



Tell Us North CIC

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures

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Document details and review

Organisation	Tell Us North
Responsible person	Chief Executive
Date approved	November 2016
Approved by	Tell Us North Board
Reviewed	September 2019
Next review	September 2020

This policy and the procedures will be monitored and reviewed in line with developments in child protection and at a minimum annually.

1. Safeguarding children and young people (child protection) policy statement

Tell Us North recognises that:

- **The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989)**
- All children and young people regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- It is not the responsibility of staff and volunteers to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on child protection concerns and do something about it.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children and young people's welfare.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide protection for the children and young people who receive Tell Us North services **including the children of adult clients and members.**
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or be at risk of harm.

The policy applies to all staff, directors, sessional workers, volunteers/champions, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Tell Us North.

For the purposes of child protection legislation, the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years.

Tell Us North will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Recognising that of the children in need of child protection and social care, many have parents with mental health issues, substance misuse issues, or where there is domestic violence.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing effective management for Tell Us North staff and volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- Including consideration of child visitors and young clients in Tell Us North risk analysis and procedures on the use of Tell Us North office and facilities.

Tell Us North will review its Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practice regularly.

This policy will be available on our website and any website created for a service we run. All directors, staff and volunteers/champions are required to review this policy as part of our ongoing safeguarding training and support.

2. Safeguarding children and young people procedures – purpose and aim

These procedures set out how Tell Us North will respond quickly and effectively to a concern about a child or young person, which might be because of what someone says or how the child behaves. They apply to all staff, Directors, sessional workers, volunteers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Tell Us North.

3. Tell Us North Designated Safeguarding Lead for Tell Us North for Safeguarding Children and Young People

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Tell Us North is the named person responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of children and young people and will make the decision about what action to be taken in the event of concerns being raised. In their absence the named deputy will be available for staff and volunteers to consult with.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy are also the named leads for Prevent under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

DSL for safeguarding children and young people for Tell Us North

Name	Steph Edusei, Chief Executive
Telephone	0191 338 5721
Email	steph@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk
Address	MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS

If the DSL is not available, you should contact the Deputy

Post of deputy	Tell Us North Director
Name of deputy	Kate Israel
Mobile Number	07583 156966

The role of the DSL Tell Us North for safeguarding children and young people:

- Ensure the Tell Us North Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures are followed and act as a source of advice on safeguarding matters.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to make contact with the NSPCC, children's social care, and Police responsible for dealing with child protection concerns.
- Receive reports of allegations against staff or volunteers.
- Ensure that concerns are acted on, and clearly recorded in writing.
- Report concerns to the Newcastle Initial Response Service or Newcastle Emergency Duty Team, or Gateshead Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team or Gateshead Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team, or children's social care for any other relevant local authority where necessary, or the police.
- Urgent referrals should be reported immediately by those aware of them, even if the DSL is not available. It is the role of the DSL for safeguarding children and young people to ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to do this.
- Follow up any referrals or allegations, ensure verbal and telephone referrals are made in writing, and ensure the issues have been addressed.
- Ensure that any records are kept safely, securely and in line with data protection requirements.
- Make the policies available on the Healthwatch and Tell Us North websites.
- Ensure that safeguarding is a standing item on the Tell Us North Board meetings.

4. Reference to other policies and procedures

The Tell Us North Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures should be read along with:

- Tell Us North policies set out in the Tell Us North Employee Handbook April 2019, with particular reference to policies on Safe Recruitment, Health and Safety, Code of Conduct/Behaviour, Whistleblowing.
- **Multi agency safeguarding children procedures**
Staff and volunteers who work with children and young people should use the latest version of the relevant local multi agency procedures/practice guidance.

If online procedures have been printed off, the date should be checked before use so that you know if it is a recent version. Paper copies should be discarded following use.

Links to multi-agency procedures (Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland): **North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual (from September 2019)**
www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion

5. What is abuse? A description of the different categories of abuse

There are four types of abuse outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018:

- **Physical abuse** – hitting, shaking, throwing, punching, burning, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- **Emotional abuse** – being unloved, name calling, bullying, causing fear, discriminatory (including homophobic, racist, sexist, or based on a person's disability or faith).
- **Sexual abuse** – rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, watching pornography, sexual exploitation.
- **Neglect** – acts of omission, leaving in soiled clothes, failing to feed properly, leaving alone.

In addition to these four types of abuse, all staff, volunteers etc. should be aware of the following:

- **Child sexual exploitation**
Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- **Honour based violence**
Honour based violence and abuse can take many forms, for example, threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment committed due to so called 'honour'. Murders in the name of

'so-called' honour, (often called honour killings) are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family.

