

## Safeguarding Policy

This policy details our policies and procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, as well as our anti-bullying and image policies.

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## Purpose and scope

Inn Churches works with children, families and vulnerable adults as part of its activities, including:

- delivering cooking classes / workshops in schools, churches, our premises and other locations
- hosting vulnerable adults overnight in churches
- providing welfare support to vulnerable adults.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Inn Churches' services, as well as the children of adults who use our services
- prevent bullying from happening in our organisation, make sure that it is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount in our approach to creating, using and sharing images (still and moving) of them
- provide staff, volunteers and parents/carers with the principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and the information needed to operate in line with our values and within the law.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Inn Churches, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

## Contact details

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<u>NSPCC Helpline</u> 0808 800 5000		

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

## Safeguarding Children

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary is available from [nspcc.org.uk/childprotection](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/childprotection).

### **We believe that:**

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

### **We recognise that:**

- the welfare of children and young people is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- bullying causes real distress, it can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm, and everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to it.
- children and their parents / carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, that there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online, and that consent to take images of children is only meaningful when they and their parents / carers understand the risks
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection / safeguarding lead, a deputy child protection / safeguarding lead and a lead trustee for safeguarding
- developing child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures reflecting best practice
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, involving children, young people, parents / carers and families appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- sharing information about child protection and safeguarding best practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- implementing a code of conduct for staff and volunteers

- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in line with law and regulatory guidance
- recording and storing information professionally and securely.

### Radicalisation

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Challenging and tackling extremism is a shared effort. Adults who work or volunteer in faith organisations have a responsibility to protect children from becoming radicalised and/or being exposed to extreme views.

If you think a child or the people around them are involved in radicalisation, you should follow the procedures for recording and reporting in the same way as for any other concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing, including contacting the police if urgent.

More detailed guidance on recognising radicalisation is given in appendix 2.

### Concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing

It can be very hard for children and young people to speak out about abuse. Often they fear there may be negative consequences if they tell anyone what's happening to them. Some may delay telling someone about abuse for a long time, while others never tell anyone, even if they want to.

It's vital that children and young people are able to speak out and that whoever they tell takes them seriously and acts on what they've been told.

Even if a child doesn't tell someone verbally about what's happened to them, there may be other indicators that something is wrong. People who work with children need to be able to recognise the signs and know how to respond appropriately. These guidelines outline best practice for recognising and responding to abuse and some of the issues which may arise when working with children who have been abused.

#### Procedure: responding to concerns

If a child makes a disclosure to you, you should ensure they feel listened to and taken seriously:

- **show you care** (full attention, compassion, reassurance, open and encouraging)
- **take your time** (child's pace, body language)
- **show you understand** (reflect back, child's language)

Reassure them that they've done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure.

Never promise a child that you will keep the things they're telling you a secret. Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help. If a child or young person needs confidential help and advice direct them to Childline on 0800 1111 (free) or online.

More detailed guidance about how to recognise abuse and helping children make disclosures is given in appendix 1.

## Allegations of abuse against a child or young person

There are many ways that a child may be abusive towards others. A child who is displaying abusive behaviour may not realise they are doing so.

Allegations may involve bullying or cyberbullying, emotional abuse, online abuse, physical abuse, sexting, harmful sexual behaviour or sexual abuse.

Concerns might be raised by:

- a child or adult making a direct allegation of abuse by a child or young person
- a child or adult telling you they're uncomfortable with a child or young person's behaviour. They may not realise the behaviour is abusive
- a member of staff or volunteer observing behaviour that gives cause for concern
- you being informed that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation
- a child or young person telling you they have harmed someone else or are at risk of doing so.

Inn Churches is committed to:

- ensuring that children who may have been abused by another child or young person are protected and supported
- providing the child or young person who may have carried out the abuse with appropriate help
- responding to allegations fairly and consistently and managing any risks posed appropriately.

### Procedure: responding to concerns

When responding to an allegation of abuse made against a child, it's important to consider the needs of everyone involved.

