



**Worcestershire Council for  
Voluntary Youth Services**



Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board

# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**GUIDANCE FOR WORKERS, VOLUNTEERS,  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
AND TRUSTEES IN VOLUNTARY AND  
COMMUNITY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS  
WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

This document has been prepared by  
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in partnership with the  
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## FOREWORD

The safety and welfare of children and young people has never been more important nor had a higher profile. The voluntary and community sector, along with those in the statutory and independent sectors, must ensure that their work with children and young people keeps everyone as safe as possible. This is better achieved when statutory, voluntary and community groups and organisations work closely and effectively together.

In Worcestershire a wide range of services are provided to children, young people and their families by the voluntary and community sector. The purpose of this guidance is to support these organisations and groups in fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people.

Worcestershire Council for Voluntary Youth Services has worked in partnership with Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board to produce this updated guidance.

I recommend this guidance to you and hope that it will prove helpful in your work with children and young people.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hilary Thompson".

**Hilary Thompson**  
**Independent Chair**  
**Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board**

## **“SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE’S BUSINESS”**

Everyone involved in the care of children and young people has a role to play in safeguarding their welfare.

**As an individual** working with children and young people, you are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child or young person’s behaviour or appearance. You may be some-one a child or young person will turn to for support. You must prepare yourself and be ready to act on any concerns.

**As a leader/manager** with responsibility for workers, paid and/or voluntary, you have a responsibility to create a safe environment for all. This means creating an environment where:

- staff are vigilant to concerns about the welfare and protection of children and young people and know what action to take
- there is no negligence or unnecessary exposure to avoidable risks
- the risks that you do need to take are assessed, carefully managed, and communicated to children, young people and their parents or carers
- children, young people, parents or carers can raise concerns
- there are safe recruitment and selection practices

**As a member of a management committee/board of trustees or directors** you have a responsibility:

- to ensure policies and procedures are in place which create an environment and culture which safeguards children and young people
- to ensure that these are adhered to
- to appoint a Designated Person for Child Protection
- to create a culture of listening to and enjoying dialogue with children and young people
- to develop a culture of reflection and evaluation involving children, young people, parents and carers as well as staff
- to keep up-to-date with issues and research on child protection

Many people working with children or young people never experience at first hand child abuse or disclosures about child abuse. Nevertheless, everyone has a duty to be alert to signs of abuse. Should abuse be suspected, disclosed or discovered, regardless of the setting in which the abuse has taken place, you have a moral and legal responsibility to act on your concerns.

**Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)** is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how partner agencies throughout the county cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and for ensuring the effectiveness of partnership working. There are voluntary sector representatives on the Board and the Executive.

WSCB produces the **Interagency Child Protection Procedures for Safeguarding Children in Worcestershire** and a **Pocket Guide to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children**. These can be downloaded from the WSCB website [www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk).

**The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)** plays an important role in delivering services and support to children, young people, their parents and carers. Every VCS organisation/group has a role in contributing to the safeguarding of children and young people. This is often best achieved by working in partnership with other statutory and voluntary agencies. The sector also carries out a key role in providing information and resources to the wider public about the needs of children and young people.

**The Independent Sector** also plays an important role in delivering services for children and young people. Every company has to ensure it is safeguarding the children and young people for whom it cares.

**The Government** in ‘**Every Child Matters**’ and ‘**Youth Matters**’ identified five outcomes for young people:

- Staying safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

These documents are part of the legislation and guidance the Government has produced aimed at safeguarding and improving outcomes for all children and young people.

### **Sharing Responsibility**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends on effective joint working between agencies and groups, in both the voluntary and the statutory sector, that have different roles and expertise. They may also meet the children and young people in different settings. Joint working is especially valuable for some of the most vulnerable children and young people and those at the greatest risk of suffering harm and social exclusion.

### **Safeguarding Adults**

The protection of vulnerable adults is also a multi-agency responsibility and it is essential that staff, including those in voluntary and community organisations, play their part in this work. In recent years there has been a growing awareness that the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable adults is a very real problem in our society. The increasing number of serious incidents of abuse emphasises the need for action to ensure that vulnerable adults, who are at risk, receive protection and support.

For further information go to the Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding website at: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/safeguardingadults](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/safeguardingadults).

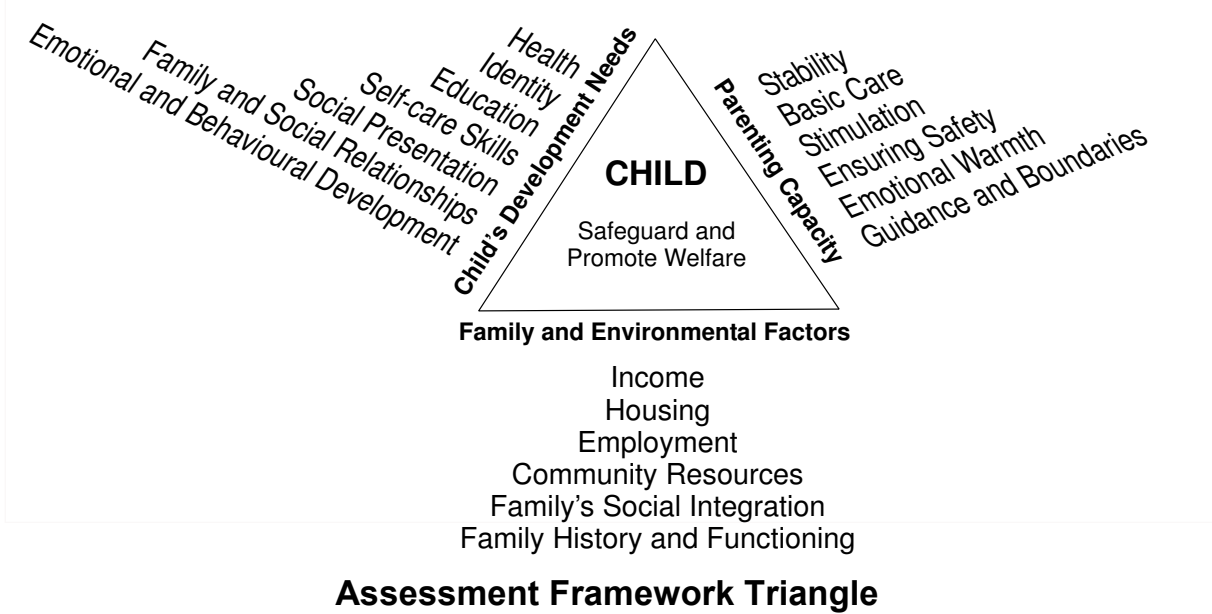
# UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

Those who work with children and young people are in unique positions to perceive how individual children and young people are dealing with life within their own particular environment. You are often in a position to notice changes in how the child or young person is developing and is responding to peers and adults.

Children and young people from all cultures are subject to neglect and abuse. It is important that workers are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. At the same time abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Children and young people may need to be protected even when it appears that they are not aware that the neglect they experience or that the physical abuse or sexual activity that they are involved in or witness or, is harmful to them.

When you are concerned about a child or young person you may find it helpful to look at the **Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families**. This is Government Guidance to help agencies, including VCS, to work together.



## WHAT ARE ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm.

Children may be abused:

- in a family
- in an institutional setting
- within their community
- by those known to them
- by a stranger
- by an adult, or adults
- by another child, or young person
- by a group of children or young people

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, 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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 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 or young person, though it may also occur alone.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's 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, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

## **Stress**

Sources of stress for children and families are social exclusion, domestic violence, poverty, the mental health illness of a parent/carer or drug or alcohol misuse. All these areas may have a negative impact on a child or young person's health and development and may be noticed by workers.

This information is adapted from **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DFES)**

## **RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern or if you believe a child or young person is at risk of neglect or abuse.

The following information will help you to be alert to the signs of possible abuse.

### **Recognising physical abuse**

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins.

Some children and young people, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury, or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g. on the cheeks or thighs. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

### **Recognising emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify, and often children and young people who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parents being approached regarding their behaviour

### **Recognising sexual abuse**

Adults who use children and young people to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse, it is the child or young person's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children and young people who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money

- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

### **Recognising neglect**

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/young people
- constantly dirty or “smelly”
- loss of weight, or being consistently underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

The above list is not meant to be definitive but a guide to assist you. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour, such as a death or the birth of a new baby in their family, relationship problems between parents/carers etc.

### **What may give cause for concern?**

- Bruising on parts of the body which do not usually get bruised accidentally, e.g. around the eyes, behind the ears, back of the legs, stomach, chest, cheek and mouth (especially in a young baby), etc
- Burns or scald marks
- Bite marks
- Any injuries or swellings, which do not have a plausible explanation
- Bruising or soreness to the genital area
- Faltering growth, weight loss and slow development
- Unusual lethargy
- Any sudden uncharacteristic change in behaviour, e.g. child becomes either very aggressive or withdrawn
- A child or young person whose play and language indicates a sexual knowledge beyond his/her years
- A child or young person who flinches away from sudden movement
- A child or young person who gives over rehearsed answers to explain how his / her injuries were caused
- An accumulation of a number of minor injuries and/or concerns

- A child or young person who discloses something which may indicate he/she is being abused
- Concern about a parent or carer's behaviour or presentation, e.g. evidence of possible alcohol or drug misuse, mental health difficulties, or domestic violence
- Concern about arrangements for the collection of the child or young person

A “**cluster**” of these signs should increase concern.

Workers must take special care to help safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who may be living in particularly stressful circumstances. These include families:

- living in poverty
- where there is domestic violence
- where a parent has a mental illness
- where a parent is misusing drugs or alcohol
- where a parent has a learning difficulty
- that face racism and other forms of social isolation
- living in areas with a lot of crime, poor housing and high unemployment

When working with children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm workers should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks of harm
- prioritise direct communication and positive and respectful relationships with children and young people ensuring their wishes and feelings underpin any safeguarding activities or assessments
- share and help to analyse information so that an effective assessment can be made
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child or young person
- work cooperatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the safety of the child or young person

## **Children and Young People with a Disability**

Children and young people with a disability may attend your organisation/group. You should be aware that some children and young people, because of their learning or physical disability, are vulnerable and may find it more difficult to recognise and report abuse.

Their disability may mean that:

- Their life experiences are limited, creating difficulty recognising inappropriate behaviour.
- They are afraid of challenging people, concerned that they will anger an authority figure or get into trouble.
- Communication difficulties make it hard to report abuse.
- They may not be able physically to leave an abusive situation.
- They receive intimate physical care and, therefore, the abuse may seem 'normal'.
- Their self-esteem and self-image are poor.
- They might not be aware to whom they can report abuse.
- Authority figures are unwilling to believe that anyone would abuse a disabled child or young person.

Your organisation/group must take particular care, therefore, when working with children and young people with disabilities.

## **Thresholds in Worcestershire**

Thresholds have been developed in order to promote early identification of concerns by organisations/groups and agencies working with children and young people. Based on a four-tier model it provides a framework to support both the identification of need and the delivery of appropriate support for children, young people and their families.

The Thresholds Guidance can be downloaded from the WSCB website [www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk)

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Children and young people and their parents and carers have a right to expect that every organisation/group creates a safe environment so that it can fulfil its 'duty to care'.

Your organisation/group's responsibility for keeping children and young people safe and secure is broader than just child protection.

Your organisation/group, therefore, must have clear policies and procedures about:

- Safeguarding
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety and Risk Assessment
- Safe Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff and Volunteers
- Codes of Conduct
- Reporting of Complaints, Concerns or Allegations
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Management of Allegations against Staff and Volunteers
- Equal Opportunities
- Diversity

A Policy is a stated mode of action for the future, providing a framework for decision making within the organisation/group. It provides the boundaries within which workers and volunteers can operate.

Procedures are the processes by which the policies are put into practice.

Policies should be developed in consultation with all involved in the organisation/group including children and young people. They need to take account of all the activities and services undertaken by your organisation/group. A policy should include a statement about when it will be reviewed.

Once developed these policies and procedures should be adopted by the Management Committee and made familiar to all workers, volunteers, members, parents and carers. They should be visible and available for all to see and inspect.

### **What is the difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection?**

**Safeguarding** means proactively involving everyone in keeping all children and young people safe and promoting their welfare.

Having the appropriate policies and procedures in place also safeguards volunteers, workers and trustees or committee members. It also means you can tell parents and carers the safeguards that are in place to protect their children and young people.

**Child Protection** is a central part of safeguarding. It is about protecting an individual child or young person who is identified as either suffering harm or at risk of suffering harm as a result of neglect or abuse.

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Your organisation/group should develop and adopt a policy statement setting out its commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all the children and young people with whom it works. Below are a couple of sample statements.

### **SAMPLE SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT (1)**

..... (name of organisation/group) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect. This applies to all the children and young people, with whom we work, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality or country of origin.

Workers, including volunteers and management committee members, will at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of the children and young people involved with.....(name of organisation/group).

We will ensure that staff and volunteers know how to recognise and respond to concerns that a child or young person may be abused or neglected.

The management committee will appoint, from within its membership, a Champion for Safeguarding. He/she will report annually to the committee on any safeguarding and/or child protection issues and/or any allegation which have arisen over the previous twelve months.

We will review our policies and procedures on an annual basis.

