



## **Children's MARS Guidance**

# **Safeguarding Policies for Voluntary, Charity, Social Enterprise, Faith-Based and Private Sector Organisations**

**May 2023**

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## Introduction

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 says that...

*Voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) and private sector organisations and agencies play an important role in safeguarding children through the services they deliver. Some of these will work with particular communities, with different races and faith communities and delivering in health, adult social care, housing, prisons and probation services. They may as part of their work provide a wide range of activities for children and have an important role in safeguarding children and supporting families and communities.*

*Like other organisations and agencies who work with children, they should have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. Many of these organisations and agencies as well as many schools, children's centres, early years and childcare organisations, will be subject to charity law and regulated either by the Charity Commission and/ or other "principal" regulators. Charity trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from, or working with, their charity, are not harmed in any way through contact with it. The Charity Commission for England and Wales provides guidance on charity compliance which should be followed. Further information on the Charity Commission's role in safeguarding can be found on: [the Charity Commission's page on Gov.uk](#).*

*Some of these organisations and agencies are large national charities whilst others will have a much smaller local reach. Some will be delivering statutory services and may be run by volunteers, such as library services. This important group of organisations includes youth services not delivered by local authorities or district councils.*

*All practitioners working in these organisations and agencies who are working with children and their families are subject to the same safeguarding responsibilities, whether paid or a volunteer.*

Every VCSE, faith-based organisation and private sector organisation or agency should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. These should be followed and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this. Individual practitioners, whether paid or volunteer, should be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children from harm, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary.

Certain VCSE organisations are named as 'relevant agencies' within the Children's MARS Arrangements. However, all VCSE, faith-based organisations and private sector organisations who provide activities for children and/or support families have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and working within the Children's MARS Local Arrangements. The Children's MARS Local Arrangements and Appendices can be found on the [Children's MARS website](#).

Each organisation should have a safeguarding policy that reflects the activities of the organisation and the individuals involved. It is therefore important that each organisation designs its own policy.

The Children's MARS Board would recommend that you include all the elements in the guidance which are relevant to your organisation. There may be additional aspects which you need to add owing to the nature of your organisation. The checklist and draft policy that are outlined below are designed for guidance only.

## **Help with preparing a safeguarding policy**

The Children's MARS Board would recommend accessing support for developing your policy, for example information is available from the [NSPCC website](#). There are numerous links to other sources of guidance throughout this document and listed within appendix 2.

If you are part of a national organisation, you should make contact them in the first instance as there may already be a procedure in place. Alternatively, they may be able to offer advice specific to your organisation.

## **Operation of the policy**

A safeguarding policy must be agreed by the entire organisation. It must be known and accessible to everyone. Parents and young people should be consulted. Ideally, everyone in your organisation will be involved in the creation of the policy. To be effective it must give clear instructions on what action is to be taken, when and by whom. It must be supported by adequate supervision and training. The Children's MARS Board would recommend that your organisation appoint a safeguarding officer or designated senior lead.

A safeguarding policy should help prevent abuse and neglect but also help and protect children.

## **Checklist**

The safeguarding policy should be a statement of intent that demonstrates commitment to safeguarding children involved with the organisation.

It should:

- be written in a clear and easily understandable way
- publicised, promoted and distributed to the relevant audience
- recognise the needs of children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication

- recognise the needs of children and families with protected characteristics such as LGBTQ+, religious and/or spiritual and those with more complex needs
- approved and endorsed by the relevant management body
- be mandatory for staff and volunteers
- be kept under review

The policy should include:

- the name and address of the organisation
- the date the policy was agreed and the next review date
- the values of the organisation
- policy statement
- definitions of abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour
- what you should do if you suspect abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour
- recording
- maintenance and security of records
- e-safeguarding and acceptable use policy for electronic equipment
- whistleblowing procedure
- contact information

The Children's MARS Board would recommend that a safeguarding officer or designated senior lead should be identified with a clearly defined role in relation to safeguarding and who is responsible for the implementation of the safeguarding policy. They should have appropriate training in relation to safeguarding and child protection. They should be identified as a person who members of your organisation can talk to about safeguarding.

A safeguarding awareness e-workbook is available on the Children's MARS website. This can be accessed by any member of the organisation and will provide a basic awareness of safeguarding children. Other workbooks are also available on the Children's MARS website. Further training activity is available through the Children's MARS Board. The latest training programme can be viewed on the [Children's MARS website](#).

It is recommended that your organisation has a complaints process for dealing with complaints.

