

IvybridgeLink at the BridgeLink Centre

Safeguarding and Child/Adult at Risk Protection Policy

1 Purpose

IvybridgeLink fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and the contribution it makes to the protection of children, young people and adult at risk. It is fully committed to protecting the mental and physical health of all children, young people and adults at risk. We will give equal priority to keeping all children, young people and adults at risks safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Our policy aims to ensure that all staff, volunteers and organisations that use the BridgeLink Centre are aware of their responsibilities and expected behaviour in relation to safeguarding and how to access good practice and procedures. These ensure that child/adult at risk protection concerns, referrals and monitoring will be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the individual concerned. This policy does not cover the safeguarding policies of the BridgeLink Centre Partners (other than contact details of their relevant Safeguarding lead).

2 Definitions

BridgeLink Centre Partners – those organisations regularly using or hiring the facilities at the BridgeLink Centre for community activities (to the extent that such activities involve children, young people or adults at risk).

Child/ren - A child is any person under the age of 18 years. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2018a).

Adult at risk- An adult at risk is someone aged 18 years 'with care and support needs' (as advised by the Care Act). This could include people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse.

3 What is Abuse?

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse happens when an adult inflicts harm on a child or young person – even, in some cases, if the adult's actions are not deliberate. Sometimes children are sexually abused by other children.

There are four broad categories of child abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse

Physical Abuse

This happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises and broken bones. It can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, slapping or suffocating. It is also physical abuse when a parent/carer fabricates, or induces, the symptoms of an illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

This is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional development. Active emotional abuse happens when a parent/carer denies the child the love and care they need in order to be healthy and happy. Such adults might be emotionally unavailable; fail to offer their child praise and encouragement; interact with them in an age-inappropriate way; be over-protective, limiting their opportunities to explore, learn and make friends; or expect the child to meet parent/carer's own emotional needs.

Neglect

This is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect is difficult to define as it is hard to describe the absence of something such as love or attention. In practical terms, neglect may involve a parent/carer's failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and/or shelter
- Protect the child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Supervise the child properly
- Make sure the child receives appropriate medical care and treatment

Sexual Abuse

This involves actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. It also involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve violence, and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse includes: grooming a child with the intention of sexually abusing them; all forms of penetrative and non-penetrative sex; sexually exploiting a child in return for gifts, money or affection; and making, looking at and distributing indecent images of a child.

Additionally, adults at risks may suffer the following forms of abuse: financial, discriminatory, psychological, organisational, domestic, modern slavery, neglect and self-neglect.

Appendix 1 provides further details of specific types of abuse (Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Radicalisation, Child Criminal Exploitation, Domestic Violence & Abuse, Honour Based Violence, Online e-safety, Private Fostering, Peer on Peer Abuse)

4 Policy Aims

Children, young people and adults at risks have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and expect us to provide them with a safe and secure environment. We recognise that their protection is a shared community responsibility. Safeguarding incidents can happen anywhere and staff need to be alert to this fact.

Our intention is that the following principles underpin all safeguarding action (See Care Act guidance).

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

The three main elements to our policy are:

- Prevention through the establishment of a safe environment in which children, young people and adults at risks can learn, develop skills to help them keep safe and have fun in a community setting.
- Development and implementation of procedures for identifying and promptly responding to all suspicions and allegations of cases of abuse.
- Support to those who may have been abused.

4.1 Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence and supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention.

Ivybridelink will therefore:

- Ensure that the Bridgelink Centre has designated activities for children, young people and adults at risks which foster confidence and self-esteem and in which individuals are listened to and feel secure.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults at risks know that there are adults who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Encourage delivery partners of the Bridgelink Centre to champion good preventative practice and embed into their programmes such as positive parenting skills courses
- Encourage the use of the Bridgelink Centre for sessions for young people to develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.

- Ensure that Bridgelink Centre reinforces the importance of online safety and will use reasonable efforts to prevent online or mobile phone abuse during delivery to children and youth people.

