place as publicly as possible. If privacy is needed other staff and volunteers should be informed of the meeting
- Don't exaggerate or trivialize safeguarding issues
- Don't let allegations made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult go without being addressed and recorded
- Don't deter anyone from making allegations through fear of not being believed
- Don't engage in or permit abusive behavior between young people e.g., ridiculing, bullying
- Don't engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Don't make suggestive remarks or gestures or tell jokes of a sexually inappropriate or discriminatory nature
- Don't show favouritism to any individual

- Don't allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behavior, such as tantrums or crushes but deal with such behavior firmly and fairly
- Don't give a child, young person or vulnerable adult your personal contact details and do not communicate with them outside of the work you are doing with them
- Do respect a person's right to privacy

Physical Contact

Staff and volunteers should not have unnecessary physical contact with child, young person or vulnerable adult. There may, however, be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or positively desirable or necessary for safety reasons, for example

- Providing reassurance for a distressed person
- When teaching sports
- When working with a person with a disability who requests such assistance
- Giving direct assistance when fitting outdoor activity equipment, e.g., harness
- Administering first aid

Wherever possible there should be an attempt to ask the person to agree to such contact. Where appropriate, staff should explain their actions. This should be conducted openly and ideally with another member of staff or volunteer present. Staff should be aware of their positioning so that, where possible, others can see the assistance being given.

Staff and volunteers should avoid doing things of a personal nature that the person can do themselves. However, when working with people with disabilities, personal care and help is sometimes required.

In very rare circumstances there may be a need to physically restrain a young person for their own or other's safety. See Appendix B for further guidance about restraint.

Social Media

As technology develops, the internet and its range of services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, computers and game consoles. Although the internet has many positive uses, it provides the key method for the distribution of indecent images of children.

Furthermore, social networking sites, chat rooms and instant messaging systems are increasingly being used by online predators to "groom" a child, young person or vulnerable adult. In addition, electronic communication is being used more and more by young people as a means of bullying their peers and distributing inappropriate images.

To safeguard Activities 4 U employees and the people we work with the good practice outlined in Activities 4 U Social Media Guidelines must be followed.

Photography

Photos of young people taking part in Activities 4 U programs and activities are an excellent way of communicating and promoting Activities 4 U but when personal information is added to photographs, these images can be used to identify children, and put their safety and privacy at risk. Photographs can also be adapted for inappropriate use. To manage the risks associated with photographing children and young people all employees must comply with Activities 4 U Photography Policy.

We recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
- only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
- avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

Residential Trips away

By following basic safeguarding best practices, we can protect children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in our programmes.

- Adults should ideally not share a bedroom with a child or young person; however, this may be necessary where the adult is the child or young person's carer
- Bedrooms of only two young people should be avoided if possible
- Bedrooms should not be mixed male and female. The exception to this may be where there are transgender young people
- Adults and young people must use private shower facilities

Toilet policy

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an agreed procedure to intimate personal areas to care for another person. This may be due to their young age, physical difficulties or special needs. Examples include continence and menstrual management as well as washing, toileting or dressing. It also includes the supervision of children and young people involved in intimate self-care.

Best practice includes ensuring that:

- All intimate care is provided in a manner to maintain the child's or young person's dignity and confidence.
- The child or young person is cared for in a way that avoids distress, embarrassment or pain.
- Staff are regularly trained regarding child protection and health and safety, (which may include manual handling), and are fully aware of infection control, including the need to
- A member of the trained staff (who is ideally familiar to the child/young person) will work alongside a new or more inexperienced colleague when they are introduced to a child and their toileting routines.
- Staff work in partnership with the child or young person's parents or carers, to discuss their needs, routines or preferences.
- Individual Health Care plans are written and agreed upon with parents/carers and where appropriate with the young person.
- All children and young people are supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible, given their age and ability. Staff will always encourage the child or young person to do as much as possible for him/herself as possible.
- Adults who assist a child or young person one-to-one are employees and have DBS checks at the appropriate level
- If two members of staff are present to assist with intimate care procedures they do not talk over the child or young person.
- Staff inform another colleague when they are going to assist a child with intimate care.
- Cameras and mobile phones are never taken into bathroom areas.
- Whenever possible, staff should care for a child of the same gender.
- Where a child or young person's care plan does not include 'intimate care', parents/carers will be informed the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs. (e.g. if soiled or passed urine).
- Information regarding intimate care is treated as confidential and communicated in person,

by telephone, or by sealed letter and not by any other method which is not confidential.

