



## P-02 Safeguarding Children

Version	Date of change	Changed by	Trustee approval	Notes
1.00	12/04/2018	E Tillotson		Transfer of Dec 2015 policy to new template
1.3	11/09/2019	ASB		Yearly updates
1.4	10/02/2020	ASB		Full update based on new regulations
1.5	01/09/2021	ASB	✓	Yearly updates and branding update
1.6	19/08/2022	ASB		Yearly update
1.7	18/01/2024	AS		Updates after Safeguarding Lead refresh training
1.8	15/08/2024	AS	✓	Updates for Trustee's Approval

Haxby & Wigginton Youth & Community Association is fully committed to safeguarding and the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect young people. HWYCA acknowledges its duty to act appropriately when a safeguarding concern is brought forward. This policy follows the statutory guidance from *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023* and training received from the City of York Safeguarding Children Working Together A and B training courses.

### In implementing this Child Protection Policy HWYCA will:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's Child Protection Procedures and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a young person, or a staff member or volunteer's conduct towards a young person, to the organisation's Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Lead understands their responsibilities to manage and refer any safeguarding concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police, MASH, etc.);
- Support the safety of young people by remaining involved in any support plans from outside agencies which are relevant to the work the Youth Provision undertakes;
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all staff and volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of young people, including mandatory safeguarding training every three years for all Youth Provision Staff and volunteers and supervision support for the Safeguarding Lead;
- Ensure that young people are able to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's *Complaints procedure*;
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

## Guidelines and Procedures

### Section 1 – Outline

These procedures have been designed to ensure the welfare and protection of any young person who uses the services provided by the HWYCA Youth Provision. The procedures recognise that child protection can be a very difficult subject for staff to deal with, to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else's problem to deal with. HWYCA is committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all staff and volunteers to act appropriately to any concerns that arise.

### Section 3- Understanding Safeguarding

HWYCA recognises that not everyone may understand what Safeguarding and Child Protection is, but will ensure that any staff or volunteer working with or making decisions about young people has an appropriate understanding of Safeguarding and Child Protection before they are allowed to work with young people. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023* (p.8) defines Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

"Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online."- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023* (p.8)

HWYCA recognises that a young person's welfare is of utmost importance and that their voice must be heard, requested and responded to as part of their protection. We also endeavour to understand that we must be sensitive to all factors impacting the life of a young person including socio and economic circumstances and ethnicity which may impact safeguarding and child protection.

### Section 4 – A Named Person and Safeguarding Lead for Safeguarding and Child Protection

HWYCA has appointed individuals who are responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns. The Named Person for Safeguarding is **Mairi Taylor-Gibson** and the Safeguarding Lead is **Alysha Smith**.

The role and responsibilities of the Named Person and Safeguarding Lead are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and whom they should go to if there are any safeguarding concerns regarding a young person.
- To ensure that any concerns about a young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred where necessary and followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- To record any reported incidents or breach of this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and/or our procedures.

In addition, the Named Person will:

- Ensure all staff records of safeguarding training are up to date and confirm when refresher training is needed.
- Refer safeguarding matters which need further investigation to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Have up to date training at the CYC Safeguarding: Working Together A level.

In addition, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Be responsible for making the decision on how to best go forward with a safeguarding concern brought forward.
- Be responsible for all reporting, referrals, and communication with MASH or any relevant multi-agency working organisations.
- Ensure all staff are fully trained to understand safeguarding and child protection.
- Have up to date training at the Safeguarding: Working Together A and Safeguarding: Shared Responsibilities and Procedures - Working Together B levels.

## Section 5 – Recognising a Safeguarding Concern

HWYCA Staff working with children and young people will be required to familiarise themselves with the most common safeguarding concerns; **Abuse, Controlling or coercive behaviour, County lines, Domestic abuse, Emotional abuse, Extra-familial harm, Extra-familial contexts, Extremism, Financial exploitation, Maltreatment, Neglect, Physical abuse, Serious violence, Sexual abuse** (See appendix 1), alongside other important concerns for young people including but not limited to bullying, substance misuse, self harm, and suicidal ideation. HWYCA will ensure that all Youth Provision Staff and Volunteers undertake Safeguarding training to gain a basic awareness of child safety and the signs of a safeguarding concern. It is recognised that concerns about a young person's safety can come to light in the following ways:

- A young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- A third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- A young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statement causes concern;
- A young person reports an incident of alleged concern which occurred some time ago;
- A report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a young person.