To safeguard children, the Children's MARS Board advises that your organisation has policies or procedures for recruiting staff or volunteers who have contact with children and for assessing their suitability to work with children. The Children's MARS Standards for Safer Recruitment policy and procedures is available on the [Children's MARS website](#).

It is recommended that your organisation has a code of conduct, or your organisation can use or refer to the Children's MARS Guidance on [Code of Conduct for Employers, Staff and Volunteers working with Children and Young People](#).

## Appendix 1: Safeguarding policy template

Name of Organisation:

Address:

Date Policy Agreed:

Date of Next Review:

### Policy statement on safeguarding children

The values held by this organisation are *[Add values]*. *[This organisation]* recognises that all children have a right to protection from abuse. *[Name of organisation]* takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

We will:

- respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse and neglect, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour
- provide parents and children with the opportunity to voice their concerns
- have a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse and neglect

### The policy

*[Name of organisation]* recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect. They may also be victims of child exploitation, domestic abuse including coercive control and other types of abuse such as Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and/or Female Genital Mutilation. Accordingly *[name of organisation]* has adopted the following policy guidelines. The policy sets out agreed guidelines for responding to allegations of abuse/neglect, including those made against staff and volunteers. These guidelines have been prepared in accordance with North Lincolnshire Children's MARS policies and procedures that can be found on the [Children's MARS website](#). They will be kept under review and be supported by appropriate training.

The policy applies to all *[staff and volunteers (delete if not applicable)]* who act on behalf of the *[name of organisation]* and who work with children. Every individual has a responsibility to inform the designated person in respect of safeguarding or their deputy of concerns relating to safeguarding children. The designated person should decide if the concerns should be communicated to North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the police. However, all *[staff and volunteers (delete if not applicable)]* can contact North Lincolnshire Children's Services directly if necessary.

### Definitions of abuse

The following definitions of abuse are as written in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

A concern should be raised if any of the following circumstances have or are happening to a child:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Neglect
- Domestic Abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour

### **Physical abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.



## **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victims needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

## **Child criminal exploitation**

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

## **Neglect**

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 mental and physical health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Domestic abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent.

Also known as coercive control, the use of control and coercion in relationships is a form of domestic abuse and, since December 2015, a criminal offence. Controlling and coercive behaviour is outlined in Government guidance issued under section 77 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 as part of the Government's non-statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse.

It is described as:

- Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; and
- Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim

Coercive control is a form of abuse that involves multiple behaviours and tactics which reinforce each other and are used to isolate, manipulate and regulate the victim. This pattern of abuse creates high levels of anxiety and fear. This has a significant impact on children and young people, both directly, as victims in their own right, and indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on the non-abusive parent. Children may also be forced to participate in controlling or coercive behaviour towards the parent who is being abused.

What you should do if you suspect abuse

- You must report concerns as soon as possible to [*designated safeguarding person*] via [*add contact details*] who is nominated by *name of organisation* to act on their behalf in referring concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect to North Lincolnshire Children's Services. In the absence of the designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the [*deputy designated safeguarding person*] via [*add phone number*]. If it is an emergency, and the designated person(s) cannot be contacted, then North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the police should be contacted on the numbers given below. For further information, see the [One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire Document](#) and [Children's MARS Policy and Procedure for Assessing Need and Providing Help](#).
- If allegations relate to the designated person, then the deputy designated person, North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the police should be contacted.
- Concerns or allegations should not be discussed with anyone, other than those named above.

- It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to North Lincolnshire Children's Services or the police if they have concerns or an allegation has been made. However, this policy should be followed where possible.
- Allegations against staff or volunteers will be investigated following local procedures. The Local Authority Designated Officer should be contacted and further information can be found at [Children's MARS Procedures for Managing Allegations against people who work with children](#).

## **Recording**

- Write down exactly what the child has said in their own words. Write down the conversation held, where it was held, when and what was happening beforehand. Alternatively write down what you have observed, details of any witnesses, location, and your specific concern if you believe that a child has been abused or neglected. Record dates and times of the events and when the record was made. Keep all notes secure.
- Report your discussion as soon as possible to the designated person or the deputy designated person.
- If an allegation has been made about a staff member or volunteer, write down exactly what you have been told or have witnessed including what is outlined in the 'What should you do if you suspect abuse' above if applicable

## **Maintenance and security of records**

Organisations must consider and develop clear guidelines for the security of records, retention, storage and destruction of their records where these relate to child welfare concerns or concerns about possible risk posed by employees (whether paid or voluntary).

## **eSafeguarding and acceptable use policy for electronic equipment**

Include details relevant to any electronic equipment used especially where equipment can be used to access the internet.