- Every child's right to privacy is respected.
- Careful consideration is given as to how many staff might need to be present when a child or young person needs help with intimate care.

When a child has a specific medical or developmental condition which could impact toileting management, then advice from the Pediatrician should be sought either by the parent/carer or with permission, the designated adult e.g. teacher or SENCO. Staff will record date and time of changing and whether child was wet/dry/soiled. This information will be shared with parent/carer. This plan will be reviewed as the child's needs change.

To maintain the young person's dignity, appropriate facilities should be available e.g. adult visitors or disabled toilet, rather than pupil toilet. This should be clean, warm and safe. Parents/carers and the child should be reassured that if the child has an accident, it is not a problem and children will not be made to feel that it is an issue.

Unaccompanied children and procedure (for example at the end of the day)

Activities 4 U recognises that it has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and that this duty extends to having arrangements in place for dealing with children who are not collected at the end of a day, or at the end of an authorised activity.

The protocol will be brought to the attention of parents, in writing, when their child joins the programme. On registration, parents should supply:

- names and full addresses of parents/carers (and confirmation of parental responsibility)
- home and work telephone numbers
- mobile phone numbers where appropriate
- TWO emergency contacts who may be called in the event of the parents/carers being unobtainable or in the case of an emergency

This information should be updated annually or whenever circumstances change. It is the parent's/carers responsibility to ensure that the pupil is collected by a responsible person. Activities 4 U must be notified immediately it becomes apparent that the person collecting the child may be late. A4U agrees to care for a pupil who has not been collected from school, until such a time as he/she has been collected by a parent/carer, or until appropriate, alternative care arrangements have been made with Social Care, and/or the Police, in order to maintain the child's safety. If there are any concerns about the child's safety and welfare these will be dealt with by following the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Entrance policy for admitting unaccompanied children (Is your organisation's site closed access or open access and what measures are put in place if it's open access. What age are children allowed to come on their own? parental consent process needs to be stated)

The access door will open at the specified time of each project, two members of the team will be waiting at the entrance doors to sign the child/ young person in. No child/ young person will be allowed in until a member of staff registers them on arrival. All programmes require a completed parental registration form to join that includes a parental consent question.

Collection from a session

Parents/ carers will need to meet our youth workers/ coaches at the entrance gate to collect their child, they will not be allowed past this threshold unless there is a specific reason i.e locating lost property. Children and young people will need to be signed out by a member of staff before leaving the premises unless we have written consent from the parent stating their child can leave unaccompanied they will need to be collected by the appropriate adult. Should a family member/ friend be picking the child up we require the full name of the person collecting by the parent/ carer.

Adult levels of supervision and supervision for children with additional needs or disabilities

Activities 4 U will follow the NSPCC recommend the adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- 0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
- 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
- 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
- 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
- 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children

Depending on the needs and abilities of the children, and the nature of the activity, we may need to have more adults than the minimum.

With at least two adults present, even with smaller groups.

If young people are helping to supervise younger children only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios.

When working with children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) you may need more supervision than the minimum ratios above.

For each activity you should undertake a risk assessment to help you decide on supervision ratios. The assessment should take into account children and young people's behaviour, ability and mobility. As far as possible, include input from children and young people and their parents and carers in risk assessments to ensure children's needs are met

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Staff and volunteers may become concerned about a person in a number of ways

- A child, young person or vulnerable adult may tell (disclose) that s/he or someone else has been or is being abused
- There may be concerns due to the person's behavior or presentation
- Concerns may be raised about the behavior of an adult, who may be a member of staff, volunteer, another professional or a member of the public
- A parent, carer, relative or member of the public might share their concerns about a

child, young person or vulnerable adult

In all cases, the following procedures must be followed.