We recognise the need for all staff, directors and volunteers who are in contact on a regular basis with children, young people and adults at risks in the Bridgelink Centre to be aware of safeguarding procedures. We will therefore:

- Promote the awareness of safeguarding and the protection of children, young people and adults at risks amongst Bridgelink Centre Partners and establish an environment that is safe through ongoing training.
- Display the policy on the IvybridgeLink website and information of all Designated persons and their contact details will be displayed at the Bridgelink Centre
- Ensure that all our staff have DBS checks (enhanced where appropriate) and that we keep a central register and ensure that Bridgelink Centre delivery partners record and monitor their own staff and volunteers. The Centre Manager will liaise with the Bridgelink Centre Partners and confirm to the board that required safeguarding measures are in place including DBS checks.
- Ensure that all organisations hiring the Bridgelink Centre for activities with children/vulnerable adults are adequately insured and where they carry out activities with children (that are not supervised by parents) that their staff have enhanced DBS checks.
- Ensure we practise safe recruitment practices (as described in Section 4.6) when recruiting staff and volunteers to work at the Bridgelink Centre.
- Ensure we have a **Designated Safeguarding Lead for Children/Adults at Risk (DSL)** who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a Designated Trustee for Safeguarding who will oversee the Bridgelink's Safeguarding Policy and practice.
- Ensure every member of staff, trustees, volunteers and partner organisations knows the name of the DSL and his/her role(s).
- Provide training for all new staff including volunteers so that they know i) their personal responsibility ii) the Bridgeink Centre procedures, iii) the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse iv) how to support someone who tells of abuse.
- Ensure training is updated regularly.
- Ensure that the DSL also undertakes training relevant to their role and attends refresher training at two-yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up-to-date. The Designated Trustee will also attend training.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences
- Keep records of concerns about children, young people or adults at risks (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Services immediately;
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations/retained in password protected files.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that:

- The Bridgelink Centre complies with legislation related to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk.
- The Bridgelink Centre has a Safeguarding & Child Protection/Adult at Risk Policy and that procedures are in place that safeguard and promote the well-being of children, young people and adults at risks attending the Bridgelink Centre.
- This policy is reviewed annually, reflecting changes in legislation including to the Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' last updated on the 9th December 2020. Further useful information links are included in Appendix 2.
- The Bridgelink Centre is using safe recruitment procedures, and that appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers.

The Designated Trustee for Safeguarding is responsible for maintaining:

- Regular contact with the Bridgelink Centre staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for the protection of children and adults at risk.
- Awareness of current responsibilities and requirements by attending appropriate training.
- The provision of leadership and vision in respect of child/adult at risk protection and safeguarding.
- Ensuring that appropriate policies and processes are in place so that staff are recruited safely and that all staff employed at the Bridgelink Centre, including volunteers, have the appropriate training. This will include ensuring the Centre Administrator to arrange training and the Safer Recruitment Checklist is followed by the DSL and Centre Administrator for each new recruitment.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of staff responsible for:

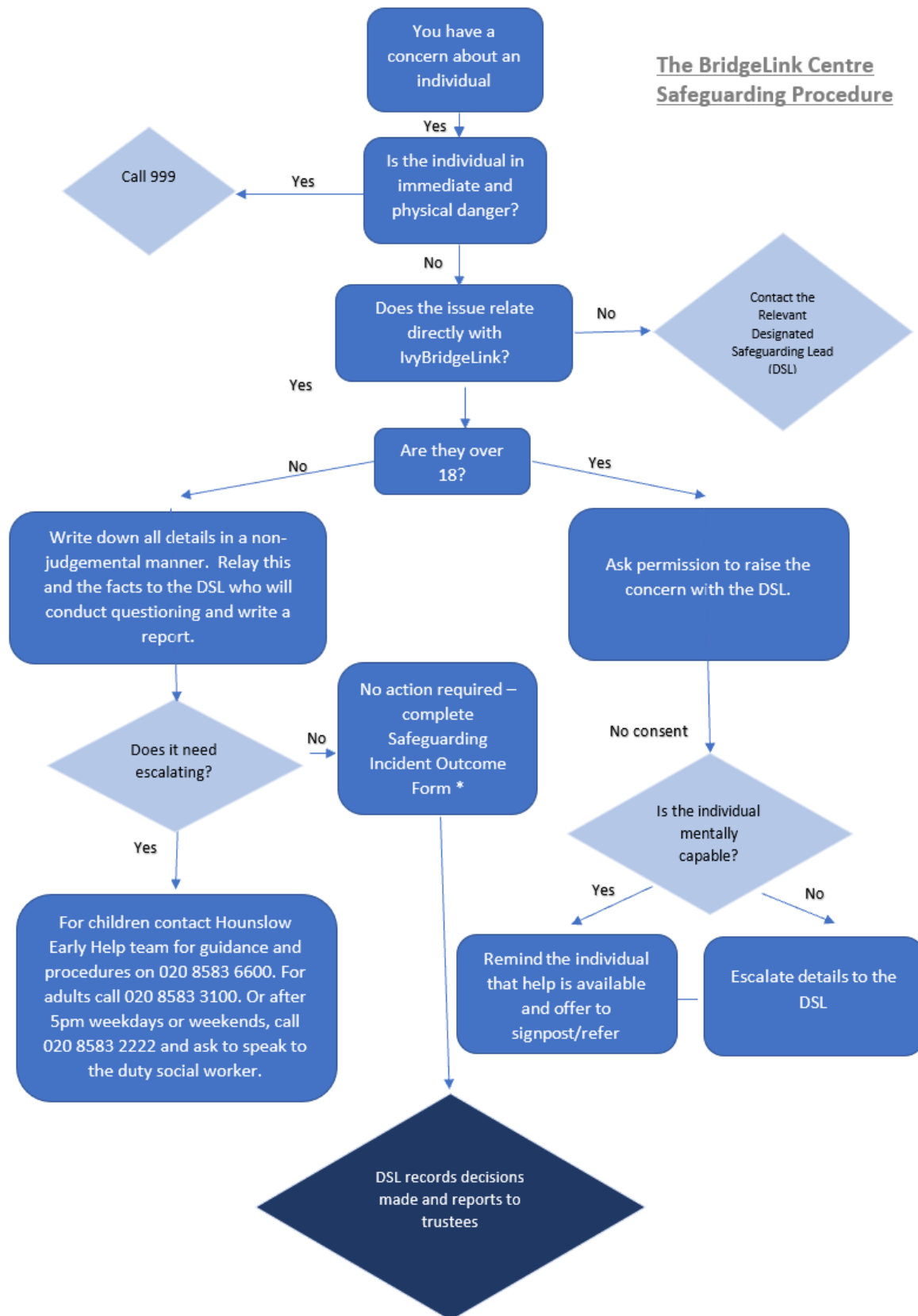
- The practical implementation of the child/adult at risk protection policy by ensuring that procedures are followed within the Bridgelink Centre and appropriate referrals are made to the correct Social Care Services and other agencies.
- Promoting the awareness of safeguarding and the protection of children, young people and adults at risks amongst Bridgelink Centre Partners and work with the Centre Administrator to ensure that Partners carry out their own training and checks.
- Recommend training requirements to the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding for staff and volunteers so that they are aware of signs of abuse, what they need to do if they think someone is being abused, and how they can protect themselves from an allegation.
- The co-ordination of all activities related to child/adult at risk protection, including record keeping, centre representation at conferences and other related meetings, liaison with other professionals, and the monitoring and evaluation of our procedures.
- Ensuring that all staff members, trustees and volunteers are aware of and comply with our safeguarding procedures.
- Making the community aware of the Bridgelink Centre's Safeguarding Policy.

- Dealing with any allegations against members of staff or volunteers.

All staff, including volunteers are expected to:

- Know the names of the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead and the trustee for Safeguarding and Child/Adult at Risk Protection)
- Understand and comply with the Bridgelink Centre's Safeguarding Policy.
- Deal with any bullying incidents that may occur, following proper procedures.
- Refer concerns including FGM, e-safety and radicalisation concerns.
- Behave in accordance with our Staff Code of Conduct.