#### **If a child tells you directly that they have behaved abusively towards someone else:**

- reassure the child that they've done the right thing by telling you about it
- listen carefully and let them tell their whole story. Don't investigate or quiz the child, but make sure you understand what they're saying
- use non-judgmental language
- remember that a child who is telling you they've abused someone is a child in need of support
- tell them that you now have to do what you can to keep them and other children involved safe
- explain what you will do next and that you will need to speak to other people who can help
- reassure them that they can get help to change their behaviour and move forward with their life
- you may want to suggest the child contacts Childline for support.

Never promise to keep what a child tells you a secret. Explain that you need to talk to other people who can help keep them and the other children involved safe.

#### **If an allegation is made against a child:**

Speak to the Child Protection Lead, who can advise you on the best way to proceed. If you confront the child about the allegations before taking advice, it may make the situation worse.

Sometimes you may have noticed a child behaving inappropriately and you may need to talk to them about this immediately, in order to manage the behaviour. Remember that they may not

realise their behaviour is unacceptable. Talk to them calmly and explain why their behaviour is unsuitable and what they can do to improve it.

Be aware that a child who displays challenging behaviour may be doing so because they have experienced abuse or neglect. If you think this may be the case, follow your organisation's child protection procedures.

### **Procedure: deciding if a concern is a child protection issue**

When a child or young person behaves inappropriately towards another child, a decision needs to be made about whether there is a child protection concern.

Your organisation's nominated child protection lead should make this decision in consultation with:

- the volunteer or staff member responsible for the supervision/pastoral care of those involved
- the senior manager or trustee responsible for safeguarding
- any other agencies you know are working with the child
- the local child protection services if necessary.

### **When an allegation is a child protection concern**

An allegation becomes a child protection concern when there's a significant difference of power between the child who is displaying abusive behaviour and the person being abused, for example:

- there's an age difference of more than two years
- there's a significant difference in terms of size or level of ability
- the child displaying abusive behaviour holds a position of power (eg. a helper / informal leader)
- the child being abused is significantly more vulnerable than the other child or young person.

It is also a child protection concern when:

- the behaviour involves sexual assault or physical assault
- the child who has experienced the abusive behaviour has suffered significant harm
- the behaviour forms part of a pattern of concerning behaviour
- the child carrying out the abuse is displaying harmful sexual behaviour
- you are concerned that the child carrying out the abuse may be doing so because they have experienced abuse themselves.

### **Procedure: telling parents that their child has abused someone else**

The child's parents or carers should be informed, if it doesn't increase the risk to the child. Ask the child how they would like their parents/carers to be told. You could suggest talking to parents first without the child there, then summarising with the child present, or helping the child tell their parents in their own words, with you present for support.

It's important for parents and children to talk and begin to come to terms with it as a family.

When talking to parents or carers, remember that the news their child has behaved abusively may be a shock. Reassure them that support is available to help their child change their behaviour and move forward. Examples include Family Lives (support with a range of parenting challenges), and The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour).

## Allegations of abuse against a volunteer or staff member

Any allegation that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

Depending on the situation, managing an allegation of abuse may involve:

- the police investigating a possible criminal offence
- local child protection services assessing whether a child is in need of support
- Inn Churches considering whether to take disciplinary action against the individual.

The child's views, needs and wishes will be considered carefully and they will be given appropriate support.

If an allegation is made that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children

then it will be recorded and reported as detailed below.

### Procedure: conducting an investigation

Inn Churches will investigate any concerns raised against staff or volunteers, regardless of who the person is or how long they've been involved with the organisation.

If someone resigns from their post or refuses to cooperate with an investigation, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up. "Compromise agreements" (where a person agrees to resign to avoid disciplinary action) will not be used in cases of alleged abuse.

Inn Churches will liaise with local child protection services and the police to ensure that the investigation is conducted in the right way.

Inn Churches will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties while an allegation is being investigated, considering how best to support the children involved, their parents or carers, and individuals who have had an allegation made against them. This may include:

- telling parents / carers and the employee or volunteer about the allegation as soon as possible
- telling them how we will manage the allegation
- keeping everyone informed about the progress and outcomes of the case.