When a child, young person or vulnerable adult wants to confide in you

- Stay calm and listen carefully to them
- Show them that you take what they are saying seriously
- Encourage the child, young person or vulnerable adult to talk, but do not interrupt whilst they are recalling events
- Ask questions only to clarify your understanding of what you are being told. Do not investigate. Do not ask them to repeat his/her account
- Do not promise to keep the information secret. Explain that you have to pass the information on to those who can help. Tell the child, young person or vulnerable adult what you are going to do next
- Do not confront any alleged abuser

- As soon as you can, write down what the young person has said, using the child's own words (within 24 hours)
- Report to your Designated Safeguarding Officer, Joy Brown as soon as you can, and definitely before the end of the shift/day (see next section for relevant designated safeguarding officers)

Reporting a young person's disclosure of abuse is not a betrayal of the young person's confidence. It is your duty and is also necessary to allow protective action to be taken in relation to the young person and any other children.

If you feel a young person may be going to tell you about abuse, but then stops or tells you something else, let them know that you are always ready to listen to them and/or remind them of the Childline number 0800 1111

If the child, young person or vulnerable adult has communication difficulties or English is not their first language, pass this information on so that an appropriate interpreter can be identified.

If you become concerned about a child, young person or vulnerable adult (due to the young person's behavior, presentation or other reason)

- Do not trivialize or dismiss your concerns
- If the behavior may be sexually harmful to other young people do not explain it away as 'normal'
- Report your concerns to your Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as you can, and definitely before the end of the shift/day (see next section for relevant designated safeguarding officers)

Information that may seem trivial can frequently form the missing piece of the puzzle and lead to protective action being taken.

Children, young people or vulnerable adults who display sexually harmful behavior need to have an assessment of their needs, including possible needs for protection.

If you become concerned about the behavior of an adult

- Do not dismiss your concerns
- Do not confront the person about whom you have concerns
- Report your concerns to your Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as you can, and definitely before the end of the shift/day (see next section for relevant designated safeguarding officers)

It is VERY IMPORTANT you do not ignore or dismiss suspicions about another professional or colleague, however well or little you know them, or whatever position they may occupy in their organisation.

If your concerns are about a Designated Safeguarding Officer speak the Director. If your concerns are about Director, then you should speak to the Chief Executive. If your concerns are about the Chief Executive, you should speak to the Trustees

Your concerns will be taken in confidence and even if they are subsequently seen to be mistaken, you will not suffer any adverse consequences for raising the concern. The only exception to this would be where it could be conclusively shown that the concerns were raised maliciously.

If a parent, carer or another member of the public tells you of their concerns about a young person or the behavior of an adult

- Do not leave it to them to make their own referral to social care services. You should make your own report
- Take adequate details about their concern and the identity of the young person
- Report your concerns to your Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as you can, and definitely before the end of the shift/day (see next section for relevant designated safeguarding officers)

Concerns raised by members of the public should always be taken seriously and where necessary Activities 4 Should take responsibility to make the referral to social care services.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to any of your concerns above, raise these again with your Designated Safeguarding Officer. If you are unable or unwilling to do this, you can approach another Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Director or the Chief Executive.

Designated Person

Activities 4 U has appointed Designated Safeguarding Officers who are trained to respond to safeguarding concerns. Staff who have safeguarding concerns must raise these with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Joy Brown and should not make a direct referral to any outside agency. Joy can be contacted using the details below:

Joy Brown

Telephone: 07927 264 327

Email: admin@activities4u.org.uk

Training

All Activities 4 U staff, volunteers and trustees will be given safeguarding training. Staff are required to attend the internally run training course within the first three months of their employment. Volunteers will be given safeguarding training relevant to the position in which they are volunteering, this could be their manager talking through Activities 4 U Safeguarding Policy with them or they may need to attend Activities 4 U Safeguarding training. This will be organized locally through their programme manager.

Working with Partner Agencies

Working with partner agencies is a key part of our work. It is important in these circumstances that there is clarity of responsibility for different aspects of safeguarding between the two parties.

Concerns about the behavior of a member of staff or a volunteer

These procedures should be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that a person who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults has:

- behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- behaved towards a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm

In connection with the person's employment or voluntary activity.

If the concern is not connected to the person's employment or work activity, these procedures may also apply.