**SAMPLE SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT (2)**

..... (name of organisation/group) recognises and fully endorses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our policies recognise the obligations and duty of care on organisations working with children and young people as identified in the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. These acts define children and young people as anyone up to the age of 18 years. We recognise that similar responsibilities cover our work with young people with learning disabilities until they are 25 years of age.

Our policies apply to all staff and volunteers including trustees. They are designed to encourage the development of good practice so as to prevent the physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect of children and young people while they are in the care of .....(name of organisation). They apply to all the children and young people, with whom we work, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality or country of origin.

They stress the responsibility of all to be alert to the signs of abuse and provide a prompt and effective reporting procedure should abuse be suspected, disclosed or discovered, regardless of the setting in which the abuse has taken place.

..... (name of organisation/group) is committed to raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, to prevent instances occurring, to ensuring safe recruitment and selection practices and to provide training for staff and volunteers.

The policies are also intended to protect those who work with children and young people from behaving in ways which may be well-intentioned but inadvisable and from unfounded accusations. It also enables ..... (name of organisation/group) to fulfil its duty of care.

Our trustees will appoint, from within its membership, a Champion for Safeguarding. He/she will report annually to the committee on any safeguarding and/or child protection issues and/or any allegation which have arisen over the previous twelve months.

We will review our policies and procedures on an annual basis.

## CHAMPION FOR SAFEGUARDING

A trustee or member of the management committee should be appointed as the Champion for Safeguarding. This is to ensure that the organisation/group accepts responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level.

### SAMPLE ROLE DESCRIPTION CHAMPION FOR SAFEGUARDING

- To ensure that a safeguarding policy is in place and that it is reviewed annually by the committee
- To ensure that safe recruitment procedures are in place
- To ensure that procedures are in place for handling allegations against paid staff and volunteers
- To provide an annual report to the committee about any safeguarding and child protection issues, including allegations

### SAMPLE SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT FORM

To be completed annually by the Safeguarding Champion

The Designated Person for Child Protection is

.....

The WSCB training that s/he has undertaken this year is

.....

The alternate Designated Person for Child Protection is

.....

The WSCB training that s/he has undertaken this year is

.....

The Safeguarding Policy was agreed by the committee on .....

It will be reviewed on .....

Child Protection Policy was agreed by the committee on .....

It will be reviewed on .....

#### Recruitment

I confirm that workers and volunteers selected this year were recruited following safeguarding guidance.

The qualifications were verified and their identity checked.

Reference requests included the person's suitability to work with children/young people.

Missing information or vague information is always followed up with the referee.

Enhanced CRB Disclosures are undertaken for all new workers.

All new workers undertake child protection training.

**Information**

Children and young people are aware of the Child Protection Policy and who they can speak to about a concern.

Parents and carers are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and who they can speak to about a concern.

**Disclosures**

The number of child protection disclosures this year was .....

The outcomes of these disclosures were .....

**Concerns**

The number of child protection concerns raised this year was .....

The outcomes of these concerns were .....

**Allegations**

The number of child protection allegations against adults made this year was .....

The outcomes of these allegations were .....

**Safeguarding Complaints**

The number of safeguarding complaints made this year was .....

The outcomes of these complaints were .....

**Referrals**

The number of child protection referrals to Children’s Social Care and/or the Police this year was .....

**Learning**

The learning from these disclosures/concerns/allegations/complaints was .....

**Action for Next Year**

As a result of this learning I recommend that .....

Signed..... Date.....

Designated Person for Child Protection

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Your organisation/group should develop and adopt a child protection policy. This is that part of safeguarding which identifies what will be done to protect specific children or young people who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

Below are a couple of sample policy statements. Please refer to following pages for further details.

### **SAMPLE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT (1)**

..... (name of organisation/group) believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people. We will be alert to any indications of neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse in the children and young people with whom we work and will respond to their needs.

We value and respect every child and young person and will endeavour always to listen to them and respond appropriately to safeguard them.

We will provide staff and volunteers with guidance to follow when they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or at risk of harm.

We will adhere rigorously to our Procedures and Code of Conduct.

We will work cooperatively with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The Designated Child Protection Person is

.....

The alternate Designated Child Protection Person is

.....

When there is a concern about a child or young person every adult in our organisation/group is expected to share those concerns with the Designated Child Protection Person.

We will review our policy and procedures on an annual basis.

**SAMPLE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT (2)**

..... (name of organisation/group) recognises that the welfare of children and young people is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities.

We will:

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Be watchful for children or young people who are experiencing harm or neglect
- Respond to concerns and allegations appropriately
- Adopt good practice with regard to safeguarding children and young people and ensure adherence to our policies and procedures
- Ensure that safe recruitment and selection practices are followed
- Ensure workers and volunteers are trained in accordance with their roles
- Ensure the every adult shares concerns about the welfare of any child or young person with the Designated Person for Child Protection
- Work in partnership with children, young people, parents/carers and other agencies

The Designated Person for Child Protection is responsible for:

- Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers
- Monitoring and recording concerns
- Making referrals to Children’s Social Care without delay
- Liaison with other agencies.

**Confidentiality:**

In cases of disclosure of abuse, whether by children, young people, parents, carers or other adults, we are obliged to share the information with the Designated Person for Child Protection, who, after discussion with the Chairperson may have to refer our concerns to Children’s Social Care.

**Allegations:**

Concerns about the behaviour of adult(s) in the organisation/group will be referred without delay to the Designated Person for Child Protection who will, after discussion with the Chairperson, contact the Local Authority Designated Officer in Children’s Services or the Police as appropriate.

We will review this policy on an annual basis.

**Remember:**

**A child protection policy is only any good if it is followed...a policy alone does not protect a child or young person.**

### **Responding in an emergency situation**

There may be a rare occasion when it is necessary to act quickly, for example, to protect a child or young person from a violent or drunken parent. In these circumstances it would be appropriate to call the Police.

In the unlikely event that a child or young person arrives with serious injuries then you should telephone for an ambulance to take him/her to hospital.

**Always keep a record of the actions taken.**

## THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Your organisation/group should have a 'Designated Person', (sometimes called Welfare Officer), who has particular responsibility for Safeguarding throughout the organisation. Within large organisations it may be appropriate for a 'Designated Person' to be appointed within each unit/club. This may be in addition to their main role and responsibilities.

### Role description

- To take responsibility for disseminating and implementing Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures within the organisation/club
- To be familiar with WSCB procedures for safeguarding and investigating child abuse
- To know the relevant contacts within Children's Services and, if appropriate, within own organisation/group
- To receive information from workers, volunteers, children and young people, parents and carers about child protection issues including any allegations against staff or volunteers
- To assess information promptly and take appropriate action
- To refer child protection concerns to Children's Social Care
- To ensure that the child/young person and their parents/carers are offered appropriate support
- To maintain records of all information received
- To be familiar with Children's Social Care and Police procedures for investigating child abuse
- To monitor safeguarding concerns and report, on an annual basis, to the organisation/group management committee
- To monitor safeguarding procedures in the organisation/unit including:
  - checking that a parent/carer consent form for every child and young person is completed and stored safely
  - checking that safe recruitment and selection procedures are followed
  - checking that child protection awareness training is undertaken so that staff, including volunteers, know how to recognise and respond to concerns about a child or young person
- To offer advice, guidance and support to staff and volunteers dealing with child protection
- To identify training needs

Remember – it is not the role of the Designated Person for Child Protection to decide whether or not the child or young person has been abused. This is the task of Children's Social Care.

## DISCLOSURES, CONCERNS, ALLEGATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

In order to keep children and young people safe groups/organisations need to be clear about the differences between disclosures, concerns, allegations and complaints because there are different processes to be followed.

**Child Protection Procedures** should be followed when: (see page 23)

- A child or young person makes a **disclosure**.

A **disclosure** is when a child or young person tells someone else about the behaviour of another person or persons towards him or her which makes the hearer think that the child or young person is experiencing some form of abuse or may be at risk of abuse

- There is a **concern** about a child or young person.

A **concern** is when another child or young person, another parent or carer or a worker raises a question about whether a particular child or young person is experiencing some form of abuse or may be at risk of abuse

**The Management of Allegations Procedures** should be followed when: (see page 78)

- An **allegation** is made about a worker, paid or unpaid, or a committee member.

An **allegation** is when somebody informs someone in the organisation/group or there is reasonable cause to believe that a person who works with children or young people may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
- Behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children or young people.

**The Complaints Procedure** should be followed when: (see page 28)

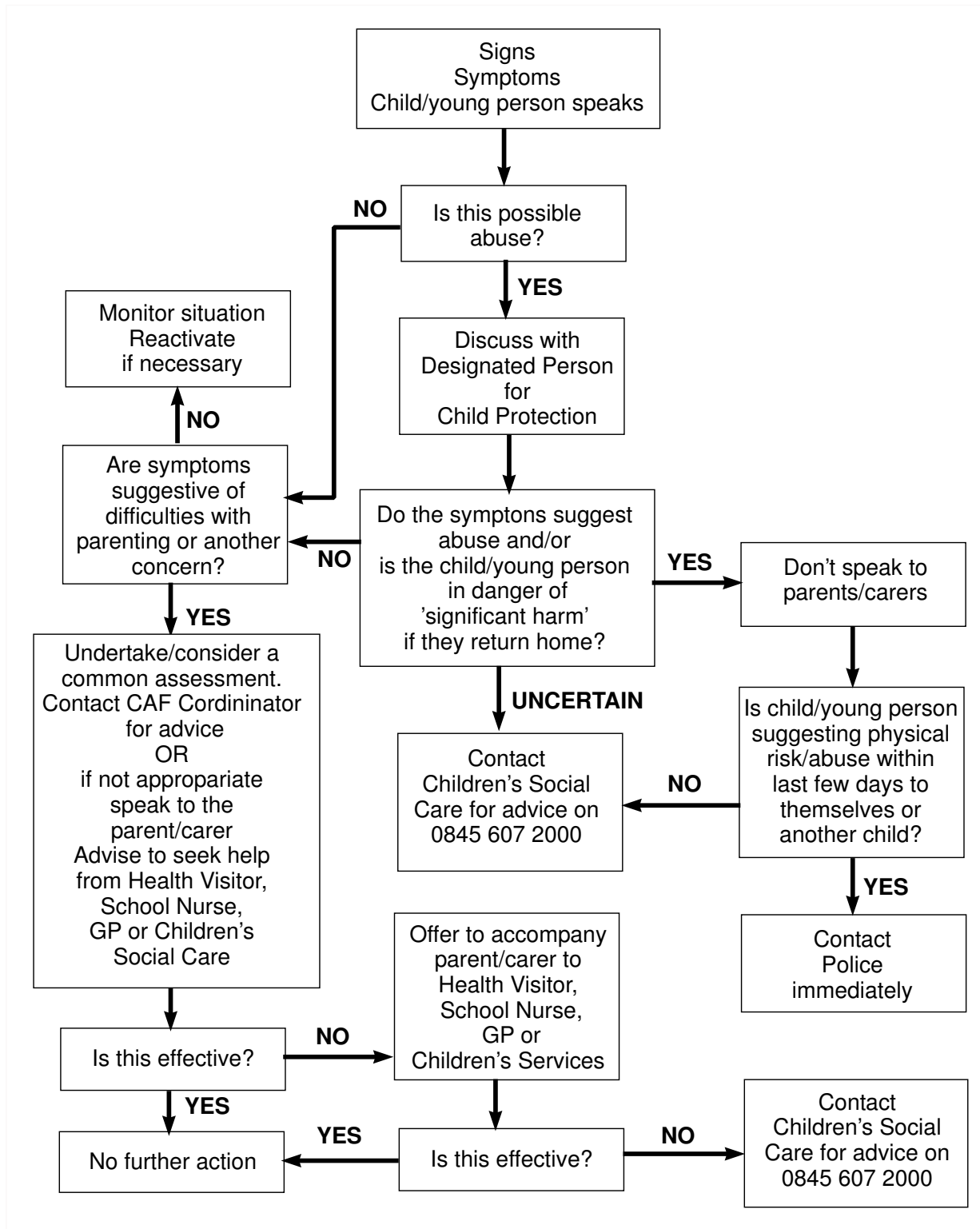
A **complaint** is made about the organisation/group.

A safeguarding **complaint** is a complaint about practices in the organisation/group which mean that children and young people are put at risk.

Everyone needs to know these differences and which procedure to follow. They should contact the Designated Person for Child Protection in any of these instances. In some cases two sets of procedures may need to be used.

**Remember:** In all cases the wellbeing of the children and young people are paramount.

## RESPONDING TO A CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE FLOWCHART



## Responding to a disclosure from a child or young person

Your organisation/group should produce guidelines for how volunteers, workers or management committee members should behave if a child or young person discloses to you or tells you something that leads you to believe that they are, or may be, at serious risk of harm from someone else or themselves. A sample procedure is given below.

