

Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Young People in the Eastern Region

***A guide to standards for community,
voluntary and independent organisations,
commissioners and local safeguarding
children boards***

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FOREWORD

This guide has been designed to assist voluntary, community and independent organisations, commissioners and local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs) in the eastern region. It should be read in conjunction with the document *Children, Young People and Families Safeguarding Standards Applied by Local Authorities and Children's Trusts When Commissioning Services from the Community, Voluntary and Independent Sector* (October 2009).

The guide provides further information about what is expected in relation to these standards for safeguarding children and young people. It makes no judgments about your current level of knowledge and offers no apologies for being comprehensive in covering all of the standards that have been identified for creating and sustaining safe environments for children, young people and their families. The agenda is too important for any of us to rely on an assumed level of knowledge or understanding.

In practical terms, the guide will take around **two to three hours** to work through. It is designed to help you think about the issues presented and how the material relates to your local situation, the children, young people and families you may be working with, and the organisation you represent.

INTRODUCTION

In working through the material contained in this guide you will encounter a number of features designed to help you think about the importance of safeguarding. These features are represented by the symbols shown below:



Key facts – these are used to indicate research, quotations, explanations or definitions that you may find helpful.



Challenges – these are questions or queries raised in the text which ask you to reflect on your role or approach – in essence, they are designed to be thought-provokers.



Good practice – these are ‘pen pictures’ of useful approaches to safeguarding developed by other organisations.



Commissioning tips – these represent a selection of hints and tips which commissioning organisations, in particular, may find helpful.



Useful links – these are signposts to sources of further information, outside of the guide, which may help with principles, processes, methods and approaches. A full list of useful additional information is also set out in Appendix A of the guide.

SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Need for Safeguarding Standards

The government has defined safeguarding as:

“The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.”

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse. In England, the law states that people who work with children and young people have to try to keep them safe. Organisations are also required to talk and work together to agree how best to collaborate in safeguarding children.



“The government’s aim is for every child to have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. All organisations involved with providing services to children – from hospitals and schools to police and voluntary groups – have a responsibility to work together to protect children and young people from harm and abuse”

Home Office, 2009



Statistics on child abuse

- 7 per cent of children suffer serious physical abuse at the hands of their parents and carers.
- 25 per cent of all rape victims are under 16 years old.
- Seven children under the age of 16 are murdered by strangers each year.
- Each week at least one child dies from cruelty.
- Almost two-thirds of children killed at the hands of another person in England and Wales are under the age of five.

Are They Safe? (Guide), Children England/NCPCC, 2009

There is much research and evidence about how children and young people are at risk of abuse (see *text box*). At an organisational level, safeguarding is about developing and maintaining clear and effective policies and procedures which can help to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm.

In response to the challenges faced, a number of standards have been developed for commissioners, voluntary, community and independent organisations and LSCBs working in the eastern region. These were informed by legislation, research and best practice and were developed in consultation with local authority commissioners, LSCBs and voluntary and community organisations themselves.

The remaining sections of this guide provide further information in relation to these

standards.

Standard 1 - Equal Rights of All Children to Be Safe

Organisations should take steps to address the needs of all children to be protected from abuse and to combat discrimination.

Equal rights and the recognition of additional vulnerability

All voluntary, community and independent organisations working with children and young people should have a written *Safeguarding Policy* and codes of conduct which reflect their ethos and objectives in relation to safeguarding. These documents should also make it clear that all children and young people have *equal rights* to protection.

The policy may need to reflect the additional vulnerability of some groups, such as disabled children and young people or those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.



“Disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect than non-disabled children...there is also evidence that current safeguarding systems do not adequately protect disabled children from harm.”

Safeguarding Disabled Children, DfES, 2006

The voluntary, community and independent sector is one of the primary providers of services and activities for children and young people with a disability. Research has shown that they may:

- Have additional needs associated with their disability, which may increase their vulnerability to abuse.
- Often be more dependent on (a number of) adults and can spend a lot of time away from home e.g. in intimate care, and for short breaks.



Safeguarding disabled children

The DfES has a specific programme of guidance in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people with disabilities. It is called *Aiming Higher*.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00048/>

The Council for Disabled Children can also provide guidance in this area:

Council for Disabled Children, 8 Wakley Street, London, EC1V 7QE - Email: cdc@ncb.org.uk Tel: 020 7843 1900

- Be unable to recognise abusive behaviour because they may have learning difficulties or a lack of awareness - and/or reduced exposure to - the norms of adult/children interactions.

The sector is also the primary source of services and support to young carers, who often have particular risks associated with

their role and its impact on their childhood. Commissioners and LSCBs need to ensure that they take full account of the specific professional development needs of organisations which deliver such services, to equip them to identify and respond effectively to these particular safeguarding concerns.

Similarly, the sector delivers substantial support to children, young people and families from BAME communities and often helps Children's Trusts to reach marginalised communities and individuals. Having effective safeguarding arrangements in place is important as there is evidence of disproportionately higher child protection referral statistics for some groups of BAME children.