4.3 Procedures



4.3.1 Who to report a concern to

If anyone (including a member of staff, volunteer or Bridgelink Centre Partner) has a concern regarding the safety of a child, they have a duty to report his or her concerns immediately to:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Community Partnerships & Programme Manager

Kuldip Sandhu

kuldip.sandhu@bridgelink.org.uk

07927 988362

In their absence the report must be made to:

Trustee for Safeguarding and Child/Adult at risk Protection:

Sharon Henry

shenry@eachcounselling.org.uk

07932 814381

In the absence of the above the referral should be made to:

The chairperson for IvybridgeLink Charity

Debbie Squires

debbie.squires@bridgelink.org.uk

If your concerns relate to staff working for a Bridgelink Centre Partner please contact the Centre Administrator for the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.3.2 Response

- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention or Dial 999 for emergency services
- Get brief details about what has happened (in line with the procedures below)
 - where it involves an adult at risk, seek to understand what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation. Seek consent from the adult at risk to take action and to report the concern to the DSL (or designate in accordance with 4.3.1). Consider whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If the individual decides to act against their wishes or without their consent, the DSL will record that decision and the reasons for this.
 - Where it involves a child, report it to the DSL (or designate in accordance with 4.3.1).

A disclosure should be made particularly where any member of staff, volunteer or Bridgelink Centre Partner:

- Has a suspicion that a child/adult at risk is marked or bruised in a way that is not readily attributed to 'normal' knocks or scrapes.
- Notes behaviours or actions in a child/adult at risk which give rise to suspicions that they may have suffered abuse.

- Receives hints or a disclosure of any type of abuse from a child/adult at risk or from one of his/her friends.

4.3.3. Verbal Report

- In the first instance, reports should be made verbally. However, as in all cases where referral to outside agencies is a possibility, accurate written records are vital. An email (marked confidential) with details of what has been disclosed should be used to follow up any concern. It is important that members of staff do not investigate or follow up any suspicions themselves, for instance by speaking with and/or questioning students or parents/carers.
- Whilst staff must be circumspect about using 'hearsay' evidence, it must not be discounted without thought. Gossip is often, but not always, untrue. Such evidence may, together with other indicators, give us warning of an abusive situation. It is an essential requirement for all members of staff to record any conversation or contact that might be useful as evidence.

4.3.4 Written Record

- This should be followed with a written record within 24 hours, using as far as possible the person's own words. Staff must take further action if they feel the Bridgelink Centre has not acted appropriately or robustly to safeguarding. This may involve reporting to the Trustee or directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Social Care or Police. In London all organisations use the London Child Protection Procedures, which set out how agencies and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- The DSL will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or an allegation of abuse to Hounslow Children's Services via Early Help Hounslow. Any referral will be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. Where possible the inter-agency referral form should be used.
- If the DSL is unsure about whether a formal referral should be made or has a general concern about a child's health or development, advice should be sought from local Social Care Service via Early Help Hounslow.
- In addition to working with the designated lead, staff may be asked to support Social Care/Police to take decisions about individual students.

4.4 Responding to Disclosure using Non-Leading Techniques

4.4.1 Receive

- Staff should receive what has been said. Accept what you are told - you do not need to decide whether it is true.
- Listen without displaying shock or belief.

4.4.2 Reassure

- Reassure children that the law is in place to protect them rather than criminalise them.
- Acknowledge that you are listening to them.

- Do NOT promise confidentiality. You must not keep information to yourself or act on your own initiative.
- Reassure them but do not promise what you may not be able to deliver, i.e. "everything will be all right now" (it may not be).

4.4.3 Respond

- Respond to what the child/adult at risk has said but do not interrogate.
- Avoid leading questions like: "Was it your father?" Questions like this can be used by defence counsel in a subsequent court case to suggest that you 'contaminated' the evidence.
- Ask open-ended questions: "Do you want to tell me anything else?"; "And?"; "Yes?"
- Where necessary, clarify what has been said.

4.4.4 Record

- Make brief notes as soon as possible. Keep original notes then write up a subsequent record including date, time and place.
- Record the actual words that are used.
- Maintain the records in a location where the alleged abuser does not have access to the record.
- Notify the DSL
- On receipt of the information, they must make a decision as to whether there are grounds for suspecting abuse, neglect or the potential risk of abuse and to, therefore, make a referral to Social Services or the police as a priority. A record of the decision whether to refer or not will be kept by the DSL.
- A note will be made of the adult at risk's contact details in order to keep them informed at all stages.
- If it is considered that it would be unwise/unsafe to contact parents/carers until Social Services staff have contacted them, then Bridgelink Centre staff will not inform parents/carers of referrals to Social Services. A record of this decision will be made.