### **SAMPLE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF A CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE OF CHILD ABUSE**

- Keep calm. Do not be shocked.
- Listen to the child or young person.
- Accept what you hear without passing judgement.
- Ask questions only for clarification.
- Do not investigate.
- Do not make promises.
- Offer support and understanding explaining that you cannot keep it secret and what may happen. (This gives them the choice to continue telling you or stop.)
- Reassure the child or young person that they were right to talk to you.
- Write down notes – dates, times, facts, who were involved, observations using actual words used if possible.
- Report to the Designated Person for Child Protection as soon as possible (or contact immediately if you believe the matter is urgent).
- Ensure that you have the following information:
  - name(s), address, date(s) of birth of the child/children or young person/people
  - parent/carer's name and contact details
  - name of the person said to be involved
  - names of any witness to the incident (if appropriate)
- Keep notes of your conversation with the Designated Person and any advice offered.
- Sign and date the notes and keep them in a confidential file.
- Act on the advice given.

### **ALWAYS REMEMBER – IF IN DOUBT – CONSULT**

Respect confidentiality of everyone involved in the incident keeping the matter restricted only to those who need to know.

Support should be provided for the child or young person making the disclosure.

Your organisation/group should have a form for recording such a disclosure. A sample recording form can be found on page 76.

## **Making a referral**

Once a decision has been made that a child or young person is likely to be at risk of significant harm you, or the Designated Person for Child Protection, must phone the Access Centre of Worcestershire's Children's Social Care on 0845 607 2000 immediately. Say that you have serious concerns about a child or young person.

When making a referral the following information will be needed:

- the name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and gender of the child or young person
- the name and contact details of the parent/carer or other close family members, if known
- the name and contact details of the child or young person's GP
- the reason(s) for your referral

Following the telephone call you may be asked to put the referral in writing.

Under 47 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities have a statutory duty to make enquiries where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Children's Social Care, part of Children's Services, carries this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority.

All referrals are taken seriously. The needs of the child or young person and the family will be assessed so that information can be collected and support put in place where appropriate.

Enquiries will be made with other professionals and the child or young person's family. Your organisation/group may be part of these enquiries and you may be invited to take part in meetings. Your organisation/group may continue to be part of any ongoing support for the child or young person.

Children's Social Care will not be able to guarantee to keep the identity of the referring organisation/group or individual worker confidential as s/he may be needed to provide evidence should an investigation become necessary.

## **What happens next?**

If your organisation/group makes a referral Children's Social Care has an obligation to inform you about the outcome of the referral.

## THE MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Your group or organisation must have an agreed procedure in place to deal with a situation when you know or have reasonable cause to believe that a person who works with children or young people may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person
- Behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Children's Services have workers whose responsibility is to advise you in the event of an allegation being made. They are known as LADOs, (Local Authority Designated Officers) and can be contacted on 01905 752800.

Dealing with an allegation may bring your organisation/group into contact with a number of agencies as there can be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation.

- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care about whether a child or young person is in need of protection or in need of services
- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action. (If you are not the employer.)

### Breach of Trust

There is a new offence 'Breach of Trust' which means it is illegal for someone in a 'Position of Trust' to have a sexual relationship with a young person under 18.

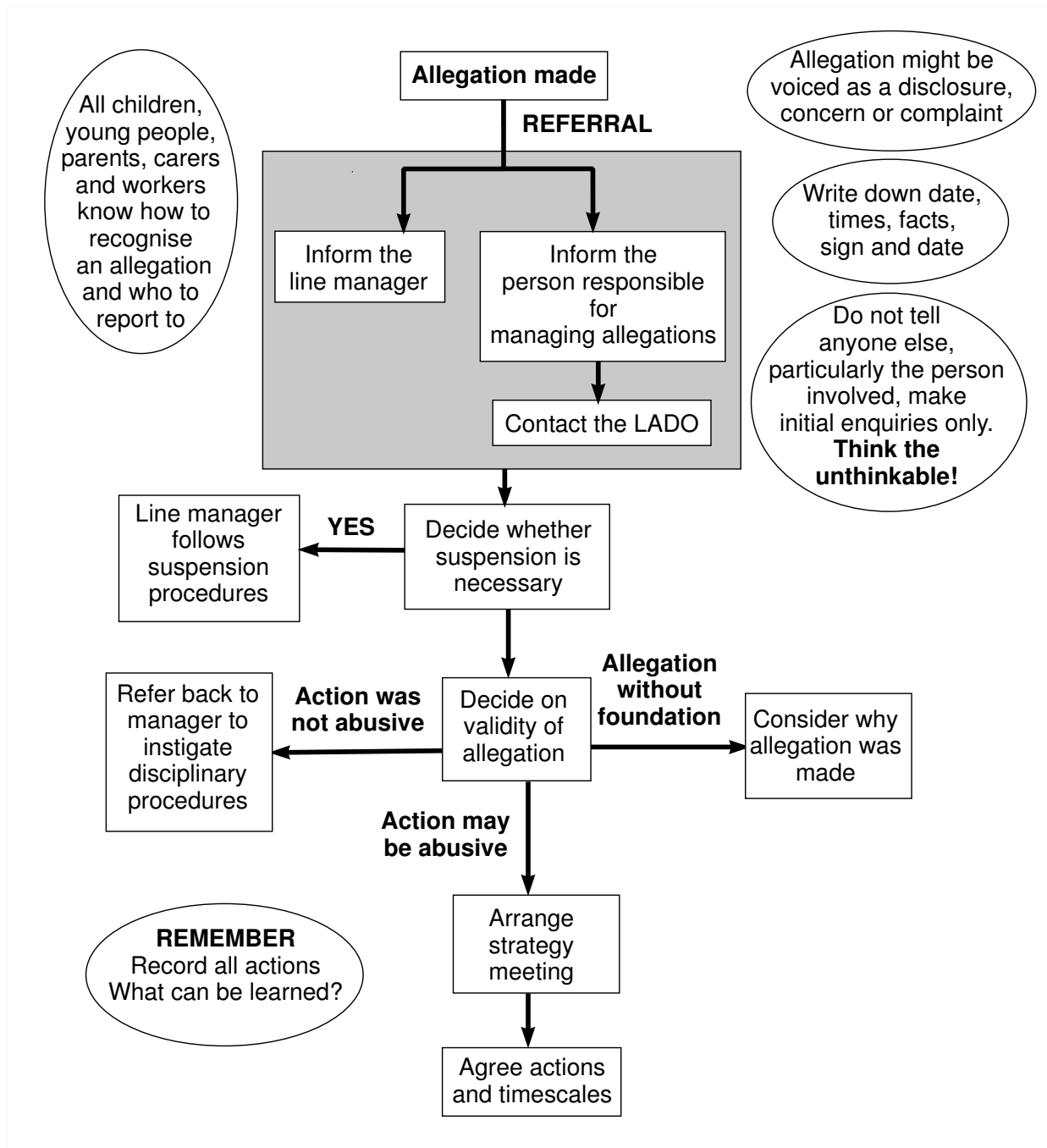
#### SAMPLE MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS STATEMENT

..... (name of organisation/group) is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the children and young people with whom we work. We will deal with any allegation made against any worker, paid or voluntary, or member of the management committee promptly and in line with our agreed procedures.

## RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATION

In all cases when an allegation is made against a worker or a volunteer, including a member of the management committee, Management of Allegations Procedures should be followed. If a child or young person is at risk then Child Protection Procedures should be followed.

### MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS FLOWCHART



Every allegation, whether made by a child, young person, parent, carer or another member of the organisation/group must be taken seriously and treated in accordance with your procedures.

### **Additional Points**

- Support should be provided for the individual making the allegation if he/she is within the organisation/group.
- Suspension should be seen as a neutral act without prejudice.
- The person against whom the allegation has been made should be informed as soon as possible and advice given on how to access support.
- Parents or carers of the child or young person should be informed and support offered following discussion with the LADO.
- Confidentiality should be maintained.
- Even if the individual resigns the allegation must still be followed up.
- A record must be kept of any allegations made and how it was followed up and resolved. This must be kept for 10 years. A copy will be given to the individual.
- If a reference is provided for an individual against whom an allegation has been made, then it must clearly state this even if it was found to be false or unproven.
- Support should also be provided for the individual against whom the allegation has been made. The Safeguarding Adviser Network has produced helpful information for staff and volunteers who work with children and young people. It can be downloaded from [www.wcvys.co.uk/safeguarding](http://www.wcvys.co.uk/safeguarding).
- Disclosures or allegations of abuse have an impact on the organisation/group. It is important for the benefit of the children and young people and the organisation/group that the impact causes as little disruption as possible. Having a clear Confidentiality Policy (see page 29) and Whistleblowing Policy (see page 33) can be supportive.

A sample procedure for Management of Allegations can be found on page 78.

A sample checklist for handling and recording allegations or complaints against a worker/volunteer can be found on page 79. A flow chart showing the management of an allegation is on page 26.

## COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Children, young people, and/or their parents or carers, should know how to, and be able to, complain if they are not happy with any aspect of your organisation/group. An open culture enables people a safe way to voice complaints or concerns. Any complaint should be addressed without delay. The complainant should be kept informed of progress.

Your organisation/group should have a written policy and procedure in place for dealing with complaints. If dealing with complaints is part of their job or role a worker or volunteer may need to receive training in the procedures.

<b>SAMPLE COMPLAINTS POLICY</b>
<p>..... (name of organisation/group) recognises the right of children, young people and their parents or carers to have access to the organisation/group’s complaints procedure. A complaint is any clear expression of dissatisfaction with the organisation/group, its workers, volunteers or management committee or its activities or services.</p> <p>We will ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and in confidence. We will learn from any complaints and use them to improve how we operate.</p> <p>The complaints procedure will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• say what a complaint is</li> <li>• identify how a complaint can be made – verbally, in writing or by email, or in a box where complaints can be placed anonymously</li> <li>• explain who should be notified of the complaint within the organisation/group</li> <li>• ensure that all complaints are dealt with</li> <li>• not put restrictions on issues which may be complained about</li> <li>• explain the procedures for dealing with complaints, including any complaints made against staff or volunteers</li> <li>• outline what will happen if a complaint is not resolved promptly</li> <li>• say how records are kept</li> <li>• provide a timetable for dealing with a complaint</li> <li>• be written in a format that is appropriate to the age of the users</li> <li>• be circulated to all children and young people who use the organisation and their parents or carers and paid staff and volunteers</li> </ul>

Your organisation/group will also need to consider:

- who will review the complaints to check that the procedure is working satisfactorily
- ways of identifying any emerging patterns of complaints and action taken on individual complaints.

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Within your organisation/group the principle of confidentiality should be fundamental. Information should not be confidential to individuals - the bounds of confidentiality are within the staff team on a need to know basis.

Workers must treat with confidence personal information about children and young people, whether obtained directly or indirectly, or by inference. Such information includes name, address, date of birth, and other descriptions of the child or young person's life and circumstances, which might result in their identification. Information concerning a child or young person will not be passed on to another young person except with their agreement. Workers and volunteers must take particular care not to gossip either about children or young people or with them.

Where workers wish to communicate information about a child or young person outside the team permission will be sought from the child or young person, if appropriate, or their parent or carer.

In exceptional circumstances where there is danger that a child or young person may cause physical harm to themselves, or to a third party and there are good grounds to indicate that he/she is no longer able to take responsibility for his/her own actions the worker should take action to protect the child or young person.

In situations where a child or young person may be disclosing sexual, physical, or emotional abuse or neglect a worker should never agree to confidentiality.

The nature of working with children and young people makes the practice of prescriptive guidelines difficult in some areas. Workers, including volunteers, therefore, need to be aware of different factors around confidentiality, which affect them in different working contexts, and make appropriate decisions. If a member of staff has any doubts whatsoever they should seek advice.

It is good practice for your organisation/group to display a statement about confidentiality where it can be seen by all. Workers, volunteers and committee members need to be aware of good practice in relation to information sharing. (see page 36)

### **SAMPLE CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT (1)**

.....(name of organisation/group) support the legal principle that the welfare of the child or young person is paramount. This means that the considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the organisation should not be allowed to override the right of children and young people to be protected from harm. Every effort will be made, however, to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned particularly when a disclosure or an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

**SAMPLE CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT (2)**

Confidentiality is important to us at ..... (name of organisation/group) but in the event we are made aware that a child or young person is at risk of harm we have a responsibility to share this information with the appropriate agency. This is because we believe that the protection of a child or young person is the most important thing.

Some personal information is provided on the membership form. This will be kept in a secure place and is available only to members of the staff team.

In addition children and young people often build up trusting relationships with adults working with them and share personal and family information with them. This information will only be recorded if, in exceptional cases, it may have an impact on the child or young person or their contact details.

There are rules about what we do with personal information:

**Staff Team**

Details of any information will be shared among the staff team only if it is considered to be relevant, for example medical issues in relation to an activity or the taking of medicine.

**External Agencies**

In most circumstances, and taking into account their understanding, we will not share personal information without talking to the child or young person. This may include the parent or carer. We will encourage children and young people to share information or discuss issues with parents and carers or appropriate outside organisations that may help them.

If a child or young person, however, is at risk of harm or in need of protection or if a parent/carer is at risk of harm or if an offence may be committed we have a responsibility to try to prevent this happening. In these circumstances we would pass on any relevant information to Children’s Social Care or the Police. We will also try to talk to the child or young person first.

**Gossip**

Workers and volunteers, including members of the management committee, will not gossip about any child, young person or their family with other children or young people, with other adults involved in ..... (name of organisation/group) or with any outsiders.