Safeguarding children from BAME communities

The NSPCC has produced some specific guidance in relation to the safeguarding of children from BAME communities:

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/trainingandconsultancy/Consultancy/CST/BME/BME_wda57859.html

Dignity and respect

The sector has traditionally been at the forefront of campaigning work around children's rights and its advocacy role has often been innovative and influential.

Voluntary, community and independent organisations should ensure that their safeguarding policies and codes of conduct reflect the legal responsibilities of adults and children in treating each other with mutual dignity and respect. A key element of this will be the extent to which organisations can demonstrate that they are committed to the active involvement of children and young people in their policy formulation and service delivery.



Hear by Right

The *Hear by Right* standards framework is designed to help secure sustained and beneficial participation of children and young people and to encourage continual improvement in an organisation's activities. It is intended to be applied to all services that affect children and young people, directly or indirectly. The framework encourages inclusion of a wide range of children and young people, while urging care in choosing approaches appropriate to different ages, abilities and understanding.

Hear by Right is based around the 'Seven S' model for organisational change: Shared values; Strategy; Structure; Systems; Staff; Skills and knowledge and Style of leadership. The standards framework has been used by local authorities, health providers voluntary, community and independent organisations, as well as Children's Trusts.


http://hbr.nya.org.uk/pages/about_hear_right

A good starting point for information in this area is provided by *Hear by Right*, a tried and tested standards framework for organisations to assess and improve policy and practice on the active involvement of children and young people (*see good practice box*).

This uses measurable standards to map and improve the level of young people's participation in decisions which affect their future. It is already being

used successfully by a wide range of organisations.

Clear codes of conduct and complaints mechanisms

	Employment law LSCBs, local authority designated officers (LADOS) and commissioners should ensure that the safeguarding policies and codes of conduct of organisations complement - and are sensitive to – their wider employment policies and practices. Commissioning contracts should also allow for allegations, complaints or grievances to be resolved under the legislative framework of employment law.
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Voluntary community and independent organisations should align their safeguarding policies and codes of conduct with their wider employment policies and practices. The expectations and requirements of the safeguarding approach should also be covered as part of any induction processes for new trustees, staff or volunteers.

Any allegations, complaints or grievances in respect of safeguarding, must also be resolved under the existing legislative framework of employment law. The required processes should be clearly described and prominently displayed for all relevant personnel and, again, be covered as part of any induction training.

Standard 2 – Policy and Procedures

Organisations should have a safeguarding policy which demonstrates a commitment to keeping children safe, makes clear what is required in relation to protecting children, and how the organisation will support this commitment.

The nature of any safeguarding policy

A safeguarding policy should be a clear *statement of intent* that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children and young people from harm. Essential components should include:

- An explicit statement that the welfare of the child is paramount and that all children and young people, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- Who the policy applies to, i.e. all trustees, staff and volunteers.
- Arrangements for informing children, young people and their families about the policy and its application.
- A clear message that *all* concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately -

this may require referrals to statutory children's services and the police.

- A commitment to the safe recruitment, selection and vetting of trustees, staff and volunteers.
- Reference to principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy and any associated policies and codes of conduct which promote children's safety and welfare, e.g. on health & safety, anti-bullying, protection of children online and photography.
- Arrangements for regular reviews of the policy, its procedures and any linked codes of conduct.



"It is important that everyone can understand the policy, and that it means something to them"

***Are They Safe? (Guide),
Children England/NSPCC,
2009***

The policy should be clear, accessible and written in a language or format that is understandable to all children, young people, carers, trustees, staff and volunteers. It may be necessary to have different versions of the policy written for these different audiences.

Approval, ownership and review

The trustees and managers of organisation have a legal responsibility to ensure that the safeguarding policy and its relevant procedures are in place, that they conform to all legal requirements, and that all relevant personnel are made aware of them.

The approval process for the policy needs to be clear and led by the trustees. They may delegate responsibility for approval to a sub-group or to managers and may wish to call on external expertise, but ultimately retain the legislative responsibility. Ensuring that the policy fits with any wider LSCB requirements will also be essential.



Policy ownership

Commissioning and safeguarding managers will need to be assured that any safeguarding policy is *owned* by the whole of the organisation. Check that websites, welcome packs and posters are used to raise awareness of the policy and investigate whether safeguarding requirements are explicitly covered during induction training.



Does it all work?

- Does everyone know what to do if they have worries about a child? How can you be sure?
- Is everyone happy with the procedures?
- Have the procedures been used and did they work?
- Could the procedures be improved?

In line with recommended practice, the policy should be reviewed and updated, section by section, over a three year period. Any supporting procedures should be underpinned by clear, step-by-step guidance, which explains what to do in different circumstances and provides clarity on

roles and responsibilities within the organisation.

Designated responsibility and written procedures

Every organisation working with children and young people should have a named person who has designated and documented responsibility for safeguarding. Their role should be clearly defined and appropriate arrangements put in place for deputising for this person in the event of their absence.