## **Whistleblowing procedures**

Provide details pertaining to your registered body or Voluntary Umbrella body if applicable.

## **Contact information**

Contact details:

[Your organisation]

[Your organisation address]

[Your organisation telephone number]

Designated safeguarding officer or designated senior lead for your organisation:

[Name of designated safeguarding officer/designated senior lead]

[Telephone number of designated safeguarding officer/ designated senior lead]

Deputy designated safeguarding officer or designated senior lead for your organisation:

[Name of deputy designated safeguarding officer/ deputy designated senior lead]

[Telephone number of deputy designated safeguarding officer/ deputy designated senior lead]

Any national or support body for your organisation:

[Add or delete as applicable]

North Lincolnshire Children Services Single Point of Contact

Church Square House

30-40 High Street

Scunthorpe

DN15 6NL

01724 296500 or 01724 296555 (extended hours)

Police non-emergency 101

Police emergency 999

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Independent Reviewing Service

01724 298293

## Appendix 2: Resources

### General Resources

- [Guidance on Handling Safeguarding Allegations in a Charity](#) A safeguarding tool which offers a step-by-step guide to help charities correctly manage their concerns, identify the right people to contact if needed and access helpful resources and advice.
- [Guidance on Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees](#) 2017 The Charity Commission
- [NVCO Knowhow](#) provides Safeguarding Advice and Support for Voluntary organisations. The knowledge bank provides information relating to roles and responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and provides guidance around how to make your organisation safer
- [Keeping Children Safe Away from Home – Sports Clubs and other activities](#) NSPCC
- [Safeguarding Checklist online tool](#) This NSPCC includes guidance safer recruitment and safer activities
- [Safeguarding and Child Protection – Voluntary and Community Groups](#) NSPCC

### Faith Communities

- [Safeguarding People in Faith Communities](#) 2018 Social Care Institute for excellence
- [Safeguarding in Faith Communities](#) NSPCC resources on how to approach safeguarding from within the beliefs, teachings and cultural context of faith communities
- [Safeguarding Guidance for Faith Groups](#) Safer Activities for Everyone CIC
- [Practice Guidance: Safeguarding in Religious Communities](#) The Church of England
- [Guidance for Camps and Residential](#) Thirtyone:Eight

### Sports Groups and Performing Arts

- [Safeguarding in the Performing Arts](#) 2019 NSPCC
- [National Network for Children in Employment or Entertainment NNCEE](#) Access guidance and information on child performance legislation in the UK and how to support children engaged in public performances
- [Child Performance and Activities licensing legislation in England - Departmental advice for local authorities and individuals working with children in all types of professional or amateur performances, paid sport and paid modelling](#) 2015 DfE
- [Royal Academy of Dance](#) policy and procedures on safeguarding children and adults at risk includes information on recognising signs of abuse
- [Child Protection in Sport Unit](#) provides help and advice in relation to safeguarding, athlete welfare and online safety
- [Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Sport](#) NWG Network

- [Stop Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse in Sport](#) The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has produced resources for identifying the signs of Sexual Abuse and Grooming in Sport and outlines the IOC expectations for sports organisations
- [Safeguarding and Protecting Children](#) - UK Coaching provides guidance on identifying the essentials of good coaching practice, with particular consideration to working with children and young people
- [The Football Association](#) (The FA) provides further information and guidance around safeguarding in the digital world and safeguarding policies and procedures
- [Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Member Associations](#) FIFA
- [Sport England](#) provides advice for sports and activity providers who are not affiliated to a national governing body
- [Working together for Safer Sport](#) The Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts website provides self-assessment tools, implementation plans and webinars covering range of safeguarding subjects
- [Safeguarding in Sport](#) Children 1<sup>st</sup> provides a variety of resources for maintaining good practice in sport and ensuring good standards for child wellbeing and protection in sport
- The [Safe to Play Tennis Campaign](#) Website has a variety of resources and case studies relating to safeguarding both children and coaching staff
- [Table Tennis England](#) provides guidelines on using social media and best practice for staff and volunteers working with children and young people
- [An introduction to Safeguarding in the Horseracing industry Workbook](#) A free workbook specifically tailored towards an awareness of safeguarding in the horseracing industry
- [Is your club a safe and enjoyable environment?](#) England Hockey
- [England and Wales Cricket Board](#) provides safeguarding resources including how to develop and implement safeguarding policies
- The [England Golf](#) website provides templates and advice on writing safeguarding policy and procedures
- [UK Athletics](#) provide printable leaflets and guidance on safeguarding policy

#### Other Voluntary and Community Groups

- [Good Safeguarding Behaviours Guide](#)– Girlguiding UK