- **Radicalisation**

The process of a person being influenced or coerced into supporting violent extremism including terrorism.

- **Trafficking**

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim, whether or not they have been forced or deceived.

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

All acts of FGM are a crime in the UK and the girls and women subjected to FGM are victims of this crime. The act of FGM to female children under the age of 18 is also a form of child abuse. There is, therefore, a mandatory duty to refer disclosures of FGM to the police.

Do not ever think that you could not be placed in the position of reporting child abuse.

- Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly.
- Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.
- Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child or young person.
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges.

6. How to recognise the signs of abuse

It is not always easy to recognise signs of abuse, but it is important for you to have some idea about some of the signs to look out for when you're concerned about a child.

It is useful to look at two areas – physical signs and behavioural signs. They include injuries which a child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly, injuries which have not been treated, being constantly hungry and unkempt, running away, and sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.

Tell Us North recognises that in cases of FGM there may be no other safeguarding children concerns. Tell Us North recognises that there should be increased awareness of FGM when working with clients from the population at risk as assessed by Public Health, i.e. women and girls from countries where there is a prevalence of FGM.

7. Risk assessment: mapping Tell Us North work where there may be contact with children and young people under 18

While the majority of Tell Us North services are not provided directly to children, areas where there may be contact with children or services for children include:

- Healthwatch Newcastle
- Healthwatch Gateshead
- Events, information stands, crèche provision
- Use of office by the public
- Community groups/activities

- Work in schools/colleges

Examples of work currently undertaken by Tell Us North where a concern may arise:

- An enquirer to the information/signposting service who is under 18.
- An engagement worker sees something is told something during an outreach session.
- During a visit to the office, the behaviour of a child or young person.
- A Healthwatch volunteer sees or is told something while on a formal visit to a care service.
- Tell Us North staff member sees something while on a visit to another organisation.

8. How to respond to a child or young person telling you about abuse

- Respond in a way appropriate to the child's age and understanding.
- Reassure the child or young person concerned; abuse is not their fault.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told or have witnessed as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- Tell the child or young person that the information will be treated seriously.
- Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place, the priorities will be to (the sequence of priorities will depend on the circumstances):

- Call an ambulance if required.
- Call the police if a crime has been committed.
- Keep yourself, staff, children and clients safe.
- Preserve evidence.
- Inform the DSL in Tell Us North.
- Record what happened on the 'Children's Safeguarding Log' (see Z:\Tell Us North\Business and governance\Governance\1. Policies and procedures\Children's Safeguarding Log).

9. Reporting abuse or allegations of abuse

Reporting abuse has different levels of action, from what to do if you are worried to urgent action.

Advice

If you are worried about a child or young person, or you have any concerns, you can ask for advice from Children's Social Care Services or from Northumbria Police Safeguarding Department via telephone number 101. Or call the NSPCC Childline Service 0800 1111 for confidential advice.

In Newcastle

Call the Initial Response Service in Newcastle Children's Social Care, or if it is outside normal office hours call the Emergency Duty Team.

Initial Response Service	0191 277 2500 (weekdays 8.45am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 278 7878 (out of hours)
Northumbria Police	101

In Gateshead

Call the Gateshead Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team for advice about the appropriateness of a referral.

Children's Social Care	0191 433 2653 (weekdays 8.30am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 477 0844 (out of hours)
Northumbria Police	101

Raising a concern

If you are concerned about a situation you should refer the matter immediately to the Tell Us North DSL, who will decide whether or not to report the matter further. The concern should be written down using the 'Children's Safeguarding Log' (see Z:\Tell Us North\Business and governance\Governance\1. Policies and procedures\Children's Safeguarding Log). If further investigation is necessary, the DSL will refer the matter to Children's Social Care.

Make a referral

If you think a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed, you should make a referral to children's social care using the agreed Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership Process.

In Newcastle

Call Newcastle Children's Social Care or if it is outside normal office hours call the Emergency Duty Team or the police.

Initial Response Service	0191 277 2500 (weekdays 8.45am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 278 7878 (out of hours)
Website	https://nccportal.newcastle.gov.uk/forms/referral/public

In Gateshead

Referrals must be made in writing. For advice contact the Gateshead Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team or if it is outside office hours as below call the Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team or the police.

Children's Social Care	0191 433 2653 (weekdays 8.30am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 477 0844 (out of hours)
Website	www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9179/Report-concerns-about-a-child

You or the Tell Us North DSL for safeguarding must confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 24 hours of being made.