In line with the safeguarding policy and any wider requirements of the LCSB, the written procedures of the organisation will need to cover the following:

- A description of what child abuse is and the step-by-step arrangements for responding to it, when there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare or disquiet about the actions of a trustee, staff member or volunteer.
- Up to date contact details for personnel in children's services, police and health and access to NSPCC helplines.
- A process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely in line with relevant legislation and insurance company requirements.
- Guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which is legislation compliant, and which clearly states that the protection of the child is the most important consideration.
- A code of conduct for trustees, staff and volunteers which clearly identifies the consequences of breaching the code, linked to

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Organisations providing further guidance on safeguarding

In the first instance, organisations should check the Children Matter East website for further information or relevant contacts in their LSCB or VCS support partner:

www.childrenmattereast.org.uk/LocalPartners.asp

www.childrenmattereast.org.uk/Safeguarding.asp

www.pscb.org.uk

Other organisations providing support include:

NSPCC – provides a range of services and publications on child protection policies and procedures. Also offers a training and consultancy service on the implementation of safeguards to prevent abuse. Tel: 0116 234 7227 – Web: www.nspcc.org.uk/consultancy

Safe Network - jointly managed by NSPCC and Children England, and was created as a result of the Government's *Staying Safe* action plan. Tel: 0808 800 5000 – Web: www.safenetwork.org.uk

NCVYS - a membership organisation which aims to raise the profile of youth work, share good practice and influence policy development. NCVYS has published *Keeping it Safe: A Young Person-Centred Approach to Safety and Child Protection* which provides guidance on safeguarding policy, standards and procedures. Tel: 020 7422 8630 – Web: www.ncvys.org.uk

Children England - the leading membership organisation for the children, young people and families' voluntary sector provides capacity building support and information to its members and the sector. Contact Joe Levenson, Director of Policy and Communications. Tel: 020 7833 3319 – Web: www.childrenengland.org.uk

SafeChild - a registered charity dedicated to child protection and providing child protection training, CRB checks, risk assessments and child protection policies. Web: www.safechild.org.uk

disciplinary and grievance procedures.

- Safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures that include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, staff and volunteers who have direct or indirect (e.g. helpline, email) contact with children. In the case of trustees, a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check should be carried out (an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Check is soon to become a mandatory requirement).
- A complaints procedure which is an open and well-publicised way in which adults and children can voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children.

Organisations should also have systems in place to ensure that all trustees, staff and volunteers working directly with children are monitored and supervised and have opportunities to learn about safeguarding arrangements in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

Standard 3 – Staff, Trustee and Volunteer Recruitment

Organisations should minimise the risk posed to children and young people from those in a position of trust by operating safe recruitment practices.

Clear procedures, processes and checks

The quality of services to children and young people depends on the skill and commitment of those who deliver them, whether paid or unpaid, and the support they receive. Rigorous recruitment procedures will help to send out a message that voluntary, community and independent organisations are a safe place for children, young people and their families.

The chief executive and trustees of the organisation have a legal duty to ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed. Organisations should make certain that any recruitment processes are led by an individual who has undertaken appropriate 'safer recruitment' training. This is particularly important in situations where trustees may be leading the recruitment process for new senior managers.



Recruiting safely

Are all of your paid and unpaid staff required to:

1. Complete an application form?
2. Provide at least two references?
3. Produce two pieces of identification?
4. Attend an interview?
5. Have a CRB check?
6. Register with the ISA's Vetting and Barring Scheme (from July 2010)?
7. Complete an induction process?
8. Complete a trial working period?
9. Receive regular supervision, training and appraisal?

All potential paid and unpaid staff should be required to complete an application form which includes the identification of at least two references. Where short



“Some people who harm children appear very trustworthy and may hold important positions in the community. You should not take anything on trust or make assumptions based on someone’s job or position”

Are They Safe? (Guide), Children England/NSPCC, 2009

listed, they should be required to produce at least two pieces of identification which can provide verification of who they are and their current address, e.g. driving licence, passport etc. References should be taken up prior to interview. In interviews, there should be formal questioning of each applicant - by at least two people - to establish their suitability for the post and attitudes to children and young people. Offers of paid and unpaid employment need to be conditional on a CRB check and from July 2010, the requirements of the ISA’s *Vetting and Barring Scheme* (see Appendix B).

In attracting new staff, job advertisements should reflect the commitment to safeguarding and provide a clear outline of the work involved. Application forms should be designed to help answer the following questions: What experience does the applicant have of working with children and young people? What is the job history of the applicant? Are there any gaps that are not explained and which need to be followed up?

In all cases, written references should be taken up and checked. These should typically include references from the applicant’s last employer and an organisation that has knowledge of the person’s work with children and young people. Where applicants have not worked with children - and in many cases volunteers and trustees may not have done - they should not be needlessly excluded from consideration.



Ex-service users

Commissioning and safeguarding managers should satisfy themselves that where voluntary, community and independent organisations are using ex-service users as part of their provision, there are stringent safeguards in place such as enhanced supervision to ensure that risk is minimised.