4.5 Allegations against Staff

Staff

- All Bridgelink Centre staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents/carers to be conducted in view of other adults. All staff should also be aware of the Bridgelink Centre's Behaviour Policy.
- We understand that a child/adult at risk may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the DSL, or if the allegation is made about the DSL, then the Chairperson of the IvyBridgelink Board of Trustees.
- Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult with the Board of Trustees in making this decision.

Whistleblowing

- All Bridgelink Centre Staff should feel that should they raise concerns that these are taken seriously and properly investigated. If a member of staff is worried that IvyBridgelink or a Bridgelink Partner is not responding to or sharing child protection information appropriately, it is vital that you share your concerns to keep children safe.
- Legislation across the UK ensures that you should not be treated unfairly or lose your job because you 'blow the whistle' (Gov.uk, 2018).
- In England, Scotland and Wales, whistleblowers are protected by law under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

4.6 Safer Recruitment and Selection

Please refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy. Safer recruitment practice includes: a member of the panel having safer recruitment training; scrutinising applications; verifying identification, qualifications and references; and checking previous employment history.

1. A DBS disclosure (enhanced where appropriate) is obtained for all new appointments.
2. The Bridgelink Centre is committed to keep an up-to-date single central record.
3. Two references will be sought for each appointee.

5 Support

We recognise that children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame. Their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. They may not feel comfortable with giving a disclosure. All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the undesirable behaviour but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. Staff should endeavour to ensure that the child/young person knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

The Bridgelink Centre will endeavour to support the child, young person or adult at risk through:

- The content of the activities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- The Bridgelink Centre ethos which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment (ii) gives everyone a sense of being valued
- Liaison with other agencies who support children and young people such as Children's Social Care, Children's Centres, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and School Services
- Keeping records and notifying the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

6. Confidentiality

All staff need to understand that the only purpose of confidentiality is to benefit the child, young person or adult at risk. No one should guarantee confidentiality to a child, nor should they agree with a child to keep a secret, as any child protection concern must be reported to the DSL and may require further investigation by the appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases on a need-to-know basis only. Any information shared in this way must be kept confidential.

Timely information sharing is key to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

People who work with children, whether in a paid or voluntary role, may need to share information about the children and families they are involved with for a number of reasons. These include:

- you are making a referral to arrange additional support for someone in the family
- someone from another agency has asked for information about a child or family
- someone in the family has asked to be referred for further help
- a statutory duty or court order requires information to be shared
- you are concerned that a child or a member of their family may be at risk of significant harm
- you think a serious crime may have been committed or is about to be committed which involves someone in the family.

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 welfare at risk by sharing information about them.

Some professionals have a legal duty to share information relating to safeguarding concerns (including to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation).

Always seek consent to share information about a child and their family. If a child is mature enough you should give them the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their confidential information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions, you should ask their parent or carer (unless this would put the child at risk). However, if consent isn't given, you can still share information with relevant professionals under certain circumstances, for example if you are protecting a child from significant harm. The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) do not affect this principle.

7 Photography

All parents are asked to give permission for their children's photographs to be used for publications such as brochures, reports, websites and local newspapers. Where permission is refused, the BridgeLink Centre will make every effort to ensure those children are not included in photographs for external purposes. Where photographs are used in newspapers, we will not identify individual children by name unless parental permission has been given.

Children or adults will not be allowed to take photographs with phones of other children during activity sessions without the consent of the activity leader.

Appendix 1

1. Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline (Department for Education, 2018). Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type 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 (Department for Education, 2017).

Children and young people in sexually exploitative situations and relationships are persuaded or forced to perform sexual activities or have sexual activities performed on them in return for gifts, drugs, money or affection.

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded or forced to:

- have sexual conversations by text or online
- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone (Hamilton-Giachritsis et al, 2017).