**SAMPLE CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

.....(name of organisation/group) believe that the safety of every child or young person is very important.

For this reason:

- What you tell a worker will be treated with strictest confidence and will not be passed on to others without your agreement.
- S/he will agree with you exactly what information can be shared with other workers and agencies.

However, there are some limits to what can be kept confidential:

- A worker may need to discuss your situation with other workers in the team including their line manager, who will treat any information in the strictest confidence.
- If you tell a worker something that means that you or someone else could be at risk of harm or placed in danger, and which s/he and their line manager judge requires urgent action, then the worker would need to take any necessary action.

These situations could mean passing on confidential information, but the worker will always try to discuss this with you first and hope that together you can agree on a course of action.

## **WHISTLEBLOWING**

Whistleblowing is described as the revelation of wrongdoing, abuse or unethical behaviour by a worker or volunteer within an organisation/group to those in positions of authority.

Workers/volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring to the attention of their line manager or a member of the management committee, any concern, suspicion, or allegation so that the matter can be investigated. The concern, suspicion or allegation may be about the behaviour of a worker/volunteer, a member of the management committee or a representative of a partner organisation. Acting on a concern, suspicion or allegation can be difficult but is particularly important to act when the safety of children and young people might be at risk.

### **Reasons for whistleblowing**

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.

- to safeguard children and young people both in the organisation/group and in other settings
- to prevent the problem worsening or widening
- to protect or reduce risks to others
- to prevent oneself becoming implicated

### **What stops people from whistleblowing**

- starting a chain of events which spirals
- disrupting the organisation/group
- fear of getting it wrong
- fear of repercussions or hurting colleagues
- fear of not being believed

### **Raising a concern**

- the concern should be raised as soon as possible
- try to be specific about what is concerning you and why
- put your concern in writing outlining the background and history, giving names, dates, etc
- talk to the line manager or a member of the management committee
- make sure you get a satisfactory response
- a person voicing a concern is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern

### What happens next?

- any member of staff, including a volunteer, raising such a concern will be listened to and treated respectfully and their concerns will be taken seriously
- when a person has reported concerns the organisation/group has a responsibility to protect that person from any harassment or unfair treatment
- the person who reported the concern should be informed about its progress.

#### **SAMPLE WHISTLEBLOWING STATEMENT**

..... (name of organisation/group) supports and will provide protection for whistleblowers.

If you become aware of anything that makes you feel uncomfortable then discuss the incident with your line manager or the Designated Person for Child Protection.

Training and supervision will be provided for workers and volunteers to ensure they are able to recognise unsuitable and inappropriate behaviour.

### Self reporting

There may be occasions when an individual has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they recognise to be impinging on their competence. That individual has a responsibility to discuss the situation with their line manager so that appropriate support can be offered. It may be that the individual is required to remove themselves from their work setting for a period.

While such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare and safety of children and young people

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

A key element of the Every Child Matters agenda is the recognition that some children, young people and their families require additional assistance to achieve positive outcomes. Early intervention and effective prevention and appropriate services can make a difference when provided at the right time.

Children and young people can have different needs, which require different levels of response. These can change. Intervention and/or support may be provided by either one agency or a number of agencies working together. The diagram Promoting Children and Young People's Well-being in Worcestershire on page 35 shows the county's approach to the different levels of need.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been devised to aid the identification of additional needs and to coordinate help before things reach crisis point. This will only happen if everyone working with the child or young person looks out for their well being vigilantly and is prepared to help if it appears something is wrong.

A Common Assessment can be instigated by any worker involved with a child or young person. It only takes place with the agreement of the child or young person and their family.

A CAF consists of:

- an assessment of the needs of a child or young person looking at all areas – health, behaviour, learning, parents/carers and environmental factors
- a meeting with the child or young person and their family and workers from the agencies who are involved or need to be involved
- an action plan agreed with all parties sometimes called a 'coordinated support plan'
- a lead professional - a named contact for the family and other workers involved with the family

### **What are the benefits of a Common Assessment?**

The child or young person will benefit by:

- the identification of need across all areas of a child or young person's life
- getting the services they need more quickly (quicker and earlier)
- not having to repeat information to workers
- going through fewer assessments as the information on the CAF will stay with the child or young person across agencies.

Working through the Common Assessment can enable the child or young person and their parents or carers to say positive things about their relationships and the things they like or enjoy. It is an assessment based on strength and need.

## What does this mean for a VCS worker?

- That you can use the Common Assessment when or if you think a child or young person has additional needs or requires more support than s/he is getting. Completion of the CAF will provide evidence of need.
- Use of the Common Assessment is understood by other agencies making dialogue easier.
- That you will need to adhere to the inter-agency agreed protocols for sharing information (see page 36).

## Support about Common Assessment

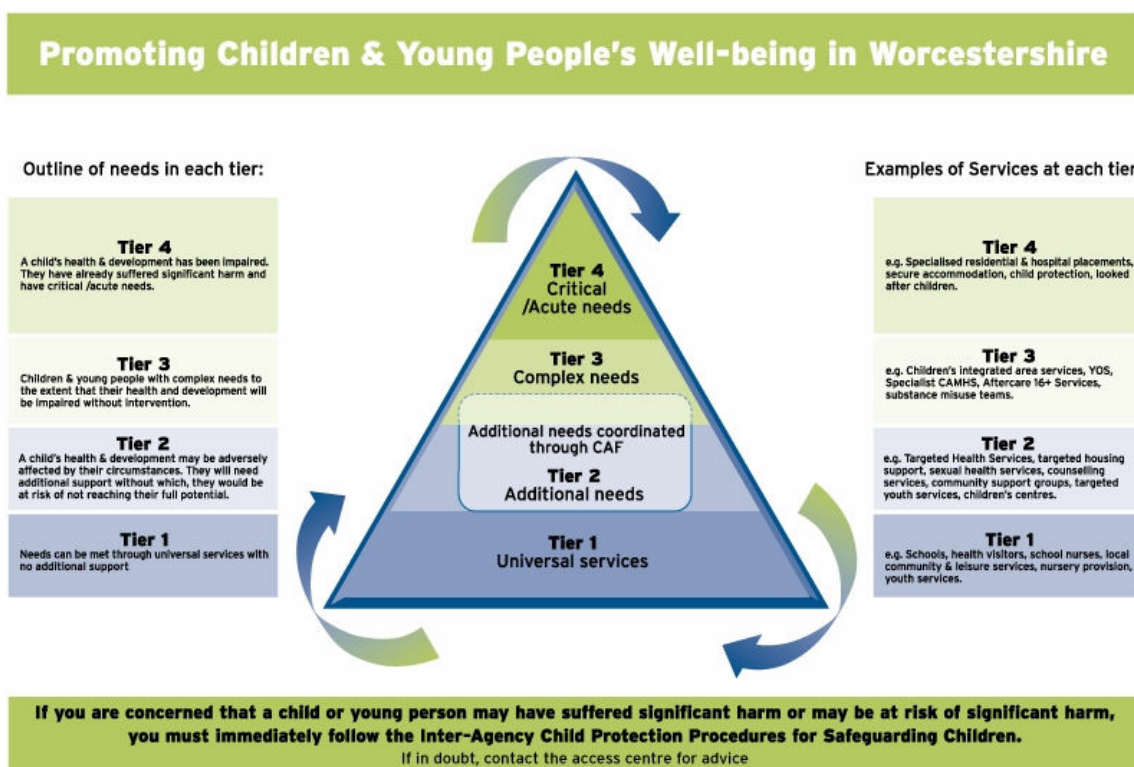
Children's Services have appointed three CAF Coordinators who will listen to your concerns and who will be able to advise you.

Redditch and Bromsgrove - 01527 556168

Wyre Forest, Hagley, Tenbury and Droitwich - 01562 757867

Evesham, Pershore, Malvern, Martley and Worcester - 01905 765758

**Remember** – CAF is about early intervention if you have a child protection concern you should follow the Child Protection Procedures.



For more information go to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/iwp)

## INFORMATION SHARING

All organisations/groups collect information about the children and young people with whom they work. Most of the time this information will not need to be shared outside the organisation/group. When, however, there are concerns about a child or young person your organisation/group may be asked to share information with a statutory agency.

**Information Sharing: Practitioner's Guide (DSCF 2008)** gives guidance on information sharing and recording, to improve practice amongst practitioners across all children's services including those provided by the voluntary sector. There are six key points to apply when considering sharing information.

1. Children, young people, parents/carers should be told, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and that their agreement will be asked. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at risk of significant harm, or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
2. The safety and welfare of a child or young person must always be the over-riding consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about them.
3. The wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information must, where possible, be respected. Information may still be shared, if in your judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to over-ride that lack of consent.
4. Advice should be sought from the Designated Person for Child Protection or your line manager where you are in doubt, especially where your doubts relate to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
5. It is necessary to ensure that the information shared is accurate and up to date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.
6. The reasons for your decisions, whether it is to share information or not, should be recorded.

## **PARENTAL RECORDS AND CONSENTS**

It is important that details of parents/carers of children and young people who attend your group or use your service, are collected in case of accident or need for consent for an activity. These records must include the following:-

- the child's or young person's personal details - name, address, date of birth
- whether the child or young person has any special needs - dietary, medical or physical
- details of parents/carers, i.e. name, address and telephone numbers (This is particularly important if the local authority shares, or has sole responsibility, for the child or young person.)
- details of an alternate contact person
- whether there are any particular instructions concerning the child of young person, for example, if only one parent is authorised to collect the child or young person

The information should be signed by the parent/carer or the young person themselves if they are over 18.

As well as a general consent for their child or young person to taking part in the activities run by your organisation/group you will also need specific consent if you are arranging off-site visits or residentials.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Others argue that bullying doesn't have to imply a series of incidents – it can be any occasion when someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another.

Bullying is unacceptable. It is important not to underestimate the damage that can be caused by bullying and the effect on a child or young person's physical and emotional wellbeing.

### **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can take many forms - physical, verbal, written, cyber, emotional, racist, sexual, and homophobic.

It can include:

- being called names
- being teased
- being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked
- having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken
- receiving abusive phone or text messages or emails
- being forced to hand over money
- being forced to do things they don't want to do
- being ignored or left out
- being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnic or racial origin.

But it is not bullying when two children or young people of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel.

All workers and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that there is a caring, safe and supportive environment within their organisation/group so that everyone knows that bullying is not tolerated. This should be specified in an Anti-bullying Statement.

**SAMPLE ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT**

..... (name of organisation/group) believes that any form of bullying is unacceptable.

In order to outlaw bullying:

- We will listen to children and young people and take seriously what they tell us about bullying.
- We will take steps to deal immediately with incidents of bullying.
- We will ensure that children and young people are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- We will be aware of the vulnerability of specific individuals and groups such as those with disabilities and from black and minority ethnic communities.
- We will ensure that both victims of bullying and bullies themselves receive support.
- We will keep a record of any incidents of bullying, how we dealt with them and whether there is anything the organisation/group can do to learn from the incidents.

Worcestershire Children's Services Anti-Bullying Policy can be found at [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/nextsteps](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/nextsteps)

# POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

In order for your organisation/group to operate in a way that benefits the children and young people there should be clarity about what is expected from the children and young people and what happens if their behaviour falls below acceptable levels.

## SAMPLE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

.....(name of organisation/group) believes that children and young people thrive best in a positive and supportive environment. We believe that all children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

To this end we will:

- ensure a consistent approach to promoting positive behaviour and managing unacceptable behaviour
- promote respectful relationships and build children and young people’s self esteem
- identify and support children and young people who display signs of emotional or behavioural difficulties
- support children and young people as they learn to resolve conflicts independently

### Positive Behaviour Practices

Workers and volunteers are expected to both model and promote positive behaviour:

- They must behave in a positive and respectful way when interacting with other adults or children/young people.
- They will give positive reinforcement when children and young people are behaving appropriately.
- They will tell children and young people when their behaviour is inappropriate.
- They will try and diffuse situations before they escalate.

It is always the behaviour that is discussed not the child or young person.

In some instances it may be necessary for one-to-one support to be provided for the child or young person.

The use of physical intervention will be avoided as far as possible. It will only be used in exceptional circumstances if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, or young person, other children or young people or an adult. When physical intervention is used it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned. Any physical intervention must be recorded.

### Sanctions

Workers and volunteers need to know the sanctions that are approved for use in your organisation/group. These will vary depending on the age and ability of the children and young people as well as environmental factors.

Sanctions may include:

- calmly requesting that a child or young person leaves the situation or activity where the behaviour has occurred and then engaging them in discussion
- quietly requesting they sit out for a given period
- if a mess has been made, for example, if something has been thrown and a cup smashed, the person should be asked to clean up the mess and replace the cup
- provide choices related to the behaviour sought, for example, you can play the game properly or leave the table
- warn about the consequences of the behaviour, "If your behaviour continues ....."
- if two children or young people are involved discuss with them how the situation should be resolved
- speak to parents/carers about the behaviour
- inform the child or young person (and parent/carer if appropriate) that they may not attend the next session

Children and young people need to know the behaviour that is expected of them. Some groups have a set of 'Club Rules'. Others get the children or young people together at regular intervals to draw up an agreed list of 'How we do things here'. These lists are more powerful as they have been discussed and agreed and use the language of children/young people.