### Learning lessons

If an allegation is substantiated, Inn Churches will think about lessons that can be learnt, by:

- considering any factors that may have contributed to or failed to prevent abuse occurring
- reviewing safeguarding and child protection measures to ensure ongoing vigilance
- making changes to organisational policies and procedures as necessary.

## Under-18 Winter Shelter referrals

Details are included in the Winter Shelter Referrals and Admissions policy.

## Recording and reporting

According to Data Protection principles, records containing personal information should be

- adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held
- accurate and up to date
- only kept for as long as is necessary.

To keep personal information secure, Inn Churches will:

- compile and label files carefully
- keep files containing sensitive or confidential data secure, accessed on a 'need to know' basis
- keep a log of who has accessed the confidential files, when, and the title of the files used.

### Procedure: making notes

It is important to keep a clear, comprehensive, detailed and accurate record of any concern about a child or young person's welfare, or allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children, whether the concerns are shared with the police or children's social care. You will need to share these with the Child Protection Lead. You should record:

- the date and time of the incident/disclosure
- the date and time of the report
- the name, role and contact details of the person to whom the concern was originally reported
- the name, role and contact details of the person making the report (if different)
- the names and addresses (and ages of children) of all parties involved in the incident, including the details of any other child involved or impacted, and any witnesses to an event
- what was said or done and by whom (record exact words of a verbal disclosure)
- for disclosures of abuse, any information the child has given you about the alleged abuser
- any action taken to look into the matter or follow up the allegation
- for allegations, how things were resolved, and decisions reached about the person's suitability to work with children
- any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
- reasons why the organisation decided not to refer concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

Always be as factual as possible. If you need to give your own or somebody else's opinion clearly differentiate it. You should identify whose opinion is being given and record their exact words.

The record should always be signed by the person making the report.

### Procedure: sharing information

Timely information sharing is key to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This may include referrals for additional support, statutory duties or court orders, concerns about a risk of significant harm or serious crimes which have been committed or are about to be committed.

You must always have a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing a child's personal information. Keep a record of the reasons why you are sharing or requesting information about a child or their family. You should also make sure you are not putting a child's safety and wellbeing at risk by sharing information about them.

### What information to share

- Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child and anyone else who may be affected.
- Share information quickly and securely whilst it is fresh in your mind and action can be taken.
- Identify how much information should be shared. This will depend on the reasons for sharing it.
- Use language that is clear and precise.
- Make sure the information you are sharing is accurate.

### Consent

Always seek consent to share information about a child and their family.

Children should be given the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their personal information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions, ask their parent or carer (unless doing so would put the child at risk of harm).

You should always seek consent to share information about an adult.

If consent isn't given, you can still share information with relevant professionals under certain circumstances, for example if you are preventing a child from significant harm.

When deciding whether to share information without consent, consider each case individually. Decide if the need to share information is in the public interest and whether it outweighs the need to maintain confidentiality, and consider all the implications of sharing the information.

If you're sharing information without consent keep (and share with the relevant professionals) a written record explaining what steps you took to get consent, the person's reasons for not giving consent (if known) and why you felt it was necessary to share information without consent.

### Procedure: reporting concerns

If a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, you can share information with appropriate agencies or professionals without the child's or their parent's consent

**If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.**

**If a child is not in immediate danger:**

- In the first instance, report your concerns to the Child Protection Lead, or in their absence (or involvement) the Deputy Child Protection Lead or Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding. They will work with you to decide upon and carry out further action.
- Contact local child protection services via the local authority website.
- Contact the police. They will assess the situation and take appropriate action.
- Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). They will give you expert advice and take action as appropriate.
- In the case of suspected radicalisation, call the police anti-terrorism hotline on 0800 789 321 or the NSPCC radicalisation helpline.

If you have made a verbal referral to local children's services you should follow this up with a written referral as soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours.

If your organisation removes a member of staff or volunteer from working with children because they pose a risk of harm (or if you would have but the person has resigned or left), you have a legal duty to inform the DBS. Failure to do this is a criminal offence.