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in further sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation. We should be aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and children may not exhibit external signs of abuse. Therefore, staff must be vigilant for the less obvious signs: lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none; seeming to have extra money to spend; moving away from established friendship groups, etc.

Refer to NSPCC website for impacts of physical and online sexual exploitation.

2. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- Staff should be fully aware of this aspect of child protection as it constitutes child abuse and is illegal. FGM involves cutting, and sometimes sewing the girl's genitalia, normally without anaesthetic, and can take place at any time from birth onwards. It is sometimes referred to as 'female circumcision' but this misnomer belies the invasive and irreversible nature of the procedure. It is now more correctly termed Female Genital Mutilation. The procedure has a cultural, rather than religious, origin and is practised by disparate ethnic communities in many countries, including Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Yemen and Iraq.
- The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence not only to carry out FGM in England, Scotland and Wales on a girl who is a UK national or permanent resident, but also to take a girl out of the UK to have FGM performed abroad, even to countries where FGM is still legal. The indicators of FGM may initially mirror those of sexual abuse. You may notice, for example, that a girl or young woman shows signs of pain or discomfort, needs to visit the toilet constantly, has vaginal blood loss, or is unable to sit comfortably. She may make

excuses to avoid physical activity. She may also become evasive or fearful if you enquire if she is unwell, and assure you that she is fine when she clearly is not. If she has recently arrived back from a 'holiday' abroad seems to be in pain and has not been taken by her family to see a doctor, you should consider FGM, alongside other possible explanations. In England and Wales, regulated health and social care professionals and teachers must make a report to the police, if, in the course of their duties:

- they are informed by a child under the age of 18 that they have undergone an act of FGM
- they observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a child under the age of 18.

Further resources on recognising and responding to various types of FGM can be found on the NSPCC website.

3. Forced Marriage

- Forced marriage occurs when a young person is forced into a marriage that they do not want with someone that they have not chosen, following coercion, intimidation, threats and possibly physical and sexual abuse. It is very different from an arranged marriage, where both young people can make the decision to accept or decline the partner chosen for them by their parents.
- A young person who fears that they are likely to be forced into a marriage may disclose to a member of staff. Their initial approach, in common with many disclosures of abuse, may be seemingly innocuous, such as talking about taking a holiday abroad. Their fear, that the proposed holiday will result in a forced marriage, may only become apparent after a number of conversations. These young women may also become victims of what is termed 'honour-based violence'.
- This type of violence is described in 'The Right to Choose' guidance as: "A variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women), including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community". Girls who are forced by others to enter into a marriage agreement against their will, will be referred to Social Services. This is part of normal child protection procedures.

4. Radicalisation

All organisations that work with children and young people have a responsibility to protect children from harm. This includes becoming radicalised and/or being exposed to extreme views.

The process of radicalisation may involve:

- being groomed online or in person
- exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- psychological manipulation

- exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- the risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

If a child or young person is being radicalised their day-to-day behaviour may become increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause. For example, they may:

- spend increasing amounts of time talking to people with extreme views (this includes online and offline communication)
- change their style of dress or personal appearance
- lose interest in friends and activities that are not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- have material or symbols associated with an extreme cause
- try to recruit others to join the cause

(Home Office, 2015).

The NSPCC website includes further details on those more at risk of radicalisation. If a member of staff has concerns regarding any extreme behaviour (which may suggest that they are being drawn into terrorism or extremism), they must report this to the DSL. If required, they will contact the Local Authority's PREVENT Officer to seek advice and guidance.

"PREVENT" is part of the Home Office's strategy to address terrorism and safeguard communities. PREVENT works with institutions where there are risks of radicalisation, including community centres. Upon referral, the Local Authority discusses the incident at a Panel Meeting in line with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015). Panels will assess the extent to which the identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into further issues.

PREVENT referrals should be reported in line with other safeguarding procedures.

5. Child Criminal Exploitation & County Lines

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity.

There are a number of areas in which young people are put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in, and as victims of, gang violence which can be in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved adult in their household.