The screening of applicants for criminal convictions is of utmost importance. Asking them to disclose convictions on their application form and during an interview is the first step, with a CRB check providing an essential back-up. However, it is important to recognise that many good candidates may be turned down simply because they are honest enough to declare minor or irrelevant offences that took place a long time ago. Having a clear policy with regard to ex-offenders can help.

Induction processes, trial periods and workplace supervision

All organisations should have an induction process for trustees, staff and volunteers that familiarises them with safeguarding policies and procedures. All paid and unpaid staff should also have a probationary period - that can be extended if and as required - and should receive regular supervision and appraisal.

The organisation should also ensure that there are appropriate checks and supervision arrangements in place for staff and volunteers already working in the service, especially when these come via another organisation or agency. This should include explicit guidance about the expectations of students who are on work placements or undertaking work experience, to make certain that they do not have any unsupervised contact with children and young people using the service.



Induction training

Induction is initial training given to someone who starts a new post. It provides workers with knowledge about working safely and effectively with children and young people, information about the organisation - including its purpose, values and services - and an understanding of how their work fits into the wider work of the organisation

Many organisations make use of placements and volunteering opportunities for young people, as part of their wider commitment to society or the type of service they provide, e.g. in peer mentoring. With the economic downturn and vocational 14-19 curriculum, this is likely to increase. Any unpaid work carried out by young people below 18 years of age needs to be undertaken in line with DCSF guidance.

Standard 4 – Appropriate Behaviour

A Code of Practice which describes acceptable behaviour is in place.

Written guidelines



“Creating a safeguarding culture within an organisation is much easier if everyone is fully aware of the behaviour and conduct that is expected from all”

Positively Safe: A Practical Guide to Safeguarding, Children England, 2009

All adults working with children and young people should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work. Behaviour which compromises this and indicates an unsuitability to work with children or young people can include the misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence.

Safe working practice requires all personnel to use judgement and integrity about their personal behaviour both in and out of the

workplace. This should include consideration of the behaviour of partners or other family members which might raise concerns about a potential risk to children and young people in the workplace.

A written code of practice is a useful way of providing clarity about what is expected by way of appropriate personal behaviour. It should cover both acceptable behaviour by adults towards children and young people and acceptable behaviour by children and young people themselves.

Codes of practice can take many forms, but should cover the following essential ingredients:

- An outline of the standards of conduct expected from people (*see good practice box*).
- How the organisation will respond to high risk behaviour, e.g. bullying, discrimination, violence or abusive language.
- Any sanctions that will be applied for breaking elements of the code.
- The circumstances in which physical intervention may be used, e.g. this should *never* be used as a punishment or to get young people to comply with instructions.
- The guidance, information and support available to personnel who may be working with children or young people who have recognised behavioural difficulties.



Appropriate behaviour

Think about your current organisational arrangements. Do all personnel:

- Behave in a manner that most people would view as that of a 'role model'?
- Avoid making - or encouraging others to make - unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate?
- Follow any codes of conduct you have in place without question?
- Understand the importance of ensuring that the behaviour of their partner or other family members does not call into question their suitability to work with children and young people?



A conduct statement

An example of a conduct statement employed by a VCS organisation:

What we expect

- *No shouting*
- *No smacking*
- *No discriminative or bad language*
- *Nobody should be disrespectful to anybody else*

Responding to inappropriate behaviour

Whatever code of conduct is adopted, there must be clear organisational processes for responding to behaviour that is not acceptable. For example:

- The steps to be taken after an incident, i.e. arrangements to check on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child and staff and guidance on recording (e.g. such as an incident log).

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- The circumstances where external agencies will be contacted for support or in response to concerns, e.g. statutory children's services or the police.
- Any disciplinary measures or sanctions that need to be enforced. In all cases, these should be non-violent and should not involve humiliating children or young people.



Dealing with challenging behaviour

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit is a joint NSPCC/Sport England initiative which has developed a helpful *Managing Challenging Behaviour* policy.

For further information telephone 0116 234 7278 or visit the website www.thespsu.org.uk

Having a clear code of conduct can help sector personnel to avoid getting into situations where they may make themselves vulnerable and open to false accusations. It can also encourage staff, trustees and volunteers to be more alert to the risks of inappropriate conduct.

Standard 5 – Safe Service Delivery

The health and safety of all children, young people, families, staff and volunteers is promoted.

The importance of safe service delivery

Safe service delivery is an important issue that covers many facets of an organisation's day to day working arrangements, e.g. health & safety, insurance and first aid. In some cases, organisations may fall foul of many commissioning arrangements unless they are unable to provide clear evidence that safe service delivery issues have been fully considered.

Safe service delivery embraces a wide variety of potential risks and the management of these. The table overleaf outlines some of the key elements which should be considered as part of the safeguarding approach.