## Section 6 – Stages to follow if you are worried about a Young Person

HWYCA recognises that it has a duty to act on disclosures or suspicions of a safeguarding concern. It also acknowledges that taking action in these cases is never easy. However, it believes that the safety of the young person should override any doubts or hesitations. When any of the concerns in Section 5 are observed, staff will:

**Stage 1-** Initially talk to the young person about what you are observing taking a child-centred approach. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay?" But never use leading questions.

- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a young person makes a disclosure;
- Never assume a young person is exaggerating or making things up;
- Always explain to the young person that any information they have given may need to be shared with others. **Any staff member who is sharing a disclosure made by a young person to the Named Person and Safeguarding Lead will need to tell the young person they will be sharing the information disclosed.**

- Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection;
- A full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told should be completed as soon as possible after any disclosure; The person who receives the disclosure or has cause for concern should write a record of what was said, heard or seen, in the words of the young person where possible, and ensure it is dated. This record should be an accurate factual description of the concern. The Safeguarding Lead can, if appropriate, support the Youth Worker during this process but must not complete the record. This record must be available on request to any necessary services who may request a copy as GDPR should not stand in the way of information sharing for Safeguarding purposes;
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely.

**Stage 2-** The member of staff who handled a disclosure must contact the Named Person. It is the Named Person who decides if the disclosure should be escalated to the Safeguarding Lead. If the staff member is unable to reach the Named Person, or in cases of extreme and immediate concern for the safety of the young person, the staff member should contact the Safeguarding Lead directly.

**Stage 3-** When the Safeguarding Lead is made aware of the Safeguarding concern, they will take the steps to decide the best direction forward. This may include choosing who is best to contact as part of a multi-agency working/working together approach such as The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of York (see appendix 2 for contact details), another appropriate organisation or agency depending on need and severity of the concern, parents or caregivers, or North Yorkshire police on 999 if there is an immediate concern for the safety of the young person. HWYCA encourages appropriate and proportional responses to safeguarding concerns which may mean that no one is contacted right away and the concern is monitored by HWYCA staff.

The Safeguarding Lead can also seek advice and clarity about a situation through the NSPCC 24-hour National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

**Stage 4-** The Safeguarding Lead should follow up with the relevant agencies or people to determine how HWYCA can continue to support the wellbeing and safety of the young person.

### **Section 7- Staff wellbeing and support**

HWYCA recognises that any staff member who is handling a safeguarding concern may be impacted by it. The Safeguarding Lead will make it a priority to do a wellbeing check in with all staff members after they have brought forward a safeguarding concern and continue to monitor staff if the concern is ongoing. Should the staff member need further support or support outside of what HWYCA is able to offer, the Safeguarding Lead should signpost the staff member to the appropriate support.

HWYCA also recognises that staff members may have their own personal experiences with a specific safeguarding concern. Should a staff member feel triggered by a disclosure and feel they cannot support the young person, another member of staff should take over the disclosure being made and the Safeguarding Lead should be made aware immediately to help support the staff member.

HWYCA will also offer the Safeguarding Lead an opportunity to have supervision for safeguarding. If the Board of Trustees does not have a suitable person with the relevant training and experience to offer this, the Board will offer an outside Supervisory option.

### **Section 8 – Managing allegations made against HWYCA Staff or Volunteer**

HWYCA will ensure that any allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that the young person is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.

- The Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the Safeguarding Lead, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that an independent person deals with the matter. (this could be the Centre Manager, a Board member or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The Safeguarding Lead should contact MASH for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team (contact number appendix 3) can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police should be contacted.
- The individual who first received or witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible in line with regular safeguarding procedures.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, HWYCA will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal depending on the nature of the incident.

### **Section 6 – Recording and managing confidential information.**

All information that is shared will be recorded and kept in confidentiality. Please see the Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection policy for further information.