It is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. All allegations must be investigated as a priority to avoid any delay. The time taken to investigate and resolve individual cases depends on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness and complexity of the allegation.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- enquiries and assessment by social services about whether a child, young person or vulnerable adult is in need of protection or in need of services
- consideration by an employer or regulatory body of action in respect of the individual

If there is an immediate risk, appropriate actions may need to be taken by the member of staff e.g., urgent involvement of police; suspension of a member of staff and removal from Activities 4 U premises; securing evidence; urgent medical attention.

Any allegation or concern which arises should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Joy Brown using the contact details found on page 23 of this policy.

Where staff receive an allegation against someone from another organisation, this should be reported to a Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Confidential Information and Retaining Records

All children, young people and vulnerable adults, and their families, are entitled to their privacy. However, where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, those concerns, and the necessary personal information will need to be shared with those who can make decisions about action to safeguard the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

There is nothing in any legislation that prohibits the sharing of confidential and personal information where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or where a criminal act may be, or may have been committed.

Employees should make written notes at the earliest opportunity, and these should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The Designated Safeguarding Officer must keep all written documents relating to a safeguarding issue in a secure place.

These detailed records should be kept until Activities 4 U is confident that the information is held accurately with the agency responsible for taking further action to safeguard the child, young person or vulnerable adult i.e., partner agencies, social services or the police. A chronology of decisions made, and actions are taken can then be kept on file, once the detailed records are deleted or destroyed. This record should be held for 50 years.

More information can be found in the government document [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

Where concerns have been raised about a member of staff or a volunteer and these relate to behavior that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult; possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult; or behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, then:

- The Directors must be informed
- A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegations were followed up and resolved, and of any action taken and decisions reached, will be recorded
- This record will be kept in the person's confidential personnel file and a copy should be given to the individual
- Such information will be retained on file, including for people who leave the organisation, at least until the person reaches normal retirement age, or for ten years if that is longer

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS disclosure reveals information from the police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or a conviction. It will also prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, allegations resurface after a period of time.

Activities 4 U has a Duty to Refer to DBS any employees or volunteers who have been dismissed, redeployed, retired/redundant or resigned where Activities 4 U believe that this person has either:

- Engaged in relevant conduct or
- Satisfied the harm test or
- Received a caution for, or been convicted of, a relevant offence

(As defined in the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)).

The Director is responsible for making this referral to DBS and for informing the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding.

Appendix A Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Definitions of Abuse

“Child abuse and neglect” is a generic term encompassing all ill-treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child’s health or development. Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse can occur in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator may or may not be known to the child. Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out definitions and examples of the four main categories of abuse

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

These categories can overlap, and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve poking, pushing, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. It can also include “fabricated” or “induced” illness where a parent or carer simulates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development. This may involve

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger - e.g., witnessing domestic violence
- Exploitation or corruption of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill-treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

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 and includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation.

Sexually Harmful Behavior

A significant proportion of sexual abuse is carried out by children and young people on their peers. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as that perpetrated by an adult. The behavior should not be dismissed as "normal". A referral to social services should always be made.

Abuse of Trust

All members of staff and volunteers with Activities 4 U have a relationship of trust with the children and young people who use our services. It is an abuse of that trust and could be a criminal offence to engage in any sexual activity with a young person aged under 18, or a vulnerable young person under the age of 25, irrespective of the age of consent and even if the relationship is consensual.

Organised Abuse

This is sexual abuse where there is more than a single abuser and the adults concerned appear to act in agreement to abuse children and/or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for sexual abuse.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g., food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or

other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Neglect

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Recognising Signs of Abuse

Recognising possible abuse is a complex and complicated procedure and it is not the responsibility of Activities 4 U employees to decide whether a child or young person has been abused or is at risk. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns and report them to a Designated Person. The following information is designed as a guide to help raise awareness of the different signs of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Most children collect accidental injuries and bruises from time to time, and bruises caused in this way are likely to be on the external bony parts of the body such as the knees, shins, elbows and forehead. Most children who have developed language skills will be able to describe how an injury was caused. Any injury should be considered in the context of the child's history and developmental stage, and any explanation given.