### Procedure: storage of records

Information about child protection concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child, rather than in one 'concern log'. The child protection file will be started as soon as you become aware of any concerns.

Child protection files will be kept separate from a child's general records. The general record will be marked to indicate that there is a separate child protection file.

Records relating to concerns about an adult's behaviour will be kept in their confidential personnel file, not a central 'concern log', and a copy will be given to the individual.

Copies of DBS certificates will not be stored, but a confidential record will be kept of:

- the date of the check
- the level and type of check
- the certificate number
- the decision made about whether the person was employed, with reasons

### Procedure: retention periods

Child protection files will be kept for seven years after the child last accesses our services.

Files regarding concerns about an adult's behaviour (even if unfounded) will be kept for ten years, or until they reach the age of 65 whichever is longer. However, if allegations are found to be malicious then the file will be destroyed immediately.

Records related to ongoing legal action may be kept for longer.

After these periods, records will be incinerated or shredded in the presence of a member of the organisation or entrusted to a firm specialising in the destruction of confidential material. At the same time, any electronic records will be purged.

If the organisation closes, appropriate arrangements will be made for the ongoing management of records in line with this policy.

## Adult to child supervision ratios

Inn Churches will always strive to have at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people, even with smaller groups.

We follow the NSPCC guidelines on minimum adult to child ratios to help keep children safe:

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

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

## Under-18 volunteers

Details are included in the Volunteering policy.

## Safeguarding vulnerable adults

We are committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our services are not abused and that the way in which we work with vulnerable adults minimises the risk of such abuse.

### Philosophy

The Inn Churches Winter Shelter takes seriously its responsibility to nurture, protect and safeguard the welfare of the vulnerable people entrusted to its care. All staff will be aware of opportunities to ensure the protection of the vulnerable people we work with and of the current procedures to follow.

The aim of this policy is to protect vulnerable people from abuse and to ensure that people who have been abused receive support and protection from further abuse.

These procedures have been produced to meet the requirements of 'No Secrets – Guidance on Developing and Implementing Multi-agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse' (Department of Health 2000).

A vulnerable adult is defined in 'No Secrets' as:

“...a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

### Intentions

- To actively promote the empowerment and well-being of vulnerable adults through the services we provide.
- To act in a way that supports the rights of the individual to lead an individual life based on self-determination and personal choice.
- To recognise people who are unable to take their own decisions and/or to protect themselves, their assets and bodily integrity.
- To recognise that the right of self-determination can involve risk, and ensure that such risk is recognised and understood by all concerned, and minimised whenever possible.
- To ensure that when the right to an independent lifestyle and choice is at risk, the individual concerned receives appropriate help, including advice, protection and support from relevant agencies.
- To ensure that the law and statutory requirements are known and used appropriately so that vulnerable adults receive the protection of the law and access to the judicial process.

### Respect for the individual

When abuse has been disclosed, reported or observed, it is important that the alleged victim be treated with dignity, is involved as an equal in the investigation, and kept fully informed on a regular basis. They have the right:

- To be believed when they report abuse of themselves and/or others, unless there is direct and unequivocal evidence to the contrary.
- To appropriate education/information in order to identify behaviour which constitutes abuse.

## What is a vulnerable adult?

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are receiving, or may need, services or support to live in the community. Some of the support they may need may be for a physical or learning disability, a physical or mental illness or a drugs or alcohol dependency. The majority of the Inn Churches guests come to us because of their chaotic lifestyles and are vulnerable and open to abuse. They may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

Abuse can include:

- financial: the illegal or improper use of a person's money including cash cards and bank books.
- physical: hitting, punching, pushing or forced medicating.
- sexual: unwanted physical touching, kissing or sexual activity where the adult at risk does not, or cannot give consent.
- psychological and emotional abuse: humiliation, bullying, verbal or threatening behaviours.
- discriminatory: abuse based on disability or gender racist or sexist comments. This is also known as hate crime.
- neglect: depriving the individual of the care they need or causing them to suffer.