By whichever method the 'rules' are drawn up they should consist of positive statements and not just be a list of '**Do not**s'; for example, '**Be kind to other people**' instead of '**No bullying**'.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Children and young people have the right to be protected from discrimination. This right should run through all the activities and decisions made within your organisation/group. In the same way, workers and volunteers, parents and carers involved in your organisation/group should not be discriminated against in any way.

For this reason, your organisation will need to have a statement which fits in with the purpose and values of your organisation. This statement will be of little value if it is not applied to all the safeguarding policies and procedures of your organisation/group.

<b>SAMPLE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT</b>
<p>.....(name of organisation/group) recognises that certain groups and individuals are at risk of being unfairly discriminated against for many reasons, including: age, appearance, class, colour, criminal conviction, culture, disability, employment status, ethnicity, nationality, political belief, race, religious belief, sexuality or size.</p> <p>Every aspect of our work is informed and enhanced by equality issues. Workers, volunteers and committee members are supported in challenging any behaviour or ways of doing things which go against the policy or the spirit of the policy.</p>

## DIVERSITY POLICY

While equal opportunities are about preventing discrimination, diversity is about recognising and valuing difference. It is about taking proactive steps to ensure that your organisation/group respects and values differences for the benefit of all the children and young people with whom you work.

### **SAMPLE DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

.....(name of organisation/group)  
recognises that each child and young person is an individual with their own skills and abilities.

We recognise that there is diversity in family life, education, faith and culture. We undertake to embrace and celebrate such differences in ways that make our organisation/group better for children and young people.

We value and encourage the participation and contribution of individuals, regardless of age, class, disability, ethnic background, faith, gender and sexual orientation.

## **PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION/GROUP**

### **For Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers are increasingly asking questions about how an organisation/group makes sure their children and young people are taking part in activities within safe environments.

It is good practice for your organisation/group to provide an information leaflet or card containing the following:

#### **What Information?**

- Information about the group or organisation
- Details of the activity programme – date, age group, etc
- Safeguarding Policy Statement
- Equal Opportunities Statement
- Names and contact details of two people who can be contacted if there is a child protection issue or concern in relation to the organisation/group
- A statement that a full file of the organisation/group's policies is available on request

### **For Children and Young People**

Children and young people also have the right to have information about your organisation/group. This could be provided in the format of a Member's Pack. It should be in age-appropriate or ability-appropriate language. As well as similar information to that provided for parents and carers it should include details about how children and young people are involved in decision-making within the organisation/group.

Children and young people usually talk to a person with whom they have a good relationship about issues they find difficult, whatever that person's role in the organisation/group may be.

There should be information displayed on a notice board, as well as within the Member's Pack, about the person (or persons) that can be spoken with or contacted if the child or young person has an issue, concern or complaint. The notice/information should be prominently displayed and in clear language, perhaps accompanied by a photograph.

## **SAFE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND RETENTION**

Rigorous recruitment, selection and retention procedures are essential for safeguarding children and young people. They are there to prevent and deter unsuitable individuals from gaining access to children and young people. Your organisation/group should identify and adopt a set of procedures to which it adheres.

WSCB has approved a document **Guidance for Safe Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff and Volunteers**. It details good practice and can be found in the downloads section at [www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk)

When someone enquires about working with children and young people, in either a paid or a voluntary capacity, it is good practice to give them (or send out):

- an information pack which includes information about your organisation/group including Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and the requirement for an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure
- a job description or a role description of what the work involves
- an application form

### **Job Description or Role Description**

A job description is used when individuals are paid for their work.

A sample job description can be found on page 81.

A role description is used when it is a volunteer who is offering their time and skills. Volunteers have as much right as paid workers to know what the expectations are in a particular role.

A sample role description can be found on page 82.

Such descriptions provide clarity on both sides of what is expected.

### **Person Specification**

A person specification is a profile of the ideal person for the job or role. It lists the criteria necessary to carry out the work. It helps both potential applicants and interview panels with a tool to systematically judge whether individuals meet the requirements and to compare one person with another

A sample person specification can be found on page 83.

## **Application Form**

The application form can be simple but should include:

- name, address, phone and mobile number and email address (to comply with **The Employment Equality (Age) Regulation October 2006**, the date of birth should not be included on the main application form, but added to a diversity monitoring form)
- previous addresses, if less than five years at current address
- contact details for two referees
- details of the worker/volunteer's interests and experience including those in non-work settings

This document is important in relation to safeguarding practices. It is not good practice to accept curriculum vitae in place of an application form because this will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

Volunteers may be put off at the thought of filling in an application form. To overcome this it can be a good idea for some-one from the organisation/group to assist the applicant in completing the form.

## **References**

Two written references are essential as part of safeguarding practices to ensure you are recruiting workers/volunteers who are who they say they are and to obtain objective and factual information. They should be from reliable character witnesses who have known the worker/volunteer for at least two years. References should not be accepted from relatives or friends. If possible one should be from a recent employer or line-manager.

Sample reference letters and forms for a volunteer and a paid worker can be found on pages 84, 85, 87 and 88.

Referees should be telephoned to confirm their identity and the content of the reference.

## **Proof of Identity**

You should ask for confirmation of identity including a passport or driving licence with a photograph and the National Insurance Number.

## Interview

As part of an Equal Opportunities Policy and a Child Protection Policy you will need to follow a process of interviewing the worker/volunteer whether it is a formal interview or informal discussion.

- A minimum of two people representing the management team/committee is needed
- It is good practice to involve young people. They must be clear about their role in the process, how their views will be taken into account and, if they are not present for the whole interview, who will feedback to them.
- The role or job description and person specification will help you to decide on appropriate questions. For the most part they should be based on what the person has done rather than hypothetical questions. For example: “Can you tell us about a time when.....”, rather than, “What would you do if.....?”
- Decide which member of the interview panel will ask the interviewee a particular question
- It is good practice to ask the same set of questions if you are interviewing more than one person for the same role. You may ask supplementary questions.
- Issues can be explored with each person based on the information provided in their application form and in the references. This would include any gaps in their work history.
- The questions should aim to assess the applicant’s attitude towards children and young people and his/her ability to support the commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

You may wish to be less formal than an interview, and in this case you could invite the applicant for a two-way question and answer session combined with a visit to the group. If you choose this more informal route, make sure that more than one person is involved in the decision to accept the volunteer.

Whether the interview is formal or informal you need to keep a record. This should include the date, those present, the decision made and the reasons for the decision. This record is confidential so should be kept in a safe place with the application form and references.

## **Criminal Record**

If a potential worker or volunteer informs you that s/he has a criminal record those interviewing must make a judgement about suitability, taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the post or role.

You should consider:

- The nature of the work
- The nature of the offence and the age at which the offence took place
- The frequency of the offence

If in doubt seek advice.

## **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure**

An Enhanced CRB Disclosure is a key element of safeguarding practice. If working with children and young people, including as a trustee, an Enhanced CRB Disclosure is needed. CRB Disclosures can be obtained via registered bodies such as Worcestershire Council for Voluntary Youth Services ([www.wcvys.co.uk](http://www.wcvys.co.uk)). A list of registered bodies can be found on the CRB website: [www.disclosures.co.uk](http://www.disclosures.co.uk).

A new Disclosure should be obtained whenever a new worker, volunteer, including a new management committee member, joins your organisation/group. No worker/volunteer should work with children or young people in an unsupervised setting until a satisfactory Disclosure is seen.

## **Registration**

From November 2010 all new workers or volunteers and everyone moving to a new organisation/group, working in a **regulated activity** (see page 49), will have to apply for Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) registration. This is also known as the Vetting and Barring Scheme. All other workers and volunteers will be phased into the scheme between 2011 and 2015.

ISA-registered means that no information is held that demonstrates the person poses a risk of harm to children or young people. A person's registration status is continuously monitored and if any new information such as a relevant caution or conviction, or information from employers comes to light, the ISA is informed. The ISA will re-assess the person's potential risk and it may choose to bar the individual. If an individual is barred they are prevented from working with children or young people in any regulated activity.

It will be a criminal offence for an organisation/group to

- take on someone for a regulated activity without checking their status under the vetting scheme
- allow a barred individual to be appointed to undertake regulated activity.

The scheme covers people working or volunteering in the following settings:

- Childcare premises, including nurseries
- Youth settings
- Play settings
- Social workers in schools
- Youth groups in faith settings

### **Regulated Activity**

A **regulated activity** is defined as one that takes place once a month or more on a regular basis or for three days or more in a single 30-day period, or overnight. A key element is that if an activity provides an opportunity for a person to develop a relationship of trust with children or young people it should be considered to be a regulated activity.

### **Controlled Activity**

From July 2014 the scheme will also cover a category of work called **controlled activity**. Employers can employ someone barred from regulated activity to carry out controlled activity, provided they put in place specific safeguards. Controlled activity will include:

- Frequent or intensive ancillary support work in general health settings
- People working for specified organisations, generally in a clerical role, with frequent access to sensitive records about children

### **Applying for ISA Registration**

During the summer of 2010 new forms will be available. Only one form needs to be completed to apply for both an Enhanced CRB and ISA registration.

For more information go to: [www.isa-gov.co.uk](http://www.isa-gov.co.uk)

### **Appointment**

Whether a volunteer or a paid worker the decision about whether to appoint an individual lies with the interviewers. It is very important to have the best possible people working with the children and young people in your group. An inappropriate appointment can cause all sorts of problems. Remember – no appointment should be made unless it is believed that s/he will work well with the children and young people and will be an asset to your organisation/group.

Once a worker is appointed s/he is entitled to written confirmation giving specific details. This is a contract if the worker is employed or an agreement if it is a voluntary position.

## **Induction**

Once your organisation/group has recruited a new worker/volunteer and completed the vetting procedures s/he needs to have an induction into your organisation/group.

The purpose of the induction is to:

- provide training and information about the organisation/group's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate to their role
- confirm the conduct expected of staff
- provide opportunities for a new worker or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
- enable the line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns about the person's suitability at the outset and address them immediately
- ensure that the person receives written statements of:
  - policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and child protection including the name of the Designated Person for Child Protection
  - safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected
  - other relevant personnel procedures, for example, whistleblowing, disciplinary procedures

Some groups ask workers and volunteers, as part of their induction, to complete a task which means they have to look carefully at the policies and procedures.

## **Support**

It is important that a worker, whether paid or voluntary, receives appropriate support. How you provide ongoing support depends on your situation. The golden rules are to make sure your worker/volunteer is valued, that their contribution makes a difference and that they enjoy themselves.

These are some ways of contributing to this:

- pre-session and planning meetings
- end of session reviews are good ways of making sure everyone knows what is happening and what worked well and what could be improved; they are also opportunities to raise concerns
- worker/volunteer meets one-to-one with the line manager or chair to discuss their work and training and development needs
- regular meetings of all workers/volunteers to plan activities for the next few months or the year

## **Training**

Training is important both for new workers/volunteers and more experienced staff. The 'right' training enables them to fulfil their current role effectively and to develop their skills to take on new responsibilities or lead different activities.

It is the organisation/group's responsibility to identify the most appropriate training for the individual and to enable them to access that training. This may include paying for the training.

In relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection training might include:

- awareness raising sessions for all workers and volunteers, this could be through e-learning or a taught session
- safeguarding training provided by Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board. This is recommended for the Designated Person for Child Protection. It is Inter-agency training which is helpful.
- Training for multi-and-agency working so that people are equipped to work effectively with those from other agencies and professions
- First Aid training
- specialist skills training in relation to specific activities, e.g. camping

## **Keeping Records**

It is good practice for your organisation/group to keep a record about each worker/volunteer and potential workers/volunteers. These must be kept confidentially in accordance with your policies. The information should include:

- completed application form
- references including telephone contact
- details of recruitment process
- number of the Enhanced CRB Disclosure, the date when it was seen and by whom
- record of meetings
- record of training undertaken
- record of any concern and how they were dealt with

Your organisation/group should also have a list of names, addresses, and contact numbers for the members of the management committee/trustees. There should also be a record of the numbers of their Enhanced CRB Disclosures, the dates when they were seen and by whom.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

All adults who work with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. Your organisation/group has a responsibility to establish a safe and responsive environment which safeguards children and young people and reduces the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

All workers and volunteers who work with children and young people have a 'duty of care' towards them and are accountable for the way in which they operate.

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people are in 'positions of trust' in relation to the children and young people in their care. A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Where an adult is in a 'position of trust' with a child or young person under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

A Code of Conduct for workers and volunteers, including members of the management committee is a good way for them to know how they are expected to behave when they are operating on behalf of your organisation/group.