A child who is affected by gang activity or serious youth violence may have suffered, or may be likely to suffer, significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

Children can be particularly vulnerable to recruitment into gangs and involvement in gang violence. This vulnerability may be exacerbated by risk factors in an individual's

background, including violence in the family, involvement of siblings in gangs, poor educational attainment, poverty or mental health problems.

Criminal exploitation of children is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity. Key identifying features of involvement in county lines are when children are missing, when the victim may have been trafficked for transporting drugs, a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered with Social Care and Police colleagues.

A child who is affected by gang activity, criminal exploitation or serious youth violence can be at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Girls may be particularly at risk of sexual exploitation.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being criminally exploited will be passed without delay to the DSL.

A request for support to Hounslow Front Door single point of access will be made when any concern of harm to a child as a consequence of gang activity including child criminal exploitation becomes known. Any member of staff who has concerns that a child may be at risk of harm should immediately inform the DSL. The DSL will contact the Hounslow Front Door single point of access. If there is concern about a child's immediate safety, the Police will be contacted on 999.

6. Domestic Violence & Abuse

Staff will be made aware of The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that received royal assent on 29 April 2021. Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are personally connected. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

All children can see, hear or experience domestic abuse in the context of their home life. They are therefore victims in their own right. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

7. Honour Based Violence

Honour based abuse (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.

Honour based abuse might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
- want to get out of an arranged marriage;

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion. want to get out of an arranged marriage.
- want to get out of a forced marriage wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

8. Online e-safety

The charity will adhere to their Cyber Security Policy at all times. All user groups will ensure their users will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online. Staff members will be made aware:

- That technology is a significant component of safeguarding issues and abuse can take place concurrently online and in daily life. Online safety is an ongoing and interrelated theme that informs other policy and systems/processes.
- Children & vulnerable adults' attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- Staff should be aware of associated risks and signs/symptoms. These includes non-age-appropriate content, self-harm and suicide, sharing nudes or semi-nudes, cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation, gaming (now identified by the World Health Organisation as a disorder), online gambling, inappropriate advertising and cybercrime.
- The procedures to follow when they have a concern regarding a user's online activity.

9. Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in residential schools, children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age. Ivybridgelink recognise that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. However, where a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be in a private fostering arrangement they will monitor and investigate to see if the carer is known to children's services and raise this with the DSL and the DSL will notify C-SPA immediately if the circumstances are concerning.

10. Peer on Peer/Child on Child abuse

Abuse may also come from Peer-on-Peer abuse whether physical or emotional.

What is Peer on Peer Abuse?

All children are capable of abusing their peers. This can manifest itself in a whole spectrum of behaviours including –

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Physical abuse
- Sexting
- Upskirting (now a criminal offence and has reporting requirements)
- Initiation /hazing type violence and rituals

Appendix 2

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Isleworth Neighbourhood Team (Police)
020 8721 2529

Early Help Hub Hounslow

A single point of contact for all those who are seeking advice and guidance in their delivery of Early Help to children, young people and their families.

Office hours: Mon – Friday 9am – 5pm: 0208 583 6653

or email earlyhelphub@hounslow.gov.uk or childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk

Out of hours and weekends: Emergency Duty Team: 0208 583 2222

Or for immediate concerns about a child's safety contact the police on 999

Hounslow Safeguarding Children's Partnership

0208 583 3068 email: lscb@hounslow.gov.uk

NSPCC

0800 800 5000

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services/library-information-service>

Childline

0800 1111

PREVENT Radicalisation

[Lets Talk About It - What Is Prevent? \(Itai.info\)](#)

Local Authority PREVENT team
najeeb.ahmed@hounslow.gov.uk

London Child protection procedures
<https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

Human Rights Act 1998 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Care and support statutory guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

London Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure
<https://londonadass.org.uk/safeguarding/review-of-the-pan-london-policy-and-procedures/>

5 statutory principles of mental capacity
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/pdfs/ukpga_20050009_en.pdf

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
25/3/24	Katherine Morgan	Sent to DS for annual review
08/07/24	Debbie Squires	Date Approved by IvybridgeLink Board of Trustees
12/07/25	Katherine Morgan	Sent to DS for annual review in September
15/09/25		To be reviewed at meeting by trustees
/09/26		