Volunteers at Inn Churches have a duty of care to report to their **team leader** or the **project coordinator** any suspected abuse. If you, or an adult at risk, is being harmed in any way by another person, please do not ignore it.

Guidance on recognising abuse in vulnerable adults is given in Appendix 3.

## What should you do?

- contact the police or call an ambulance (999) if the person is in immediate danger or needs medical treatment. For less urgent matters, you can contact the local police on 0845 6060606.
- contact the **project coordinator** on 07833 450482, or the management team.
- during the Winter Shelter, report suspected abuse to your **team leader** or **host church coordinator**.

## What should you not do?

- do not confront the person you think is responsible for the abuse.
- do not destroy any evidence.
- do not begin investigating the situation.

## What will happen next?

This will depend on the wishes of the person and the seriousness of the situation. If there is a physical danger, ensuring their safety is most important. We will carry out a sensitive enquiry, and information will be offered so that the person can make an informed choice as to how they want things to proceed. This may involve outside agencies responsible for their care.

## Image policy and procedures

Throughout this policy, images are deemed to include both still (photography) and moving (video).

### Children and young people

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

- getting written consent from children, parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- never publishing personal information about individual children, only using first names, and changing names of children whose images are being used in our published material
- reducing the risk of inappropriate use by only using images in appropriate clothing
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

If we hire or use a photographer to collect images for our own use, we will:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour
- ensuring the photographer wears identification and not allowing them unsupervised access
- informing children and parents/carers that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate photography following our child protection policy.

### Images at public activities for personal use

There is no law against taking photos at public events, including of children, but when people are taking images at our activities, we will announce/publish guidance about image sharing, including:

- reminding parents/carers and children that they need to give consent for Inn Churches to take and use images of children
- asking for images where children can be identified not to be shared on social media
- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

### Requests for images for wider use

Local journalists, professional photographers or students wishing to record our activities and share the images professionally or in the wider world should seek permission in advance, giving:

- the name and address of the person using the camera
- the names of children they wish to take images of (if possible)
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for
- a signed declaration that the information is valid, and the images will only be used as detailed.

Inn Churches will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for images to be taken and, if granted, follow the procedures for using a photographer above.

If Inn Churches is concerned that someone unknown to us is taking images, we will ask them to leave and (depending on the nature of the concerns) follow our child protection procedures.

### Vulnerable adults

To preserve the dignity and safety of our guests, we will not take, or allow to be taken, images in which they are identifiable.

## Storing images

We will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with our safeguarding policy and data protection law.

We will keep hard copies of images of children in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access. Images will be stored for a period of up to 6 years.

Inn Churches does not permit staff and volunteers to using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children. Only cameras or devices belonging to Inn Churches should be used.

## Anti-bullying policy and procedures

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is repeated and intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.

### **We will seek to prevent bullying by:**

- having a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, both in face-to-face contact and online
- holding regular discussions with staff and volunteers about bullying and how to prevent it
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
  - the needs of the person being bullied
  - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
  - the needs of any bystanders
  - our organisation as a whole.
- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

## Appendix 1: identifying concerns in children

### Disclosure

Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over a long period of time – it is a journey, not one act or action. It takes extraordinary courage. Children may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order.

Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or a case being taken to court, but all disclosures should be taken seriously.

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- directly – making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour (deliberate or otherwise) that signals something is wrong
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures, giving some details but not the whole picture. They may withhold information, or not disclose at all, because of:

- fear that they will get in trouble with or upset their family, or other consequences
- fear that they will not be taken seriously
- worry about causing trouble or making the situation worse
- feeling that they don't have anyone to turn to for support
- wanting to deflect blame in case of family difficulties as a result of the disclosure
- previous negative experiences of seeking help
- feelings of shame, guilt or embarrassment
- lack of trust or fears about confidentiality

When children do speak out it is often many years after the abuse has taken place.

### Spotting the signs of abuse

Children and young people who have been abused may want to tell someone, but not have the exact words to do so. They may attempt to disclose abuse by giving adults clues, through actions and by using indirect words. Adults need to be able to notice the signs that a child or young person might be distressed and ask them appropriate questions about what might have caused this.