Codes of Conduct are always more useful when they are negotiated and agreed by the people involved. Some ideas about the content are:

Adults, workers and management committee members should always:

- treat everyone with respect
- act as a good role model
- provide opportunities and show understanding so that children and young people can talk about issues that are important to them
- recognise a child/young person's right to privacy
- respect an individual's faith and cultural traditions
- risk assess situations to ensure potential dangers have been identified and the risk minimised
- create an environment in which children and young people feel safe and deal with situations which might make the setting unsafe
- ensure, whenever possible, that there is more than one adult present during an activity with children or young people or it takes place at least within the sight or hearing of others

- avoid physical contact where possible, if it is needed, for example, in demonstrating a skill or to assist a young person with a disability or, wanted by a child who is upset, use common sense, keep it impersonal and short

Adults should never:

- engage in inappropriate behaviour, conduct or use inappropriate language
- smack or hit any child or young person
- permit or accept abuse or discriminatory behaviour, for example, bullying, taunting
- show favouritism for anyone
- meet a child or young person away from the usual meeting place unless the parent/carer and/or the organisation/group is aware of the arrangement
- use alcohol or drugs when working or immediately prior to working
- smoke when working
- give personal money to anyone
- transport a child or young person on their own without the permission of the parent/carer and with the knowledge of the organisation/group

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Your organisation/group should have a disciplinary policy for both paid workers and volunteers. Used properly these procedures can be an aid to good management not just a means of imposing sanctions nor necessarily leading to dismissal. It should be used when an individual has acted inappropriately. If the action(s) forms the basis of an allegation of abuse or a concern about suitability the appropriate procedures should first be followed.

The ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures advises that they should:

- be in writing
- provide for matters to be dealt with without undue delay
- provide for workers/volunteers to be informed of the complaints against them and where possible all relevant evidence before any hearing
- provide workers with an opportunity to state their case before decisions are reached
- ensure that, except for gross misconduct, no worker is dismissed for a first breach of discipline
- ensure that action is not taken until a full investigation has taken place
- provide the right of appeal and specify the procedure

### **Suspension**

If a disciplinary procedure is started or an allegation of abuse or concern about suitability is being investigated your organisation/group has the right to suspend a worker or volunteer. S/he can be told not to return to work until the procedure or investigation has been completed. Suspension should be seen as a neutral act and without prejudice.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk assessment is an important factor in keeping children and young people safe. It is vital that risk assessment procedures are incorporated into the everyday working practices of your organisation/group.

Safeguarding and promoting the general safety of children and young people, and also supporting those who have been abused, involves more than just having policies and procedures in place. Risk assessing all your working practices will provide an opportunity for you to enable wider safeguarding to be established, as well as paving the way for the individual policies and procedures mentioned in this document to be implemented.

Thorough risk assessments are also important in protecting your organisation/group in the event of an accident.

Risk assessments are usually focused on assessing the risk of particular buildings or activities. The same process should be adopted and used to assess the risk of certain situations and people. This way you will ensure that you have identified, and made safer, all possible dangers.

It is also good practice to involve children and young people in the risk assessment and risk management process. Assigning such tasks to young people can help them learn the transferable skill of risk assessment and increase their awareness of the reasons for rules, codes of conduct, etc. Young people who are involved in the planning and organising of a visit are more likely to be well prepared, and therefore will be able to make more informed decisions, resulting in them being less at risk. By involving the young people you will also encourage the development of personal, social and life skills.

### **Risk assessment policy statement and procedure**

Your organisation/group is under a legal obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure a child's or young person's safety. This applies to all activities undertaken by your organisation, including activities taking place on the organisation/group's premises and also any external trips and activities.

Your organisation/group is also under a legal obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of all adults involved.

Under common law, someone who fails to take reasonable steps, as a result of which injury, damage or loss occurs, can be sued for compensation. Other responsibilities are laid down in law and regulations. The main pieces of legislation are the **Children Act 1989** and the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**.

A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of potential dangers or vulnerabilities (hazards) within your work (premises, activities and situations) that could cause harm to people. Potential hazards are dealt with by taking adequate precautions in order to minimise the risk of harm.

- A hazard is anything, anyone or any situation that could cause harm, for example, high stacks of chairs, uneven floors, unsafe electrical equipment, blocked fire exits, lack of fire escape signs, loose carpets, toxic paints, chemicals, using unfamiliar workers/volunteers, recruitment of workers/volunteers on short-term projects, consultancy workers/volunteers, lifts in cars, etc.
- A risk is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed or made vulnerable by the hazard.

Children and young people learn by sometimes taking risks. It is important, therefore, to balance risk and safety.

It is not necessary to write risk assessments for venues that have already gone through this procedure, e.g. a hotel or youth hostel; however, it is recommended that you ask to see and read them and include reference to them in your risk assessment for the whole event/project.

**SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENT**

..... (name of organisation/group) recognise the importance of provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities.

We will ensure that risk assessments will be undertaken and recorded for our activities.

We will review risk assessments every ..... or when an activity changes, whichever is soonest.

The person responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken and that any action required is implemented is:

.....

**The Health and Safety Executive** has identified a five step procedure for carrying out a risk assessment:

- Step 1 Identify hazards, dangers and vulnerabilities
- Step 2 Consider who might be vulnerable and harmed and how this could happen
- Step 3 Establish the risks and take action to remove or minimise them
- Step 4 Record your findings and action taken
- Step 5 Review and revise your assessment

A Sample Risk Assessment Form is included on page 90.

## **First Aid**

Your organisation/group must consider what needs to be provided as first aid cover. This will depend on the age, needs and abilities of the children and young people as well as the activities undertaken. It is good practice to have at least one trained first aider present at any activity and, at least, two first aiders on a residential.

## **First Aid Box**

It is important that a well stocked first aid box is available at all sessions.

## **Accident Book**

Your organisation/group should keep a record of any accident or injury which occurs. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have produced an accident book which allows you to comply with legal requirements.

## SPECIALIST AREAS

### Transport

When your organisation/group organises an activity or trip away from the usual meeting place you will need to consider how the children and young people will get there.

If your organisation/group is providing transport:

- You must ensure that any transport provided is suitable for the trip.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure that all potential hazards have been identified and eliminated.
- You must check that workers and volunteers have appropriate insurance cover and a valid driving licence.
- If using extra voluntary helpers, you must ensure that all recruitment and selection processes are completed.
- You must ensure that there are two adults in each car so the driver is not distracted by the children or young people.
- Plan the route and build in adequate rest breaks for the driver on long journeys.

The legal issues around the use of minibuses are complex.

If your organisation/group is using a minibus among the things you need to consider are:

- Have you risk assessed the minibus and the journey?
- Is the minibus correctly licensed, taxed, with a valid MOT certificate and is it well-maintained?
- Is the insurance cover adequate and appropriate?
- Is the driver suitably qualified to drive the minibus?
- Is a permit needed?
- Are there seat belts and who is responsible for ensuring that seat belts are being worn?
- Is there a first aid box on board? Is it adequately supplied?

For more information please refer to RoSPA document on **Minibus Safety: A code of practice** and the booklet **Passenger transport provided by voluntary groups under the section 19 or 22 permit system**. See [www.vosa.gov.uk](http://www.vosa.gov.uk)

### Child Car Seats

Any organisation/group or individual who carries other people's children has a legal duty to ensure they carry them safely. If children are less than 12 years of age or under 135cms in height they must travel in child seats or booster seats that are suitable for their size and weight, suitable for the car and are securely fitted.

More information about this from [www.childseats.org.uk](http://www.childseats.org.uk)

## **Safe Internet Access**

Your organisation/group may want to enable children and young people to access the internet. It is important to have knowledge of the risks and how to keep children and young people safe. Your organisation should ensure that any ICT used by children and young people has up-to-date software/electronic safeguards in place.

## **Workers and the Internet**

The Internet is a valuable resource for workers to develop programme ideas and get up-to-date information. Care must always be taken about the sites used.

## **Working with children and young people on the Internet**

Workers may wish to demonstrate the internet to children or young people or encourage them to access information online as part of an activity.

Good practice means you should:

- ensure that parents/carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their permission
- ensure that when demonstrations are being given they are planned beforehand to ensure that all websites visited have material that is appropriate for the age group taking part
- ensure that when children and young people are given access to undertake their own searches on the Internet, they use search engines have been recommended by the Department for Children, Schools and Families

Recommended websites and search engines:

- [www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk) Kidsmart is the website for Childnet, a leading organisation in e-safety and has information for children, parents/carers and workers. It contains films, presentations, games, lesson plans and posters covering a range of issues from grooming by child sex offenders to cyber-bullying. These resources encourage young people to have fun with new technology, whilst staying in control of the risks. Importantly, they also teach young people where to go if they have any concerns.
- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) This site gives guidance from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre
- [www.kidsclick.org](http://www.kidsclick.org) is a web search for kids by librarians
- [www.superkids.com](http://www.superkids.com) is a website for children, parents and teachers
- [kids.yahoo.com](http://kids.yahoo.com) is the section of Yahoo for children

## **Advertising your club/activity on the Internet**

Care must be taken when advertising events for children and young people. It is a good idea to encourage enquirers to obtain full details for an event by speaking to a responsible contact person, such as a worker.

For example, a notice for an event might give the type of event, the date, the age group, the town but not the specific venue. A holiday club for children might not give specific times, but might talk about *'two hours every morning'*. In each case a telephone contact of an organiser/leader should be included.

## **Children and young people and the Internet**

Workers must ensure that children and young people are aware of how to use the internet as safely as possible.

### **SAMPLE GUIDELINES FOR INTERNET USE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Never tell anyone you meet on the Internet your home address, your telephone or mobile number or your school's name, unless your parent/carer specifically gives you permission.
- Never send anyone your picture, bank or card details, or anything else, without first checking with your parent/carer.
- Never give your password to anyone, even a best friend.
- Never arrange to meet anyone in person without first agreeing it with your parent/carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.
- Never hang around in a chat room or in a conference if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, and always report it to your parent/carer.
- Never respond to nasty, suggestive or rude e-mails or postings in Usenet or other discussion groups.
- If you see something you don't like (for example, bad language or distasteful pictures) then move on or click "BACK". If you are still concerned, talk to your parent/carer.
- Always remember if someone makes you an offer which seems too good to be true, it probably is.

These guidelines for children and young people are adapted from the NCH paper '**Children on the Net: Opportunities and Hazards**' (1998). They should be understood by workers and discussed with young people. The guidelines should be on a notice near the computer as a reminder to young people using it.

## **Using computers in a youth club or community building**

- place the computer where everyone can use it and where everyone can see it, rather than out of sight in another room
- supervise use of the internet
- suggest sites that could be visited by children and young people

- talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit
- inform children and young people that chat sites are open to misuse and they should be as cautious of people they meet on the internet as strangers they may meet in real life
- advise children and young people not to give out personal details over the internet, e.g. surname, address, phone number or email address
- advise children and young people never to arrange a face to face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the Internet without first agreeing it with their parent/carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.
- encourage children to report anything they come across which they feel is abusive or offensive
- limit the amount of time children or young people spend online
- explore the use of filters which block access to certain sites (although remember that these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace proper supervision)

### Acceptable Internet User Policy

To encourage children and young people to be responsible for their own safety an Acceptable Internet User Policy can be incorporated into your computers. They have to agree to the policy before accessing the computer further.

#### **SAMPLE ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**

I want to feel safe when I use the computer.

I agree that I will:

- always keep my passwords a secret
- only open pages which the workers have said are OK
- only work with people I know in real life
- tell the worker if anything makes me feel scared or uncomfortable
- make sure all messages I send are polite
- show the worker if I get a nasty message
- not reply to any nasty message or anything which makes me feel uncomfortable
- not give my mobile phone number to anyone who is not a friend in real life
- only email people I know or if the worker agrees
- talk to the worker before accessing unknown sites
- not tell people about myself online (I will not tell them my name, anything about my home, family or pets.)
- not load photographs of myself onto the computer
- never agree to meet a stranger

Anything I do on a computer may be seen by someone else.

I agree  (and continues)

I do not agree  (and logs off)

## **Communicating with children and young people by mobile phone, e-mail and social networking**

Your organisation/group may wish to communicate with children and young people through social networking, e-mail and mobile phones. These technologies can be fantastic tools with which to keep in touch and communicate directly with children and young people, but their very accessibility makes them fraught with danger.

It is good practice to set up a separate identity or profile for use with the children and young people from the organisation/group. A worker has a professional relationship with the children, young people and their parents/carers so access to their email address, facebook or bebo profile is not appropriate.

Guidance might include:

- always copy another adult in on e-mails and text messages
- be extra careful not to respond to messages or to send messages which could be misconstrued in any way. “lol” in a text message could be “**laughs out loud**” or “**lots of love**” – avoid it!
- it is very easy to respond to text messages or e-mails immediately or on the spur of the moment. Think about the time of day when you are communicating with the child or young person and leave time to decide whether it is really appropriate to respond.

This advice could form part of your Code of Conduct.

## **Use of photographs or recorded images of children and young people**

Your organisation/group may want to take photographs or record the activities undertaken by the children and young people. Implicit within safeguarding principles is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect.

- A photograph or image (website) of a child or young person should not be published without written consent. Personal information about the individual should not accompany the image. When a name is requested the first name of the individual may be all that needs to be provided.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission.
- Simultaneous streaming of images onto a website should be avoided. Delayed streaming will provide an opportunity for editing inappropriate images. It is also recommended that an independent server is used to ensure that images cannot be accessed, copied or downloaded.
- Websites should be carefully monitored to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text.

- Any instance of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the line manager or management committee who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Parental consent forms should contain an informed consent statement that photographs may be taken and may be published. Here, the word photography means both still and moving images.