Recognising and minimising risks

In recognising potential risks and deciding how best to respond to these, many organisations have adopted formal *risk assessment* procedures. These help to assess anything that can cause harm and



Carrying out a risk assessment

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a useful guide called *Five Steps to Risk Assessment* (see www.hse.gov.uk). The five steps to risk assessment are:

1. Looking for the hazards.
2. Deciding who might be harmed.
3. Identifying the risks (high, low or medium) to see whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more needs to be done.
4. Recording your findings and what action might need to be taken.
5. Reviewing and revising your assessment.

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enable organisations to reflect on the likelihood that they could affect people in the delivery of services.

Safe service delivery – key factors to consider	
People	Places
<p>Children and young people are not normally left unattended.</p> <p>An adequate number of workers of both sexes are needed to supervise activities which will vary according to the age of the child, e.g. there needs to be one worker for every eight children between five and eight years old.</p> <p>Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment needs constant adult supervision, training and protective clothing, where necessary.</p> <p>All methods of transport need to be risk assessed.</p> <p>Parental consent may be necessary for certain activities.</p> <p>Information should be collected about children’s allergies, medical problems or special needs.</p> <p>Respect for privacy of children and young people is essential and you will need to think about this in terms of areas such as changing rooms, showers and toilets and give thought to activities such as overnight stays.</p>	<p>Buildings being used need to be safe and should meet required standards, such as fire and health and safety.</p> <p>Toilets, shower areas and washing facilities should be up to standard.</p> <p>There should be sufficient heating and ventilation.</p> <p>Fire precautions need to be in place.</p> <p>First aid facilities must be readily available and adequate.</p> <p>Equipment must be adequate and checked regularly.</p> <p>There needs to be access to a telephone.</p> <p>Insurance cover should be adequate and cover all necessary activities, transport and public liability.</p>

Risk assessment involves making judgements about the balance between risks and benefits and giving consideration to the potential of physical, social and psychological harm (*see good practice box*). A comprehensive risk assessment should be carried out at least once a year and reviewed on a regular basis, ideally by the board of trustees. Adequate records for this should also be maintained for internal and external inspection purposes.



Accounting for risk assessment

Voluntary, community and independent organisations should ensure that they include the costs of risk assessments in their budgets – commissioners and safeguarding managers should acknowledge the need for this and ensure that they provide full funding for this element of safe service delivery. Children’s Trusts should also be providing consistent support and advice to VCS organisations on their risk management processes.

Policies for safe service delivery

Many of the essential arrangements for safe service delivery should be contained in your safeguarding policy or supporting personnel/health & safety policies. Some of the key considerations here should include:

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- A clear policy on lone working, for those workers for whom home visits are an integral part of their work. It is essential that appropriate guidance and risk assessment procedures are in place, particularly for visits outside of office hours or in remote or secluded locations.
- Documenting procedures for 'one to one' contact between adults and children – it is unrealistic to expect that one to one situations will never take place and where there is a requirement for an adult to be alone with a child or young person, clearly agreed procedures and explicit safeguards must be in place.
- Identifying clear protocols for the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and photographic equipment, e.g. Internet use, mobile telephones, texting, e-mails, videos, web-cams and cameras.



Internet safety

Think about the ways that your organisation supports children and young people in the use of ICT:

- Are computers positioned so that everyone can use them and everyone can see them being used?
- Are computer users supervised and are there explicit limits to the amount of time children and young people can spend online?
- Do you talk to children and young people about the sorts of sites they can and cannot visit and discuss why some sites are dangerous and open to misuse?
- Are children and young people given clear guidance about never giving out personal details over the Internet e.g. surname, address, phone number or e-mail address?
- Do you advise children and young people never to arrange a face-to-face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the Internet?
- Do you encourage children and young people to report anything they come across that they feel is abusive, offensive or makes them feel uncomfortable?
- Have you explored the use of filters which block access to certain Internet sites?

Having considered these questions, do any of your existing arrangements need to change?

Standard 6 – Training and Support

Staff and Volunteers have access to training and support to assist them in their role in protecting children.

Supporting people in their safeguarding role

Voluntary, community and independent organisations need to provide training and personal support to their staff, trustees and volunteers in delivering improved outcomes for children and young people. This is particularly important in safeguarding, for those personnel who may work, or have contact with, children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect.

Initial induction training should be given to all new recruits to familiarise them with the organisation's policies, codes of conduct and working practices. The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) has developed a helpful set of *induction standards* which identify what new recruits should know, understand and be able to do within six months of starting work. As a minimum, new recruits should receive basic child protection or 'Level One' training.

Beyond the period of their initial induction, all relevant personnel should have access to further, training and development activities covering:

- Child protection policies and procedures.
- The recognition of child abuse and appropriate responses, personal behaviour and professional boundaries.
- Health & safety policies and procedures, including risk assessment, first aid and fire safety.
- Equal opportunities, diversity, complaints, grievance procedures and disciplinary processes.