If you think a crime against a child or young person has been committed, you should contact the police on telephone 101, asking for your local police station. In Newcastle call 0191 214 6555 or in Gateshead call 0345 604 3043.

If you have intelligence to share with the police, email forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk

Urgent

If you think a child is at immediate risk, you should contact the police on telephone 999.

10. Responding to allegations of abuse against a Tell Us North member of staff or volunteer

If you hear an allegation against a Tell Us North member of staff or volunteer you should refer the matter immediately to the Tell Us North DSL who will decide what action to take.

If it is outside office hours and the matter cannot wait until the next working day then you should contact the relevant authority:

- Newcastle Emergency Duty Team on 0191 278 7878.
- Gateshead Emergency Duty Team on 0191 477 0844.
- The NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 for advice about a child.

You should not question the person making the allegation further but if it is a child you should respond appropriately to their age and understanding.

The allegation should be written down using the 'Children's Safeguarding Log' (see Z:\Tell Us North\Business and governance\Governance\1. Policies and procedures\Children's Safeguarding Log).

If there is a risk of significant harm to a child or further investigation is necessary, the Tell Us North DSL will refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for managing child abuse allegations against staff and volunteers.

The Newcastle LADO: Melanie Scott

Call 0191 277 4636
Fax 0191 211 6744
Email melanie.scott@newcastle.gov.uk

The Gateshead LADO: Nicholas Leon

Call 0191 433 8021
Email nicholasleon@gateshead.gov.uk

11. Recording and managing confidential information

Tell Us North is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible, and information around safeguarding children and young people or child protection should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information, please see Tell Us North Confidentiality Policy.

All allegations and concerns should be recorded on the 'Children's Safeguarding Log' (see Z:\Tell Us North\Business and governance\Governance\1. Policies and procedures\Children's Safeguarding Log). The information should be factual and not based on opinions. It should record what the person tells you, what you have seen, and should record witnesses if appropriate.

The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with data protection. Paper information will be secured in a locked filing cabinet in the organisation. Access to this information both paper and electronic will be by the DSL and relevant Tell Us North manager. The Chief Executive of Tell Us North will keep information regarding any allegations about staff members.

12. Safer recruitment – Disclosure and Barring Service

The safeguarding regulations of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 came into effect from October 2009 and are in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. In England, the statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (Department for Education, 2019) highlights the responsibility of all organisations working with children to have safer recruitment practices in place.

All staff and volunteers will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure. Tell Us North will adhere to all duties under the relevant legislation and guidance in its recruitment, confidentiality, disciplinary and complaints procedures.

In accordance with its duties under the Act, if Tell Us North dismisses or moves a member of staff or a volunteer because they have harmed a child or adult (or would have dismissed or moved them if the person had not left), Tell Us North will notify the DBS. The DBS process and referral form will be used.

For further details see Tell Us North Disclosure and Barring Policy.

13. Training, induction and supervision of staff and volunteers

Tell Us North will provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

All Tell Us North staff and volunteers carrying out supervised or unsupervised activities with children will complete accredited safeguarding children training (provided by a Local Safeguarding Children Partnership) to an appropriate level, on a three- year cycle.

When assessing the training need of the staff member or volunteer, any adult safeguarding training that has been undertaken will be taken into account.

The recommended training includes the training provided by the **Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership** www.nscb.org.uk/training-courses or **Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership** www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9209/Training-

Safeguarding issues will be discussed in supervision when appropriate.

Tell Us North staff and volunteers will take up training on trafficking and sexual exploitation or use sexual exploitation resources as appropriate.

Tell Us North staff and volunteers will take up training on FGM as appropriate, either online www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/female-genital-mutilation or with the Home Office www.fgmelearning.co.uk

14. Useful information

North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual
www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership
www.nscb.org.uk

Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children Board
<https://gateshead.gov.uk/lscb/home.aspx>

Government guidance: Working together to safeguard children

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Disclosure and Barring Service checks (previously called CRB checks)

03000 200190

www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

Disclosure and Barring Service

To make DBS referrals and for online guidance

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

NSPCC safeguarding standards and guidance

Support for voluntary and community organisations on safeguarding, activities, risk assessment and standards, previously known as the Safe Network.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2017/nspcc-safeguarding-standards-and-guidance-england>

NSPCC safeguarding in faith communities

Guidance on safeguarding within the beliefs, teachings and cultural context of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and interfaith.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-faith-communities>

NSPCC helpline

0808 800 5000 for advice

NSPCC Childline

0800 1111 for free confidential advice for anyone under 19

NSPCC serious case review summaries

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/case-reviews>

Police anti-terrorism hotline

0800 789 321