### **Working within another organisation**

There are occasions when a worker is operating within another setting, for example, running a drama session in a school or a discussion about health issues in a youth club. If the worker identifies a child protection concern they must act on their concern as the welfare of the child is paramount. But which set of procedures should the worker follow? Their own organisation's procedures? The youth club's procedures?

The worker must follow both sets of procedures. S/he should notify the Designated Person for Child Protection in both their own organisation and the host organisation. S/he must keep written records of all the actions taken.

It is important, therefore, that the worker is familiar with both sets of procedures.

It is also good practice for there to be a written agreement between the two parties.

### **Residential with Children and Young People**

Residential are valuable for creating important learning opportunities for young people. Workers must, however, be aware of the safeguarding issues associated with such events.

A residential offers opportunities which are difficult, if not impossible, to provide at a youth club or out on the streets. Usually taking place in settings away from the participant's own environment it affords a space where young people, distanced from the pressures of their everyday life, can experiment with new ways of behaving, and enables them to get to know themselves and others better.

Planning and risk assessment are key to a successful residential. A preparatory visit should be made to the location. Children and young people must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. The details of a residential will vary depending on the purpose, age of the children and young people etc. But, there are some key points to remember.

### **Actions**

The following need to be clear so they can be communicated to children, young people and their parents and carers. Young people should be involved in planning the trip.

- Establish the purpose of the residential
- Dates and times of leaving and returning
- The location
- The programme
- Identify who will be going
- Establish how much it will cost
- Establish how much spending money is required
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Ensure adequate insurance cover
- Establish the ratio of staff to participants
- Catering for all food requirements

### **Home Contact**

- Identify a responsible person as the home contact. S/he should have the details of all participants and workers and their contact details. If an accident happens, or the return home is delayed, it is the home contact person who will inform parents and carers.
- Parents and carers should have the contact details of the home contact person.
- Keep in daily touch with the workers in case parents or carers ring to ask questions

### **Accommodation**

- All accommodation must be clean and with access to sufficient toilet and bathing facilities.
- It is not acceptable:
  - for participants to share a bed
  - for male and female participants to share a room
  - for workers to share a room with participants.
- For wheelchair users, it is important to check access to the building, room and bathroom facilities.
- Checks must be made to ensure that the needs of participants with disabilities are met.
- If rooms are equipped with satellite TV, inappropriate programmes may be available. It may be possible to arrange for these programmes to be disconnected.
- All participants must know which rooms the workers are in and how to contact them if required.

## **Communication with Parents/carers**

Before taking any children away to events, you must arrange a meeting with the parents and carers and participants to provide details of the trip. They must be made aware and given written information on the following:

- Purpose of the trip
- Name and contact details of the lead worker
- Name and contact number of the person acting as 'home contact'
- Details of transport to and from the venue and during the trip
- Details of the accommodation with address and contact number
- A programme
- Clothing and equipment list
- Emergency procedures and telephone contacts
- Codes of conduct for both staff and participants
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Cost
- Spending money
- Details of insurance

## **Information required from Parents/Carers**

- Signed consent form accepting the code of conduct and detailing any specific medical information
- Special dietary requirements
- Consent for emergency medical treatment

## **Preparing Participants**

Try to meet with the children or young people prior to the residential to agree:

- Code of conduct/behaviour which has been negotiated with the participants
- And inform them about:
  - Emergency procedures
  - Expectations of the participants
  - Workers' roles and responsibilities
  - Support if they become homesick or if they are unhappy, or need to speak to someone in confidence

## **Evaluation**

It is good practice to involve all participants and workers in identifying what went well and what could have been improved. This should include safeguarding and child protection issues.

## **SAFEGUARDING ACCREDITATION**

Your organisation/group is committed to keeping children and young people safe and to dealing with any disclosures, concerns or allegations in a way that protects those involved. A good way of checking that your policies and procedures are up-to-date is to seek accreditation from an outside body.

There are two schemes available to organisations and groups in Worcestershire. These may be useful for funding applications as well confirming your safeguarding credentials to children, young people and their parents/carers. They might also serve to attract volunteers and paid staff.

### **Quoit Accreditation for Groups**

WCVYS has been working with WSCB to develop this local modular accreditation. This, first level, scheme will assist your group to identify and develop the basic requirements around safeguarding. There are four modules:

1. Safeguarding and Child Protection - Policies and Procedures
2. Safeguarding and Child Protection - Good Practice
3. Safeguarding - People
4. Safeguarding - Support and Communications

Once a group has collected together the evidence for a module it can be submitted for assessment. A Quadrant Certificate will be awarded on completion of each module. A Quoit Certificate will be awarded when all four modules have been successfully completed.

### **Sound Systems Accreditation for Organisations**

This is a national accreditation scheme run by the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS). It encourages, promotes and accredits good practice in accordance with the Keeping It Safe standards which fall into the following categories:

1. organisational policies and procedures
2. reporting concerns, suspicions and allegations
3. safe recruitment and selection
4. managing paid and volunteer staff
5. providing education training and support
6. providing safe activities

In both schemes WCVYS will identify a mentor to help you to look at your policies and procedures and collect the evidence.

## LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The advice contained in this document is based on the key legislation and relevant guidance which promotes the welfare and safety of children and young people.

### Legislation

#### Human Rights Act 1998

This sets out the rights of children, young people and families and reflects principles in international agreements. It gives individuals the right to challenge what they perceive to be an infringement of their human rights.

#### The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org))

This includes:

- All children and young people must have equal rights and protection irrespective of race, colour, gender, disability, political or religious belief, ethnic or national origin, socio-economic background, language or other status.
- The best interests of the child or young person must be a primary consideration when decisions concerning children and young people are being made.
- All children and young people have the right to express their views freely, in all matters that affect them, taking into account the age and maturity of the child/young person.
- Children and young people cared for away from home and children with a disability have the right to protection.
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from violence, abuse, exploitation, abduction, sale and trafficking.

#### The Children Act 1989

- A child is defined as any person aged 18 or under.
- The intention of the act is to ensure the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including the need to be protected from harm. The law is based on the assumption that it is generally best for children to grow up in their own families and that most families want to care for their own children. There may be occasions, however, when it is necessary for statutory agencies to become involved to provide services for children who need assistance or protection.
- In addition to Children's Social Care (part of Children's Services) only the Police and NSCPCC have the legal right and responsibility to investigate concerns about child abuse.

#### The Children Act 2004

This provides the framework for the **Every Child Matters: Change for Children** agenda.

- The establishment of a Children's Commissioner for England to represent the views and interests of children and young people and to report annually to Parliament.
- It identified five outcomes for children:
  - Staying Safe
  - Be Healthy
  - Enjoy and Achieve
  - Make a Positive Contribution
  - Achieve Economic Wellbeing
- The local authority has a duty to make arrangements to promote co-operation between agencies to improve children's wellbeing. Key partners have a duty to take part in these arrangements.
- There is a new power to allow pooling of resources in support of these arrangements.
- Joint Area Reviews (JAR) will be carried out to look at how children's services as a whole operate across each local authority area.
- The voluntary and community sector (VCS) has a crucial role to play in improving outcomes for children and young people.
- The VCS are not only major providers of services to children, young people and families; they have significant expertise to offer in developing strategy and planning.
- A children's trust way of working will mean that children and families experience more integrated and responsive services where specialist support is embedded in and accessed through universal services.
- A lead-professional model and a Common Assessment Framework will be developed.

### **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

- This act extends the anti-discrimination principle to people with disabilities and seeks to ensure that they have equal access to services as people who do not have disabilities.

### **The Police Act 1997 Part V**

This set up the Criminal Records Bureau to improve access to criminal record checks for employment-related purposes. It is aimed at providing protection for children and vulnerable adults against those who might wish to harm them.

### **The Protection of Children Act 1999**

This includes a framework for identifying those people considered to be unsuitable to work with children.

- Voluntary organisations and community groups are recommended to check those working with children through the Criminal Records Bureau.

### **Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000**

This links with the two previous acts to build a system aims to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people.

- It defines jobs and positions which are 'regulated'. These include categories where 'normal duties include caring for, training, supervising and/or being in sole charge of children'. It also includes those who supervise or manage people who are in a 'regulated' position.
- It is a criminal offence if an employer does not take sufficient steps to check an employee working with children and/or knowingly gives someone a job that is inappropriate or disqualified from working with children.

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

This act protects the privacy of individuals and counteracts prejudice against people with convictions by allowing them not to declare convictions to employers. But, those who are involved in situations where they have prolonged or sustained access to children or young people are exempt from this legislation. They must declare all criminal convictions and these will be taken into account when deciding a person's suitability for working with children or young people.

### **Sexual Offences Act 2003**

This is designed to protect everyone from sexual crimes especially those particularly vulnerable to abuse such as children and young people.

- It extends laws relating to abuse to include those who hold positions of trust or authority in the lives of children or young people. It applies to those who have regular unsupervised contact with children in the community.

### **The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

- People permitted to engage in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults are subject to monitoring. (This includes a lot of activities undertaken within the voluntary and community sector.)
- Employers will be committing an offence if they employ people to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults if they know they are barred. This includes voluntary work.
- A new, proactive, comprehensive and continuously updated Vetting and Barring Scheme to help to eliminate any existing gaps which could be exploited by unsuitable people seeking access to children and vulnerable adults through their work. 'Real-time' instant checks will be possible to check on a prospective employee. Barring decisions will be updated as soon as information becomes available.

## **The Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998**

These acts regulate what information about people may be kept by an organisation and with whom it can be shared. In relation to child protection issues:

- All records must be kept securely.
- Only certain people should be able to access the information.
- If the information relates to a child protection concern it cannot be withheld since this would not be acting in the best interests of the child.
- Families, children and young people can see the information concerning them and have an opportunity to respond.

## **Guidance**

In addition to legislation the Government has produced a number of guidance documents on how the provisions or principles of the acts are to be put in place. They include:

### **Safe from Harm 1993**

This is a code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children that is aimed at voluntary organisations. It sets out procedures which could be adopted to safeguard children.

Available from: Home Office Publications, 50 Queen Anne's Gate London SW1H 9AT, or [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/harm.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/acu/harm.htm).

### **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010**

This is a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This document replaces the 2006 version of the guidance and is part of the Every Child Matters guidance issued following the Children Act 2004. It includes recommendations made in the report from Lord Laming. This version also reflects developments in legislation, policy and practice in relation to safeguarding children and young people. The document can be seen at [www.ecm.gov.uk/workingtogether](http://www.ecm.gov.uk/workingtogether).

### **Information Sharing: Practitioner's Guide 2006**

This guidance recognises that most decisions to share information require professional judgment. It aims to improve practice by giving practitioners across children's services, including the voluntary and community sector, clearer direction on when and how they can share information legally and professionally about a child or young person with whom they are in contact. It seeks to provide clarity on the legal framework for practitioners sharing information about children, young people and families, and give workers confidence in making decisions.

The guidance comprises three main parts:

- Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide - giving practitioners clear practical guidance, drawing on experience and the public consultation

- Information Sharing: Case Examples - a set of case examples which illustrate information sharing situations
- Information Sharing: Further guidance on legal issues - a summary of the laws affecting information sharing in respect of children and young people

More details can be found at: [www.ecm.gov.uk/resources-and-practice](http://www.ecm.gov.uk/resources-and-practice).

### **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2006**

This document provides best practice guidance for those who work with children in order to safeguard their welfare. It also contains an appendix to help workers with the legal issues affecting the sharing of information.

The guidance also provides general information for anyone whose work brings them into contact with children and families, focusing particularly on those who work in social care, health, education and criminal justice services.

Addressing issues affecting each of these target audiences, the document outlines the following:

- What you should do if you have concerns about a child's welfare.
- What will happen once you have informed someone about those concerns.
- What further contribution you may be asked or expected to make to the processes of assessment, planning, working with children, and reviewing that work.

The guidance is accompanied with flowcharts following the procedure from referral, initial assessment, emergency action that might need to be taken, through to what happens after a strategy discussion and child protection review conference.

More details can be found at: [www.ecm.gov.uk/files](http://www.ecm.gov.uk/files).

### **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People 2009**

This guidance has been written so that all adults working with children and young people understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it place them in a positions of trust. This practice guidance provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts.

More details at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice).

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**SAMPLE LETTER FOR ALL NEW WORKERS, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND HELPERS**

Dear .....

**Working with Children and Young People at .....  
(name of organisation/group)**

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining us in our work. We are always pleased to welcome new recruits but, as you may be aware, we need to check into the suitability of all workers.

Many of our members are under the age of 18 so it is essential that we take every possible step to protect the welfare of the children and young people within our care and the good name of our organisation/group.

The law requires that all adults placed in positions of responsibility with children and young people act in the best interests of these children and young people. We ask that you support us in this endeavour by reading carefully the information sheet/application form, completing it and signing it. The information you give us will be treated in confidence.

We will also assist you to acquire an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. For this you will need to provide the following personal information:

- details of your full name
- evidence of your current address
- length of time spent at your current address
- details of your previous address(es) if less than 5 years at your current address
- your date of birth

We require this of any adult who:

- has regular contact with children or young people
- may occasionally accompany them on specific activities, in particular on residential activities
- is a trustee

We thank you for your assistance in this matter and your support to (name of organisation/group) ..... in safeguarding the children and young people with whom we work.