Supervision, appraisal and personal development

Supervision - a time for staff to reflect on their own development and any issues affecting their work. It should enable problems to be shared and dealt with at an early stage. Paid workers should have supervision at least once a month. Because people who volunteer usually have little extra time on their hands, it is sometimes more difficult to arrange formal supervision, although this is not an excuse for supervision not taking place at all. If working with a large number of volunteers, it may be appropriate to run group supervision as well as individual supervision. This should be held at least once a quarter.

Appraisal – should take place once or twice a year. It provides an opportunity to review how staff feel and allow for discussion on career development. It allows the supervisor and worker to raise any concerns that have built up over a period of time and provides an opportunity to review any changes in the personal circumstances of the worker, e.g. family or health problems. Appraisals can help to check that workers feel confident about using policies and procedures and to identify training and development needs.

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- Safe recruitment and supervision (for those responsible for selecting and supporting staff and volunteers).
- Specialist training relevant to any specific services provided.

For staff and trustees who are taking a designated lead on child protection matters, there needs to be a recognised training programme to equip them with the knowledge they require for formal safeguarding procedures to be implemented. For these personnel and sector organisations that routinely work on safeguarding issues, 'Level Two' child protection training or 'Working Together' foundation stage training should be provided. Some staff with specialist roles may also require specific training in areas such as 'domestic violence' or 'safeguarding disabled children'.



Training information

Some areas offer a half-day open access course on safeguarding without the need for a referral, e.g.:

http://www.younglives.org.uk/attachments/095_Designed%20Safeguarding%20Training%20Flyer.pdf

For training on intervention and prevention work organisations may need to access the training provided by their LSCB, e.g.:

www.pscb.org.uk

For information on induction training, visit:

<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/induction-standards>

Establishing contacts with other organisations



Promoting safeguarding knowledge

Commissioners should be specific about the level of safeguarding skills/training required on any contract – organisations need to be able to cost any particular training requirements. Commissioners need to assure themselves that safeguarding standards are being maintained and include checks in the performance management arrangements for any contract.

Commissioners should also be working with partners - including the sector, workforce leads and LSCBs - to ensure that pathways to the right levels of training are consistent and consistently applied. And within any contracts there should be an emphasis on partnership-focused solutions.

Safeguarding managers need to work closely with their commissioning counterparts and the sector in supporting pathways to 'Level One' training. Although it is not a statutory responsibility to provide the training, the duty to collaborate could reasonably be assumed to cover the input required. They also need to be clear about the costs and quality of any 'Level Two' training they provide, and offer support to both commissioners and the sector in understanding the roles needed to keep children and young people safe.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children depends on the effective co-ordination and joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Staff working in the sector need to establish contacts with key child protection agencies in their area, including LSCBs, which are the main statutory mechanism for agreeing how the organisations in each locality will co-operate in safeguarding children and young people.

For further details of the organisations you will need to maintain contacts with locally, please visit the Children Matter East website:

<http://www.childrenmattereast.org.uk/LocalPartners.asp>

Standard 7 – Communication and Information

The organisation communicates its policies and procedures to staff, volunteers and service users, and involves them in development and review.

A commitment to safeguarding

Voluntary, community and independent organisations need to be explicit about their commitment to keeping children and young people safe and promoting their wellbeing. In part this is because there is a much stronger legislative framework. However, in an increasingly market-orientated and competitive environment, an explicit commitment might also be viewed as a robust measure of quality. Articulating this commitment may require you to think about the wording of your constitution, business plans, AGM reports and marketing material.

Communicating with all stakeholders

It is important that you communicate your safeguarding policies and procedures to all relevant stakeholders. And be careful not to forget the importance of communicating with the children and young people you support – they have a right to be listened to and heard.

Organisations should be placing the views of children, young people and their families at the centre of the safeguarding process. Involving service users in the development of your policies and procedures should help to ensure that your organisation has a culture of honesty and openness and that key safety issues are identified by participants.



“As you develop your safeguards, remember to include all the good things you do. Make sure you take account of children for whom English is not a first language or who use different communication methods, such as Braille or sign language”

Are They Safe? (Guide), Children England/NSPCC, 2009



Tips on communication

- Involve service users on an ongoing basis.
- Make any consultation exercises interesting, fun and rewarding.
- Use plain language, which is jargon-free.
- Allow participants time to think through options in a non-judgmental environment.
- If required, put children in touch with a mentor who can represent their views.

It is also vital that children, young people and their families are clear about where to go for help if they wish to report actual or suspected abuse. In tackling this, many organisations provide some form of signposting service, such as simple flow charts - explaining what should happen and where to go - or leaflets/posters on, ‘What to do if...’ Other helpful paperwork can include newsletters, website information or welcome packs.

Staff and volunteers should also know when and where they need to report concerns and at what level. They should also have direction on the recording of incidents. Similarly, there should be a clear understanding of the roles and legal responsibilities of trustees and senior managers and any staff that have a designated responsibility for child protection matters. This information should be regularly reviewed, updated and shared in trustee/management meetings, supervision and team meetings.



Contact details

Key contact details must be provided for your local children's social services department, the police and emergency medical team. As a matter of course, this information should be prominently displayed in every setting.