The following circumstances are possible indicators of physical abuse and should trigger concerns

- Delay in the presentation of the injury
- An injury which is not consistent with the explanation given
- Changing or differing accounts of how the injury occurred
- An unexplained injury

Types of bruising which may indicate physical abuse include

- Bruising in babies and young children who are not independently mobile
- Bruising to the soft tissue area where there is no bony prominence, e.g., face, back, arms, buttocks, genitalia, ears and hands
- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry an imprint, for example of an implement, a hand or a cord
- Grip marks; in a young baby this could indicate that the child has been shaken, risking injury to the brain
- Frequent bruising for which the child is unwilling to offer an explanation
- Regular "accidental" bruising or injury with or without a history of how the injury occurred

Types of injury which may indicate child abuse include

- Multiple burns, and burns on unusual areas of the body such as back, shoulders or buttocks
- Scalds where the child appears to have been “dipped” in too hot water
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Damage to mouths
-

Emotional abuse

This form of abuse almost always accompanies other forms of abuse. It includes persistent criticism, denigration, rejection and scapegoating. It has an important impact on a child’s mental health, behavior and self-esteem.

The following are possible indicators of emotional abuse

- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer, e.g., anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Carer shows a persistently negative attitude towards the child
- The child consistently experiences low warmth and high criticism from its parent/carer(s)
- A fixed stare
- Older children may show evidence of mental health issues such as depression, self-harm or eating disorders, or may have behavioral or educational difficulties
- Acting out aggressive behavior
- A child who is consistently reluctant to go home after school or nursery
- A child who struggles to engage in normal social activity and conversation with peers or adults
- A child who runs away from home
- A child with very low self-esteem and or who will consistently describe themselves in very negative ways such as “I am stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly”
- A child living in an environment of domestic abuse, alcohol or substance misuse

Sexual abuse

Although there are some indicators relating to sexual abuse, in many cases this form of abuse is well hidden, with the only overt signs being a child’s behaviour in general or towards an individual, and this may be attributable to many things unrelated to sexual abuse. This makes sexual abuse very difficult to identify

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse

- Bruising or bites to breasts, buttocks and around the genital area could be signs of sexual abuse as well as physical abuse
- Sexually abusive behavior
- Sexually explicit play, continual open masturbation or aggressive sex play with peers (as distinct from normal sexual curiosity)
- Extreme use of sexually explicit language and/or detailed descriptions or drawings of sexual activity

- Self-harm
- Running away or regular absences from home or school (particularly in the case of organised abuse)
- Pregnancy
- A sexually transmitted infection

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour.

Young people who are being sexually exploited may

- be involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- go missing from home, care or education.

Neglect

There are no specific features which indicate neglect, other than that the child's basic needs are not adequately met. Neglect is a pattern, not an event, so it is important to consider the standard of care the child received over time; a pattern of neglect may be missed if each individual event is considered in isolation.

The following may be indicators of neglect

- Exposure to danger, for example, cold (inappropriate clothing for the weather) or starvation
- Repeated failure to attend to the physical and developmental needs of the child, to provide warmth, appropriate clothing, food and consistent care
- Faltering growth (failure to thrive) in babies or toddlers
- The child has responsibility for activity that is not age-appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- Poor supervision of young children resulting in frequent accidental bruising or injury
- The child is always dirty and/or hungry
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers
- The child is regularly not collected from care settings
- Eating disorders, including stealing and/or hoarding food
- Failure to attend routine medical appointments
- Failure to attend to the child's medical needs and refusal of appropriate treatment

Recognising Potential Risk to an unborn Child

In some circumstances, agencies or individuals can anticipate the likelihood of significant harm with regard to an expected baby. Indicators may include

- Domestic abuse within the household
- Alcohol and substance misuse by mother, leading to possible harm to the unborn child, or by others with risk to the newborn
- Secret or hidden pregnancy or the mother's mental health problems

These concerns should be addressed as early as possible in order to provide sufficient time for full assessment and support so as to enable the parents (wherever possible) to provide safe care.