Staff members will be expected to only report safeguarding concerns from their secure HWYCA email and this will be shared with only the Named Person and Safeguarding Lead.

## Appendix 1

Key Safeguarding Definition as cited in: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (Appendix A, Glossary p.154-162).

**Abuse** - A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Controlling or coercive behaviour** - Also known as coercive control, controlling or coercive behaviour is a form of domestic abuse. In 2015, the offence of controlling or coercive behaviour was introduced under Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act as a criminal offence. Controlling or coercive behaviour is included in the definition of domestic abuse in section 1(3)(c) of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Controlling or coercive behaviour is a pattern of abuse (on two or more occasions) that involves multiple behaviours and tactics used by a perpetrator to (but not limited to) hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate the victim. It is an intentional pattern of behaviour used to exert power, control, or coercion over another person. Controlling or coercive behaviour is often committed in conjunction with other forms of abuse and is often part of a wider pattern of abuse, including violent, sexual, or economic abuse. Children can be used to control or coerce the victim, for example, by frustrating child contact and/or child arrangements, telling the children to call the victim derogatory names or to hit the victim, or by threatening to abduct the children.

This pattern of abuse causes fear, serious alarm and/or distress which can lead to a substantial adverse effect on a victim's day-to-day life. This can have a significant impact on children and young people

**County lines** - As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy<sup>234</sup> published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK; no specified distance of travel is required. For further information see 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance<sup>235</sup>.

**Domestic abuse** - The Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>236</sup> introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse (section 1 of the Act). The statutory definition is clear that domestic abuse may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including a) physical or sexual abuse; b) violent or threatening behaviour; c) controlling or coercive behaviour; d) economic abuse; and e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members.

All children can experience and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children. Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children (0 to 18), as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of domestic abuse (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

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

**Extra-familial harm** - Children may be at risk of or experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and exploitation in contexts outside their families (see glossary definition of extra-familial contexts).

While there is no legal definition for the term extra-familial harm, it is widely used to describe different forms of harm that occur outside the home.

Children can be vulnerable to multiple forms of extra-familial harm from both adults and/or other children. Examples of extra-familial harm may include (but are not limited to): criminal exploitation (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, child-on-child (non-familial) sexual abuse and other forms of harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children towards their peers, abuse, and/or coercive control, children may experience in their own intimate relationships (sometimes called teenage relationship abuse), and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation.

**Extra-familial contexts** - Extra-familial contexts include a range of environments outside the family home in which harm can occur. These can include peer groups, school, and community/public spaces, including known places in the community where there are concerns about risks to children (for example, parks, housing estates, shopping centres, takeaway restaurants, or transport hubs), as well as online, including social media or gaming platforms.

**Extremism** - Extremism is defined in the Prevent strategy as the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also i

**Financial exploitation** - Financial exploitation can take many forms. In this context, we use the term to describe exploitation which takes place for the purpose of money laundering. This is when criminals target children and adults and take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control,

manipulate or deceive them into facilitating the movement of illicit funds. This can include physical cash and/or payments through financial products, such as bank and cryptocurrency accounts.

**Maltreatment** - All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

**Neglect** - The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

**Physical abuse** - A form of abuse which 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.

**Serious violence** - Serious violence covers specific types of crime, such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. It also includes crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon. For the purposes of the Serious Violence Duty, as per section 13 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, Serious Violence in the local area is violence that is serious in that area, taking account of: the maximum penalty which could be imposed for the offence (if any) involved in the violence, the impact of the violence on any victim, the prevalence of the violence in the area and the impact of the violence on the community in the area.

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



## Appendix 2

MASH Contact information

Contact MASH Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm:

- telephone - **01904 551900**
- email - [mash@york.gov.uk](mailto:mash@york.gov.uk)

Contact MASH Early Help Team to make an early help referral or access advice:

- telephone - **01904 551900**
- email - [earlyhelp@york.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@york.gov.uk)

## Appendix 3

MASH Emergency Contact information

Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays, contact the emergency duty team

- telephone - **01609 780780**
- email - [edt@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:edt@northyorks.gov.uk)