An up to date list of key contacts is often a standard part of the documented child protection procedures of each LSCB or Children's Trust.



Responding to complaints

Think about the ways that your organisation responds to complaints:

- Have you defined what a 'complaint' is?
- Is it clear what children, parents or workers can do if they have a complaint and what will happen as a result?
- Do you have any processes for reassuring those who might make a complaint and keeping them informed of progress in dealing with their concern?
- Do you have an identified timetable for dealing with complaints and procedures for signposting complainants to other sources of help if they are not happy with the outcome?
- Do you keep records of any complaints dealt with and monitor information on the number and nature of any complaints to see if patterns are occurring?

Having considered these questions, do any of your existing arrangements need to change?

Information sharing

Safeguarding, commissioning and integrated working rely on effective information sharing, although this can be a sensitive and challenging issue. Great care and attention needs to be given to all contractual requirements to share information and any such arrangements need to take account of the requirements of the Common Assessment Framework and ContactPoint. For further information on this, please visit the Children Matter East website:

<http://www.childrenmattereast.org.uk/IntegratedWorking.asp>

Standard 8 – Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The organisation has systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its safeguarding policy and procedures.

Ensuring that your safeguarding approach remains effective and up to date

It is essential that you review the effectiveness of your safeguarding approach on a regular basis. Policies and procedures should be checked for accuracy annually and formally reviewed at least every three years. They should also be revised - as required – in line with new legislation, guidance or feedback from service users. In updating the approach, you should be careful to ensure that there is appropriate consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including children, young people and their families.



“Everyone needs to know about the safeguards you have put in place, and the trustees, management committee (or others) need to know that the procedures and guidance are being followed correctly”

Are They Safe? (Guide), Children England/NSPCC, 2009

Given its importance, you should ensure that there are regular reports on your safeguarding approach at relevant trustee and management meetings. Grant-funded organisations may be required to provide evidence to commissioners that they are considering safeguarding issues on a regular basis, both strategically and operationally.

Using some form of self-audit tool is a good way of linking risks, incidents and actions to evaluation and performance. An example of one such approach is contained in the appendices to the document *Children, Young People and Families Safeguarding Standards Applied by Local Authorities and Children’s Trusts When Commissioning Services from the Community and Voluntary Sector* (July 2009).

A FINAL WORD

Summary

It is important that all voluntary, community and independent organisations in the eastern region have effective safeguarding systems and practices in place. Section 11 of the *Children Act 2004* places a statutory duty on all agencies – whether they are public, private or voluntary – delivering services with public money, to do so. In practice, this means that organisations will need to follow best practice in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and be able to evidence this if they want to receive any kind of public funding.



“The majority of child abuse can be prevented. For this reason it is very important that everybody who works with children in any way puts safeguards in place.

It will make a difference”

Are They Safe? (Guide), Children England/NSPCC, 2009

Next Steps



Where do you go from here?

Look back over the material you have covered in the guide and consider:

- (a) What key action points can you identify to improve the way that you will be tackling the safeguarding agenda, i.e. what three or four things might you *have to do*, *need to do* or *want to do*?

- (b) Have you identified any further gaps in your knowledge or shortcomings in your personal skills which might help you in tackling the safeguarding agenda? If so, identify these below and think about how best to address your training or development need, e.g. further reading/research, attending courses, coaching, mentoring, work shadowing etc.

Appendix A

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Printed publications

Are They Safe?(Guide), Children England/National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), 2009.

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work With Children and Young People, Allegations Management Advisers, 2007.

Keeping it Safe: A Young Person-Centred Approach to Safety and Child Protection, NCVYS, 2009.

Positively Safe: A Practical Guide to Safeguarding, Children England, 2009.

Relevant legislation: *Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Protection of Children Act 1999, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.*

Safe From Harm: A Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales, Home Office, 1993.

Safeguarding Disabled Children: A Resource for Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, DfES, 2006.

Statutory Guidance on Making Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, HM Government, 2007.

The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families, Department of Health (DH), HO and DfES, 2001.

What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused, DfES, 2003.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government, 2006 (to be revised in 2009).

Useful websites

www.childrenengland.org.uk

Website of the leading membership organisation for the children, young people and families voluntary sector.

www.childrenmattereast.org.uk

Provides information on the local support available to VCS organisations working with children, young people and their families in the eastern region.

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk

Website of the Children's Workforce Development Council which contains information on induction arrangements and work around the *Common Core*.

www.dfes.gov.uk

A section of the department's website is devoted to 'Aiming Higher for Disabled Children' and provides guidance on the particular safeguarding needs of children and young people with disabilities.

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Website providing details of relevant legislation and guidance on the *Common Assessment Framework* and local safeguarding boards.