People with Disabilities

Activities 4 U is wholly committed to upholding the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults with disabilities who use our services and particularly their right to be free from violence, abuse or neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them. Research suggests that children and young people with disabilities are more vulnerable to physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect than a non-disabled child. The level of risk may be raised by

- A need for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care from what may be a number of carers
- Carers and staff lacking the ability to communicate adequately with the child
- A lack of continuity in care leading to an increased risk that behavioural changes may go unnoticed
- Physical dependency with the consequent reduction in the ability to be able to resist abuse
- An increased likelihood that the child is socially isolated
- Lack of access to "keep safe" strategies available to others
- Communication or learning difficulties preventing disclosure
- Parents' or carers' own needs and ways of coping conflicting with the needs of the child

In addition to the indicators of abuse and neglect listed above, the following indicators must also be considered in relation to disabled children:

- Force-feeding, or impatience in feeding leading to underfeeding/undernourishment
- Unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- Rough handling
- Extreme behavior modification, including the deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing or social contact
- Misuse of medication, sedation, heavy tranquillisers
- Invasive procedures against a child's will
- Deliberate failure to follow medically recommended regimes
- Misapplication of care programmes or regimes
- Ill-fitting equipment (e.g., callipers, sleep board causing injury or pain, inappropriate splinting)

- Undignified or culturally inappropriate intimate care practices.

Some sex offenders may target children and young people with disabilities in the belief they are less likely to be detected.

Institutional Abuse

Children and young people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to this kind of abuse where practices and behaviors by staff in organisation have become institutionalised or commonly accepted practice. However, those behaviors may cause significant harm (as above) and/or may be an abuse of the child's rights. Examples of the latter could be

- Where a child's communication board does not accompany the child everywhere
- Staff who assume a child's wishes or communication and speak for them
- Staff who do not facilitate a child's own communication because of the difficulty or time it takes
- Attributing difficult or challenging behavior to the child's condition rather than identifying it as communication

All staff and volunteers within Activities 4 U must be alert to signs of institutional abuse or unprofessional practices or behavior and raise their concerns as per the procedures outlined above.

Specific Forms of Abuse

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation or to perform criminal acts.

Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female and they could be any age.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust. Groomers may try to gain the trust of a whole family to allow them to be

left alone with a child and if they work with children, they may use similar tactics with their colleagues.

Bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – e.g., at school, at a youth club, at home, in the workplace or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

Sexting

Sexting means sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet

If a young person tells you they have received a Sext never view, download or print the image – you can ask them to describe the content.

CEOP, Childline and Internet Watch Foundation are available to give advice and support to young people affected by Sexting.

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for youth organisations when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management. On this basis, the phrase 'youth-produced sexual imagery' has been introduced to ensure clarity.

'Youth produced sexual imagery' best describes the practice because:

- 'Youth produced' includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.
- 'Sexual' is clearer than 'indecent.' A judgement of whether something is 'decent' is both a value judgement and dependent on context.
- 'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving

The types of incidents which may be encountered are:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18

The sharing of sexual images of people under 18 by adults constitutes child sexual abuse and the police should always be informed.

A referral should always be made if

- An adult is involved

- The child is under 13
- It involves unusual sexual acts
- The young person is being coerced, blackmailed or groomed
- The young person has special needs
- There is immediate risk of harm, e.g., suicide

Police now have discretion (Outcome 21) whether to prosecute as they do not want to criminalise young people unnecessarily

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (**FGM**) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Also referred to as 'cutting' or 'female circumcision'.

It is illegal to perform FGM or allow it to happen.

It can be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy. It is common for it to be done to girls around the time of puberty

Breast Ironing

In the procedure, hot objects, including stones and hammers, are used to pound and beat girls' breasts to stop them growing, in the belief it makes them less desirable to men and discourages premarital pregnancy and rape. Performed on girls as young as 8 until the end of puberty

Breast ironing is both physically and psychologically damaging. It can cause infections and abscesses and has been linked to breast cancer, problems with breastfeeding, and severe depression

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both of the parties is married without his or her consent or against his or her will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties' consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party (such as a matchmaker) in identifying a spouse.

Peer on peer abuse

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

- If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse involves one or more abusers and a number of children.

Organised and multiple abuse occur as part of a network of abuse across a family or community and within institutions such as residential homes, schools, sports clubs and voluntary groups

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is when someone starts to believe or support extreme views. They could be pressured to do things by someone else. Or they might change their behaviour and beliefs.

This could happen if they feel:

- isolated and lonely or wanting to belong
- unhappy about themselves and what others might think of them
- embarrassed or judged about their culture, gender, religion or race
- stressed or depressed
- fed up with being bullied or treated badly
- angry at other people or the government
- confused about what they are doing.