Child protection training can help increase adults' confidence in recognising the indicators of abuse and understanding the different ways a child might try to share what they have experienced.

You should never wait until a child or young person tells you directly that they are being abused before acting. Instead, ask the child if everything is OK or discuss concerns with the safeguarding lead or the NSPCC helpline. Waiting for a child to be ready to speak about their experiences could mean that the abuse carries on and they, or another child, are put at further risk of harm.

Not taking appropriate action quickly can also affect the child's mental health. They may feel despairing and hopeless and wonder why no-one is helping them. This may discourage them from seeking help in the future and make them distrust adults.

## Helping children disclose abuse

It's important to create an environment where children and young people are comfortable about speaking out if anything is worrying them. They need to be able to recognise abuse and know it is wrong, and to know who they can talk to about it. The people they choose to disclose to need to listen, understand and respond appropriately so the child gets the support and protection needed.

Many children and young people will seek help because they know where to go and believe that it will make a difference. Others may not have the confidence to seek support or be too scared to ask for help. They may not get the help they need until they reach crisis point (Garvey et al, 2009).

Make it as easy as you can for young people to find and take up the offer of help:

- Reinforce positive messages about those who seek help – seeking help is a sign of strength.
- Encourage parents to support their children in seeking help.
- Be positive about young people, their capacity for change and their resilience.
- Listen to the people you help: improve your services using feedback from service users.
- Shout about your work: lack of awareness is a significant barrier to young people seeking help.
- See the whole person: engage with people in terms of both their strengths and weaknesses.
- Build trust – treat young people with respect.
- Help young people to help each other – equip them with the skills and tools to support their friends/peers and family members.
- Consider the role of new technologies – these should be complementary to other support.

## Responding to disclosures

Three key interpersonal skills can help a child feel they are being listened to and taken seriously:

- **show you care**, help them open up: Give your full attention to the child or young person. Keep body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
- **take your time, slow down**: Respect pauses and don't interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
- **show you understand, reflect back**: Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.

If a child tells you they are experiencing abuse, it's important to reassure them that they've done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure. This could make things a lot worse for the child.

It's vital that any child who is trying to disclose abuse feels that they are being listened to and taken seriously. But there can be a risk that if professionals just believe the child's account without thoroughly investigating the situation, this can lead to unfair bias against the alleged abuser as formal investigations progress. This means it's important to maintain an unbiased approach when responding to disclosures and follow your organisation's procedures to ensure each case is treated in a fair and transparent manner and that the child gets the protection and support that they need.

## Tips for getting consent to share information

- be open and honest
- make sure the person you're asking for consent understands what will be shared and why
- explain who will see the information and what it will be used for
- make sure the consequences of the information not being shared are understood
- get consent in writing. If it's only given verbally, make a written record of this
- make sure the person knows they can withdraw consent at any time.

## Appendix 2: radicalisation

Radicalisation is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism. It is a form of harm. It's a gradual process so young people who are affected may not realise what's happening. The process may involve:

- being groomed online or in person
- exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- psychological manipulation
- risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

### Vulnerability factors

Anyone can be radicalised, but some factors may make a young person more vulnerable:

- being easily influenced or impressionable
- having low self-esteem or being isolated
- feeling that rejection, discrimination or injustice is taking place in society
- experiencing community tension amongst different groups
- being disrespectful or angry towards family and peers
- having a strong need for acceptance or belonging
- experiencing grief such as loss of a loved one.

However, these factors will not always lead to radicalisation.

### Recognising radicalisation

Indicators that a child is being radicalised include:

- becoming disrespectful and intolerant of others
- becoming more angry
- avoiding discussions about their views
- using words / phrases that sound scripted
- becoming isolated and secretive
- not wanting to anyone else to know what they are looking at online.

### Preventing radicalisation

To help stop radicalisation from happening organisations can:

- promote positive messages of tolerance and community cohesion
- include guidance on radicalisation in your safeguarding policies
- make sure everyone knows the signs of radicalisation and when to report a concern
- share any concerns with the NSPCC helpline or local Children's services
- help parents and children get support.



