

Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People (aged under 18)

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Ratified by forum & date	Operations Committee, November 2022
Last update	November 2023
Review Date	November 2024

1. Policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive CHS's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

2. Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>.

We take guidance from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough -Safeguarding Partnership Board: <https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/>

3. Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Missing Persons**
- Recruitment and Selection Policy**
- Grievance Procedure**
- Disciplinary Procedure**
- Complaints Procedure**
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy**
- Confidential Reporting (Whistle blowing) Policy**
- Lone Working Policy**
- Confidentiality Policy**
- Policy on Gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interest**
- Use of Disclosure and Barring Service checks**
- Dignity at work policy**
- Domestic Abuse policy**
- ASB and Harassment policy**
- Handling cash and valuables**
- Professional Boundaries**
- Use of mobile phones and cameras (Mobile Technology)**
- Adverse Incident Reporting**
- CCTV Policy**
- House rules at Looked After Children Services**
- **PIPOT (Persons in position of trust) procedure**

4. Who does this policy apply to

This policy and its associated procedures are for:

- All CHS's employees |

Commented [AC1]: Add in Board members?

- All CHS's contractors

- Apprentices, volunteers and students working within any department within CHS.

5. Policy statement

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 recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to 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
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Strategic Lead for Child protection and Young People – our Director of Communities – and a lead Board member for safeguarding, Gareth Hillier
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and behaviours framework for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via our newsletter, posters, and one-to-one discussions in our supported housing and Looked After Children's services
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- referring any current and historical allegations of abuse against children to Children's Services, whether the alleged perpetrator is a PIPOT or not

- 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 accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
- Keeping abreast of best practice

6. Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility: CHS's Board has responsibility for ensuring that the organisation meets the legislative and regulatory duties relating to children's safeguarding and the protection of children. It will:

- a) Appoint a lead Board member – with the appropriate skills and experience – to provide support to the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding. This is Gareth Hillier.
- b) Regularly review whether the things the organisation has put in place are creating a safer culture and keeping children safe.

Strategic lead for safeguarding: Director of Communities has responsibility for:

- a) Ensuring policies and procedures are in place relating to the safeguarding of children.
- b) Maintaining a cross organisational focus and attention to matters relating to the safeguarding of children.
- c) Ensuring that strategic initiatives, policies or procedures are instigated in response to internal and external learning and/or new legislative policy and guidance.
- d) In partnership with the Human Resources team, allocating and coordinating investigations into allegations of abuse in relation to the allegations against employees.
- e) Maintaining a list of Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP's) and ensuring that information related to this is kept up to date.
- f) Providing support and advice to the Designated Safeguarding Persons.
- g) Liaising with HR to ensure that training content is aligned to organisational policies and procedures and achieving required outcomes.

Directors of Homes and Customers: have responsibility for:

- a) Ensuring this policy, procedures and protocols are implemented and adhered to within their sphere of responsibility.
- b) Ensuring the swift reporting, management and follow up of safeguarding concerns within their team are dealt with in a timely and organised manner.
- c) Ensuring multi agency policies and procedures are adhered to when a concern is raised and facilitating the attendance of staff when required at relevant safeguarding meetings and forums.
- d) Reviewing, disseminating and ensuring appropriate action on 'lessons learned'.
- e) Considering the impact of reporting a safeguarding concern on a team member and any action that may be required including appropriate feedback on outcomes and any additional support or access to counselling.

Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP's): have responsibility for

- a) Being a point of contact for advice, ensuring support for service delivery staff and managers, whilst not replacing the individual's responsibility for safeguarding.
- b) Promoting within their team, understanding and adherence to the policies and related procedures and in particular, those concerned with anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, hate crime, hoarding and self-neglect.
- c) Maintaining accurate records of advice provided to other staff and ensure follow up of actions recommended
- d) Attending quarterly organisational wide safeguarding forums to discuss safeguarding issues arising, lessons learned and implications for practice within their team and the wider organisation. This will be facilitated by the strategic lead for safeguarding and include an update on relevant national and local policy, information, research or case studies from external safeguarding reviews.
- e) Maintaining links with, and attend as required, external safeguarding forums, meetings or networks on behalf of CHS.

All staff: have responsibility for:

- a) Taking seriously, listening carefully and reporting appropriately any safeguarding concerns reported to them.
- b) Ensuring immediate action is taken if the person/s are in immediate or serious danger or a crime is likely/or has been committed as per policy.
- c) Ensuring they keep accurate records of the allegation, initial enquiries and action and completing appropriate paperwork/forms as instructed by this policy and supporting procedures.
- d) Acting in accordance with this policy, procedure and protocols and attendance at appropriate training and supervision.
- e) Understanding the Whistleblowing policy and their obligation to report suspected or actual abuse or neglect.

7. Reporting and monitoring

7.1 We will review this policy annually as follows:

- a) An annual assessment of effectiveness of the policy and procedures in resolving each case of abuse that has arisen during the year is conducted. This includes seeking feedback from staff, service users and other agencies as appropriate. The number and type of safeguarding concerns and actual cases, and seriousness rating is summarised.
- b) An annual written report to the Customer and Homes Committee on the effectiveness of the Policy and Procedures including any proposals for revision, and an action plan; including assessment against NSPCC guidelines.

7.2 We will maintain and strengthen the safeguarding culture at CHS through our Safeguarding Team, which will meet quarterly, to:

- a) Monitor potential and actual safeguarding incidents
- b) Consider incidents and reflect on lessons learnt
- c) Communicate any lessons across the organisation
- d) Monitor and inform safeguarding training
- e) Consider information, lessons and policy changes from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Board
- f) Consider good practice from the NSPCC and other sources

8. Equality and diversity implications

This policy, by its nature and focus, supports the needs and promotes the safety and wellbeing of people as defined by the nine protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010).