Someone who has been radicalised might believe that sexual, religious or racial violence is OK. They might have links to extremist groups that preach hate like Nazi groups or Islamic extremists like Daesh, also known as ISIS or IS.

Having extreme views can be dangerous and can often lead to harmful and illegal activities involving violence, attacks, discrimination or hate

Honour Based Violence

Honour based violence is the term used to describe murders in the name of so-called honour, sometimes called 'honour killings'. These are murders in which predominantly women are killed for perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have breached the honour code of a family or community, causing shame.

A child who is at risk of honour-based violence is at significant risk of physical harm (including being murdered) and/or neglect,

The perceived immoral behaviour which could precipitate a murder include:

- Inappropriate make-up or dress;
- The existence of a boyfriend;
- Kissing or intimacy in a public place;
- Rejecting a forced marriage;
- Pregnancy outside of marriage;
- Being a victim of rape;
- Inter-faith relationships;
- Leaving a spouse or seeking a divorce.

Murders in the name of 'so-called honour' are often the culmination of a series of events over a period of time and are planned. There tends to be a degree of premeditation, family conspiracy and a belief that the victim deserved to die.

Victims are sometimes persuaded to return to their country of origin under false pretences, when in fact the intention could be to kill them.

Children sometimes truant from school to obtain relief from being policed at home by relatives. They can feel isolated from their family and social networks and become depressed, which can on some occasions lead to self-harm or suicide.

Families may feel shame long after the incident that brought about dishonour occurred, and therefore the risk of harm to a child can persist. This means that the young person's new boy/girlfriend, baby (if pregnancy caused the family to feel 'shame'), associates or siblings may be at risk of harm.

Appendix B Restraint

Definition of Restraint

Restraint is an intervention that prevents a person from behaving in a way that threatens to cause harm to themselves, to others, or to property, by reducing the ability of a person to move their arms, legs, body or head freely.

It is the policy of Activities 4 U that staff should never restrain a young person participating in one of our programmes.

Activities 4 U staff who are involved in direct delivery (e.g., Instructors, sports delivery officers) are required to attend de-escalation training. The techniques learned in this training will be used to de-escalate a situation, thus negating the need for restraint.

In circumstances where there is a firmly held belief that young person is at risk of physically harming themselves or others and other forms of de-escalation have failed, the accompanying youth leader or teacher will be responsible for restraining the individual. If this occurs within a programme where there are no youth workers or school staff accompanying the young people, or they are not available, then Activities 4 U staff member may physically intervene to prevent injury to another person. Activities 4 U member of staff must be able to justify their actions in these circumstances and will be supported by Activities 4 U.

After an Incident

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been restrained it is important that their parent, guardian or carer is contacted at the earliest opportunity and given details of the circumstances leading to restraint and the physical acts involved.

It is distressing to be involved in restraint, whether as the person being restrained, the person doing the restraining, or someone observing or hearing about what has happened. All those involved in an incident should receive support, which can be accessed through their line manager, to help them talk about what has happened and, where necessary, record their views.

Appendix C Designated Safeguarding Officer, Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Other External Agencies

Activities 4 U Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL)

Joy Brown

Telephone: 07927 264 327

Email: admin@activities4u.org.uk

Activities 4 U comes within the remit of three Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

We will follow and adhere to the Southwark Multiagency Threshold Guide

The London Safeguarding Children Board has published child protection procedures for the City of London and the 32 London Boroughs. Procedures can be found on their [website](#).

External Agencies who can offer support

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to make a referral on 020 7525 1921

LADO consultations and referrals please contact the duty Child Protection Adviser:

Andrew Zacharias's, on 020 7926 4679 or 07720 828 700

[The Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#)

[NSPCC](#) Tel: 0844 892 1026

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (24 hours): To report or discuss concerns about a child's welfare. Tel: 0808 800 5000 or textphone: 0800 056 0566 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline Tel: 0800 1111

[Save The Children](#). Tel: 020 7012 6400 Freephone: 0800 814 8148

[Child Exploitation Online & Protection Centre \(CEOP\)](#)

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) Tel: 0344 381 4772

Signed: Joy Brown _____ Director

Date: Dec 2024 _____

Review Date: Dec 2025