## Appendix 3: recognising abuse in vulnerable adults

### Social and emotional indicators

- The vulnerable adult appears to be withdrawn or agitated and anxious.
- They may be isolated in one room of the house or confined to living in a small space.
- Their mobility is restricted due to absence of suitable mobility aids.
- They may be excluded from outside social contacts.
- They are overly subservient or anxious to please.
- Professional and other visitors may have difficulty gaining access to the vulnerable adult.
- Lack of eye contact: looking at the floor during discussions or looking to others to answer questions even when directed to the individual.
- Dramatic changes in behaviour or personality
- Depression or confusion, for which no medical explanation can be offered.
- Refusal to allow the person into respite/permanent care.
- Poor condition, lack of clothing, lack of access to own money.

### Indicators of physical abuse

- Multiple bruising that is not consistent with the explanation eg. a fall.
- Cowering and flinching.
- Bruised eyes, marks resulting from a slap and/or kick, other unexplained bruises.

### Indicators of sexual abuse

- Changes i.e. the person starts to seek attention where previously they did not, by expressing over-sexualised behaviour, or becoming fixated on sexual matters.
- Complaints of soreness in genital/anal area, no medical cause known.
- Recurring conditions such as thrush or cystitis.
- Diagnosis of sexually transmitted disease when the person is not known to be sexually active.
- Bruising on the inner thighs or shoulders.
- Objects to being washed in genital areas, which is a change in behaviour.

### Indicators of financial or material abuse

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts.
- Contrast between known income or capital and unnecessarily poor living conditions especially where this has developed recently.
- Personal possessions of value go missing from the home without satisfactory explanation.
- Someone has taken responsibility for paying rent, bills, buying food etc; – but is clearly not doing so.
- Unusual interest taken by relative, friend, neighbour or other in financial assets, especially if little real concern is shown in other matters.
- Next of kin refuse to follow advice regarding control of property via Court of Protection or through securing enduring power of attorney, but insist upon informal arrangements.
- Where care services including residential care are refused under clear pressure from family or other potential inheritors.
- Unusual purchases unrelated to the known interests of the vulnerable adult, eg. purchases of fashionable clothes, expensive make-up, food and holidays.

### Indicators of institutional abuse

- There is poor staff morale, high turnover or high sickness rate amongst staff and excessive hours are worked.
- There is a general lack of consideration of privacy eg. staff walk casually into bedrooms; washing and personal care tasks (going to the toilet) lack appropriate privacy; there is no telephone that can be used privately.
- Residents/service users appear unusually subdued, especially when compared to their past behaviour; they retreat into their own room or other areas out of the way of staff.
- Lack of care when dealing with personal clothing, eg. loss of clothes, being dressed in other people's clothes, dirty or unkempt, spectacles not clean, wearing other people's spectacles, hearing aid or teeth.
- Poor hygiene eg. strong smell of urine; dirty clothing or bed linen, only changed when staff consider it necessary.
- Inappropriate use of tip back chairs, excessive use of bed rails, chairs with fixed tables.
- Inappropriate use of medical or nursing procedures eg. enemas, catheterisation, over reliance on medication.
- Lack of communication between staff about service users.
- Lack of communication between relatives and staff.

### Preventing abuse of vulnerable adults

While it is not possible to prevent all abuse, there are a number of steps people can take to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. They should:

- Know what abuse is.
- Understand how it can happen.
- Be alert to indicators of potential abuse situations.
- Know the procedures for reporting concerns and poor practice.
- Provide appropriate support through good assessment and care planning.

Abuse is defined in 'No Secrets' as the 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons'.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. It may also occur through deliberate targeting or grooming of vulnerable people and may be carried out by individuals or groups of individuals.

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

Abuse may occur when a vulnerable adult:

- lives alone, with a relative, or other(s).
- attends nursing, residential or day care.
- is in hospital or custodial situations.
- receives support services in own home.
- is in another place previously assumed safe.
- is in a public place.