Yours sincerely

**SAMPLE CLUB / GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND CONSENT FORM**

This form should be completed by a parent/carer if you are under 18, before you are able to participate in any activities with the group.

If you are 18 or over you should complete the form yourself and sign at the end of the second page.

Name of the organisation/group .....

Name of the group leader .....

Contact number .....

Venue .....

**Child/Young Person Information  
(to be completed by parent/carer if under 18)**

Name of child/young person:.....

Home address: .....

Telephone Number: Home: .....

Mobile Phone Number.....

Date of Birth:..... Age: .....

**Parent/Carer Information**

Parent/Carer Name.....

Parent(s)/Carer Tel No. Day:..... Evening:.....

Mobile number:.....

Does your son/daughter have any special cultural requirements or lifestyle preferences? If yes, please give details below:

.....

Has your son/daughter received a tetanus injection in the last ten years? Please give date if possible.

.....

**Emergency Contact Details**

We would appreciate an alternative contact name and details (in case of emergency)

Contact name: .....

Relationship to child: ..... (eg neighbour, aunt etc)

Address:.....

Telephone no:..... Mobile: .....

**Any other comments or information you feel may be useful:**

.....  
.....

**Declaration**

- I understand that this consent form covers my child to take part in all activities. I acknowledge that I will receive a letter to confirm events as they are planned. I agree to the staff members of the youth group/club to give permission for my child to receive any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, which is considered necessary by a medical authority. I will inform members of the youth group/club staff to changes in any of the information requested on this form.
- I ensure that my son/daughter understands as far as reasonably possible that it is important for his/her safety and the safety of the group as a whole that any and instructions given by staff in charge are obeyed.
- I understand that while the youth group/club staff are in charge they will take all reasonable care of the young people, and unless they are negligent, cannot be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by any child/young person arising during organised events.
- I give permission for leaders/youth workers to seek professional medical help for my child in case of an emergency.
- I do/do not give my permission for any photographs taken of my son/daughter, whilst involved in group activities to be used for display or publicity purposes. (Please delete as appropriate.)

Signed:.....Date:.....

Relationship to young person.....

**SAMPLE RECORDING FORM IF THERE IS A DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE**

**Child/Young Person Information**

Name of child/young person: .....  
Home address:.....

Telephone  
Home:..... Mobile:.....

Date of Birth:..... Age: .....

**Details of Disclosure or Suspicion**

Date:..... Time:.....

Place:.....

Occasion:.....

Nature of Concern:.....  
.....  
.....

**Actions Already Taken**

Child/Young Person spoken to? Yes/No Date:.....

Outcome:.....  
.....  
.....

Parent(s)/ Carer spoken to? Yes/No

Date:.....

Outcome:.....  
.....

Designated Person for Child Protection contacted? Yes/No

Outcome:.....  
.....  
.....

Signature:.....Date:.....

**Referral to Children’s Services/Police**

Name of Contact:.....

Position:.....

Date:.....

Feedback:.....  
.....  
.....

**Worker(s) Details**

1.

Name:.....

Role:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....

2.

Name:.....

Role:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....

When completed this form should be stored in a confidential file.

**SAMPLE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE AGAINST A WORKER, A VOLUNTEER OR A MEMBER OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

.....(name of organisation/group) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people.

- If an allegation is made to you (no matter how insignificant it may seem or when or where it occurred) you must treat the matter seriously. Do not investigate. (If a child or young person is at risk then Child Protection Procedures should be followed.)
- Do not immediately discuss the allegation with the individual concerned
- Do not investigate. (If a child or young person is at risk then Child Protection Procedures should be followed.)
- Write down dates, times, facts (use actual words used if possible) and sign and date it.
- Contact, if possible, the Designated Person for Child Protection who is responsible for dealing with allegations.
- Contact the appropriate LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) as soon as possible.
- We will cooperate with the LADO with regard to any strategy meeting.
- The Line Manager will liaise with the Management Committee about whether a suspension is needed. (Suspension should be seen as a neutral act without prejudice.)
- The Line Manager or member of the Management Committee will inform the named individual as soon as possible and support him/her or advise him/her on how to access support.
- Following discussion with the LADO, the parents or carers should be informed and support offered.
- Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality.
- The nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence will determine the outcome, with the advice of the LADO.
- Even if the individual resigns the allegation must still be followed up.
- A record must be kept of any allegations made and how it was followed up and resolved. This must be kept for 10 years. A copy will be given to the individual.
- If a reference is provided for an individual against whom an allegation has been made, then it must clearly state this even if it was found to be false or unproven.
- Following an allegation process, we will review our policies and procedures to help prevent similar events in the future.

**CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING AND RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR COMPLAINTS MADE AGAINST A WORKER/VOLUNTEER**

**Please read guidance notes attached before using this form.**

- 1. Name and position of worker/volunteer who is subject of allegation/complaint:  
.....
- 2. Is the complaint written or verbal? (Delete as necessary).....
- 3. Complaint made by: ..... Relationship to child: .....
- 4. Name of child: ..... Age and date of birth: .....
- 5. Parent's/Carer's name(s) and address:  
.....  
.....  
.....
- 6. Date of alleged incident/s: .....
- 7. Did the child attend on this/these date/s: .....
- 8. Nature of complaint: (attach if received in writing)  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
- 9. Other relevant information (continue on separate sheet if necessary)  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
- 10. Children's Services contacted: ..... Date: .....  
(refer to guidance notes for details)
- 11. Further Actions advised by Children's Services Department:  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
- 12. Your name and position: .....
- 13. Signature: .....
- 14. Today's date: .....

**Guidance for completing the checklist**

1. Record the name and position of member of worker/volunteer against whom the allegation or complaint has been made.
2. Verbal complaints should be backed up in writing by the complainant if appropriate; some may require immediate action that does not allow time for this to happen.
3. It is important to identify who made the complaint and whether it was received first hand or is a concern that is being passed on from somebody else. If this is the case it is better that you receive the information first hand.  
If a parent, carer or a member of staff in your setting makes a complaint against you or your organisation, it will probably be made directly to Children's Services or the Police, in which case the agency concerned will contact you directly.  
Record the full name, age and date of birth of the child/young person.
4. The address recorded should be the address at which the child/young person lives with the main carer.
5. If there are one or more alleged incidents, be as specific as possible about the dates that they are alleged to have occurred.
6. Check your daily sheet/register to see if the child/young person and the worker/volunteer were present that day. This will help to confirm the likelihood of the incident having taken place.
7. Summarise the complaint on the form.
8. Any other relevant information should be factual. It will be useful if you can confirm things such as the level of contact that the worker/volunteer has with the child and any other minor concerns that have been raised previously. Do not attempt to investigate the complaint yourself.
9. If an allegation of abuse is made in your group you should discuss this with Children's Social Care.

**SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR YOUTH WORKER (PAID)**

Job Title: Youth Worker  
Accountable to: Chair of ..... Youth Club  
Accountable for: The management and delivery of youth work within ..... Youth Club  
Salary: £? per hour for ? hours per week  
Location: ..... Youth Centre

Job Summary:

- Work with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and to support young people, aged 13 – 19, during their period of transition from dependence to independence by enabling them to gain a voice and influence their local community and wider society.

Specific Duties:

- To lead a team of workers to develop a young - people led programme of activities
- To establish contact with young people and support them as appropriate
- To ensure the involvement of young people in decision making within the centre
- To motivate and support staff and volunteers
- To build positive relations with the local community
- To assist with service development by contributing to planning, delivery and monitoring of local provisions
- To undertake day to day administration to ensure smooth running of the club including budget control, record keeping and Health and Safety
- To promote training and development for adults and young people
- To maintain the high quality of provision
- To undertake ongoing continuing professional development
- To ensure compliance with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures
- To ensure implementation of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policies

The youth worker will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.

**SAMPLE ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR YOUTH WORKER (VOLUNTARY)**

Role Title: Youth Worker  
Where: ..... Village Hall  
When: Thursday evenings: 6.30pm - 9.30pm: term time only  
Commitment: ..... hours per week  
Duration: September - July  
Accountable to: Chair of ..... Youth Club Committee  
Accountable for: Youth work with young people within ..... Youth Club

This is a Voluntary Position; expenses will be paid.

What we want:

- The Youth Worker will be responsible for working with the young people to plan and manage a range of activities for young people aged 12 -17 at ..... Village Hall.
- S/he will also be responsible for coordinating the team of voluntary workers.

What you will do:

- Work with the Management Committee to provide a safe environment for young people in the village
- Lead a team of voluntary workers to develop a young - people led programme of activities
- Support young people
- Involve of young people in decision making within the club
- Undertake day to day administration to ensure smooth running of the club including petty cash control, record keeping and Health and Safety
- Ensure compliance with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures
- Ensure that Health and Safety requirements, including risk assessments, are undertaken
- Ensure implementation of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policies

What's in it for you?

- The challenge and fun of working with young people
- Opportunities for training and development

You will need to:

- Apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.

**SAMPLE PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR YOUTH WORKER**

**Youth Worker at .....**(name of organisation/group)

Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolio of appropriate qualifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth work qualification</li> </ul>
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with and involving young people aged 13 – 19.</li> <li>Managing or working with volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running a youth club</li> <li>Managing a team</li> </ul>
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent communication skills.</li> <li>Ability to communicate effectively with young people and adults</li> <li>Programme planning and management</li> <li>Administration</li> <li>IT competent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group work skills</li> <li>First Aid Qualification</li> <li>Able to drive a minibus</li> </ul>
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An understanding and commitment to youth participation in decision making</li> <li>The issues facing young people and their families</li> <li>Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and child protection issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An understanding of Health and Safety issues.</li> </ul>
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-starter with ability to work independently</li> <li>Outgoing and enthusiastic approach.</li> <li>Able to work on evenings and at weekends.</li> </ul>	

**Safeguarding**

.....(name of organisation/group) is committed to ensuring the welfare of all children, young people and adults involved in the organisation.

**Equal Opportunities**

.....(name of organisation/group) has an Equal Opportunities Policy and is working towards becoming an Equal Opportunities Employer.

**SAMPLE REFERENCE LETTER – VOLUNTEER**

Dear

Re: ..... (name of volunteer) (address of volunteer)

.....(name) has shown an interest in becoming a volunteer with .....(name of organisation/group). This will involve working with children and young people aged .....(insert) to .....(insert).

.....(name) has given your name as a referee. I enclose a copy of the role description and person specification. Please complete the attached sheet and return in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope as soon as possible.

Please contact me by phone on .....(insert phone number) if there is anything you would like to discuss about this request.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

**SAMPLE REFERENCE FORM – VOLUNTEER**

Name of volunteer:

Capacity in which volunteer is/was known to you:

Length of time you have known the volunteer:

Do you consider the volunteer to be: <i>(please tick)</i>	Very	Generally	Not at all
Reliable			
Punctual/good timekeeper			
Trustworthy			
Self-motivated/shows initiative			
Able to communicate well with young people			
Able to work well with parents/carers			
Able to relate well with other team members			

Comments regarding the above assessment, if applicable:

Your views on volunteer's attitude towards: <i>(please tick)</i>	Good	Satisfactory	Room for improvement
Children, young people, parents, carers			
Colleagues			
Managers/supervisors			

Do you know of any reason why the volunteer should not work with children and young people in this role, and, if so, what are the reason(s)?

Eg. Criminal convictions or disciplinary concerns.

(please continue on additional sheet(s) if necessary)

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Please return reference to:

.....(insert your name and address)

**SAMPLE REFERENCE LETTER – PAID WORKER**

Dear

Re: .....(Name of Applicant) (Address of Applicant)

.....(name) has applied for the post of .....(insert) with .....(name of your group). This is a (full time / part-time) post and I include the Job Description and Person Specification for your information.

.....(name) has given your name as a referee. Please complete the attached sheet and return in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope as soon as possible. The interviews are taking place on .....(insert date).

Please contact me by phone on ..... (insert phone number) if there is anything you would like to discuss about this request.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

SAMPLE REFERENCE FORM – PAID WORKER			
<p>Name of Applicant:</p> <p>Capacity in which applicant is/was known to you:</p> <p>Length of time you have known the applicant:</p>			
Do you consider the applicant to be: (please tick)	Very	Generally	Not at all
Reliable			
Punctual/Good timekeeper			
Trustworthy			
Self-motivated/shows initiative			
Able to communicate well with others			
<p>Comments regarding the above assessment, if applicable:</p>			
Your views on applicant's attitude towards: <i>(please tick)</i>	Good	Satisfactory	Room for improvement
Children, Young People, Parents, Carers			
Colleagues			
Managers/Supervisors			

Do you know of any reason why the applicant should not work with children and young people in this role, and, if so, what are the reason(s)? eg. Any disciplinary sanctions

(Please continue on additional sheet(s) if necessary)

This role is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Are you aware of any criminal convictions that the applicant has, including those which would ordinarily be spent?

Name:	
Job title:	
Organisation:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Please return reference to:  
 .....(insert your name and address)

**SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

..... Organisation/group

Date: ..... Time: ..... Location: .....

HAZARD IDENTIFIED	PEOPLE AT RISK	PRECAUTIONS/CONTROLS TAKEN	FURTHER ACTION TO CONTROL RISK

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