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

A section of the Home Office website provides information, guidance and legislation for professionals working in the safeguarding area.

www.isa-gov.org

Website of the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

www.ncvys.org.uk

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Website of the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services. Provides useful guidance on a number of initiatives to promote safeguarding, e.g. *Sound Systems Accreditation*.

www.nya.org.uk

Website of the National Youth Agency. It contains information on the *Hear by Right* framework for developing the participation of children and young people.

www.safechild.co.uk

Website of SAFEchild, a registered charity dedicated to child protection which provides training, CRB checks, risk assessments and policy guidance.

www.safenetwork.org.uk

A website managed jointly by Children England and the NSPCC which was created as a result of the government's *Staying Safe* action plan.

Appendix B

THE VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME

Background

From October 2009, the system for checking the suitability of potential employees and volunteers will start to change. The new Vetting and Barring Scheme will require all paid employees and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) before commencing work.

The ISA was created specifically for the Vetting and Barring Scheme and will work in partnership with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), which will gather relevant information on every person who wants to work or volunteer with vulnerable people.

The CRB will receive applications to the ISA and will gather and monitor information. It will also use the information previously found in:

- The Protection of Vulnerable Adults (PoVA) list.
- The Protection of Children Act (PoCA) list.
- List 99 (a list of people considered unsuitable for work with children, held by the Department for Children, Schools and Families).

The ISA will be responsible for assessing this information and deciding who should be placed on barred lists, i.e. who will not be permitted to work with children, and for keeping a record of those individuals. There will be a single list of those barred from working with children and a separate, but aligned, list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults.

A distinction is made between 'regulated' and 'controlled' activity.

What is 'regulated activity'?

- Any activity of a specified nature that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively and/or overnight, e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment and transportation.
- Any activity that is in a specified place that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently or intensively, e.g. schools and care homes.
- Fostering and childcare.

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- Any activity that involves people in certain defined positions of responsibility, e.g. school governors, directors of social services and trustees of certain charities.

'Regulated activity' is when the activity is 'frequent' (once a month or more) or 'intensive' (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period).

How does 'regulated activity' work?

- Anyone providing a regulated activity must be registered with the ISA.
- It will be a criminal offence, punishable by up to five years in prison, for a barred individual to take part in a regulated activity for any length of time.
- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to take on an individual in regulated activity without checking that person's status.
- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to allow a barred individual, or an individual who is not yet registered with the ISA, to work for any length of time in any regulated activity and can result in imprisonment or a fine of up to £5,000.

What is a 'controlled activity'?

- Frequent or intensive support work in general health settings, the NHS and further education, e.g. cleaners, caretakers, shop workers, catering staff, car park attendants and receptionists.
- Individuals working for specified organisations (e.g. a local authority) who have frequent access to sensitive records about children and vulnerable adults.
- Support work in adult social care settings – such jobs include day centre cleaners and those with access to social care records.

'Controlled activity' is when this type of activity is 'frequent' (once a month or more) or 'intensive' (takes place on three or more days in a 30-day period).

How does 'controlled activity' work?

- It will be a criminal offence for an employer to take on an individual in a controlled activity without checking that individual's status.
- An employer can permit a barred individual to work in a controlled activity only if sufficient safeguards are put in place.

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No distinction is made between paid and unpaid work, and all rules will apply to both volunteers and employees.

There will be a £64 fee to apply to the scheme, paid once by the employee, and individuals will not need to apply again if they change jobs. Fees will be waived for volunteers, although if they later need to be part of the scheme for paid work they will be required to pay the fee. Employers or volunteer-led organisations will not be charged to check the ISA status of potential employees or volunteers.

Employers with a legitimate interest in a person registered with the scheme can sign up to be automatically contacted should their status change – that is, if new information leads to an ISA decision to bar them.

The scheme will be phased in over five years from 12 October 2009.

From 12 October 2009:

- Two new ISA barred lists will be created.
- Access to these new ISA lists will be available upon request as part of an Enhanced CRB check.
- Eligibility for Enhanced CRB checks will expand to include more employment and voluntary positions.
- Standard CRB checks will no longer be available for those working with children or vulnerable adults.

From July 2010:

- Individuals will be able via registered/umbrella bodies, to apply to the CRB for ISA-registration if they are applying to work with children and/or vulnerable adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Employers will be able to express an interest in a person's ISA-registration and be informed of any changes to that person's ISA-registration status.
- The CRB will introduce a new application form to allow applications for ISA-registration and CRB checks to be made on the same form.

From November 2010:

- It will be a legal requirement for individuals to register with the ISA if they intend to work or currently work with children and/or vulnerable adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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An ISA registration will only tell you that there is no known information preventing an individual from working with children. As an employer or volunteer-involving organisation you may need to know additional information for a particular role that would only be disclosed through an Enhanced CRB Disclosure, such as whether the individual has been convicted of fraud. In this case, in addition to checking the individual's ISA status, you will also need to apply to the CRB for an Enhanced Disclosure. An application for a CRB check can be done via a local umbrella body registered with the CRB, and these are listed on the CRB website (www.crb.gov.uk)

It is important to keep in mind that checking an individual's ISA status is the minimum safeguard used to prevent unsuitable people working with children. Potential abusers will often not have been previously cautioned or convicted of a related offence; a check cannot predict the future.

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