Safeguarding Children and Young People - Policy

Document Control

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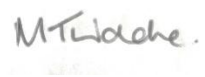
Safeguarding Leads: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Catherine Marchant, tel 07739524970 and Service Manager, Julie Robinson, tel: 07534944058

Signed



Therese Liddle, Chair

23rd July 2025

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Safeguarding and Protecting Children POLICY

In this policy, safeguarding children and promoting their welfare means

- identifying needs and risks in the child's world to ensure their well being,
- protecting them from maltreatment,
- preventing impairment of their health and development, and
- ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Further information about definitions, categories and indicators of abuse are to be found in Appendix 1.

Our Basis and Values

At Impact Family Services (IFS):

Our Mission is to improve relationships across families, to strengthen family resilience and reduce family breakdown.

Our Vision is to enable all children and families to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances, help children speak out and adults take action on abuse.

Our Safeguarding and Protecting Children's policy and associated procedures reinforce our values, corporate responsibility and uphold our statutory duties. They demonstrate our compliance with UK legislation and other four nations government legislation, policy guidance, research and good practice. This is challenging and sensitive work and it is vital that our staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do to safeguard their welfare.

Our Approach to Safeguarding

Senior Management Responsibilities

There is a lead director responsible to the trustees for safeguarding across the organisation. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Catherine Marchant, tel:07739524970 is the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation and will work in line with national legislation and guidance. The CEO is supported by the organisation's Service Manager, Julie Robinson, tel:

07534044580, who promotes safer working practices and oversight of allegations of serious incidents, case reviews, and appropriate training.

Procedures and Practice

The organisation has clearly defined procedures for identifying and taking action where there are safeguarding concerns about actual or suspected incidents or abuse. Each service area has individuals who are competent to advise staff and volunteers and can respond to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that actions are always respectful, professional, and based on what we know to be good practice.

Safe Recruitment and Safe Practice procedures

IFS has a rigorous and robust recruitment procedure in place to ensure that we appoint staff that are appropriately qualified and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a quality service.

Recruitment is undertaken in line with IFS robust safeguarding principles, including references spanning 10 years disclosure and enhanced Disclosure Barring Services (DBS) for all posts. Existing staff and volunteers are re-checked every three years.

All those who work for or on behalf of IFS, including paid and unpaid staff, students and volunteers are required to sign and abide by the organisation's employee handbook.

Learning Development & Training

All staff, and volunteers in Children's Services, are required to complete a mandatory e-learning Safeguarding module and Domestic Violence Awareness module (provided by Local Authority) within the first four weeks of employment, as part of our induction process. Staff and managers working directly with children and young people are also required to attend bespoke safeguarding training courses in line with their specific responsibilities and must update this training every three years.

It is the responsibility of the individual and their line manager to ensure mandatory training is completed. A training log, with training certificates or evidence of attendance should be stored in each employee, volunteer or student personnel file.

Supervision and team meetings are used to discuss safeguarding issues, changes in regulation and best practice. All training and requirements for

additional specialist training are recorded and discussed as part of IFS Annual Performance Appraisal.

Managing Risk

IFS operates an effective procedure for assessing and managing risks regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. A procedure for reporting, recording and reviewing allegations and significant incidents can be found on page 9 in this document. This procedure in turn informs practice, risk assessment and management procedures.

Records

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child or a vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm. The organisation has a clear policy on the management of records, confidentiality, and sharing of information. Trustees, staff, students and volunteers are clear about what information can be shared with relevant people within and outside of the organisation.

Purpose

The overall purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to protect the welfare of children and young people using and receiving services we provide. This includes responding to direct concerns of safeguarding raised by children and young people.

Our safeguarding policy aims is to achieve the following three objectives by being vigilant in the execution of our duties:

- Creating a culture where children are valued and their right to safety and respect is upheld.
- Actively managing risk to minimise circumstances where children using IFS services may suffer harm.
- Working collaboratively with other organisations to ensure that children are safeguarded and protected.

Scope

These policies and procedures apply across all teams within the Organisation to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and other workers are

clear about their role, responsibilities and expectations in responding to any safeguarding concerns regarding children at risk. We hope all employees, students and volunteers understand safeguarding is **everyone's** responsibility, and this document aims to provides clarity to enable us to act on any concerns regarding a child's welfare.

Everyone who works or volunteers for IFS has a duty to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare alongside a duty to recognise, respond and share concerns or worries about possible abuse and harm in a timely fashion. Everyone who works, is on placement, or volunteers for IFS will be supported to make decisions as to how to proceed in a way that is in the best interests and safety of the child or young person.

IFS Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures must be followed alongside local inter-agency procedures, protocols & arrangements devised by Local Safeguarding Children Boards/Regional Safeguarding Children Boards; and IFS Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy & Procedure should be referred to where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

Accountability Framework

The Trustees have a duty of care, which includes taking necessary steps to safeguard and protect children. They will act in children's best interests and ensure that they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect IFS assets and reputation.

The CEO and the Management Team are the accountable managers responsible for the management of serious safeguarding incidents. The CEO, Catherine Marchant, tel: 07739524970, is the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation. They hold responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures and effective management of safeguarding concerns in their services.

Line managers and staff; all safeguarding and child protection concerns should be addressed through respective line management structures in accordance with this Policy and Procedures.

The **CEO** is responsible for providing advice and support to managers on best practice in adhering to this policy and procedures, safer working practices and oversight of allegations, serious incidents, and significant case reviews.

Appendix 1

Glossary and Definitions

Child	• Children Acts 1989 & 2004 and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995 define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. • The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines a child in relation to the powers & duties of the local authority. Young people between the age of 16 & 18 who are still subject to a compulsory supervision requirement by the Children's Hearing can be viewed as a child. • The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) applies to "all human beings under the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."
Safeguarding	In England, safeguarding children and promoting their welfare means • protecting them from maltreatment, • preventing impairment of their health and development, and • ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. In Wales the Social Services & Well Being Act imposes duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers that require them to work to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support. In Scotland, the term Safeguarding refers to the collective principles and responsibilities of the GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child) approach to identify and address needs and risks within a framework of the child's whole world and well being at the earliest opportunity.
Child Protection	Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This action refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. Alongside physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect this includes children affected by: domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour-based violence, 'missing' children, young

	runaways, children exploited by gangs, child sexual exploitation and trafficking. This list is not exhaustive. More information about working with children affected by these issues, including definitions, tools, research and good practice information, is provided in the Barnardo's Online Research and Information Service.
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). An adult or adults, or another child or children may abuse them.
Physical Abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional Abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child though it may also occur alone.
Sexual Abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect	The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home abandonment); • protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
Domestic Abuse and Violence	The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: emotional, financial, physical, psychological, or sexual behaviours. From December 2015, coercive or controlling domestic abuse is a crime punishable by up to 5 years in prison, under section 76 of the Serious Crimes Act 2015. This relates to a purposeful pattern of behaviour, which takes place over time, in order for one individual to exert power, control, or coercion over another.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	Sexual exploitation of children and young people **(CSE)** under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a safeguarding issue, illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. There is a mandatory duty for regulated professionals to report cases of FGM in England and Wales. This applies where the victim is under 18 years old and has disclosed FGM directly and should be reported to the Police and social care department. This is a personal duty, which requires the employee who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility

	cannot be transferred to anyone else. The only exception is if you know that another employee has already made a report. Therefore, there is no requirement to make a second referral.
Regulated Profession	A regulated profession is one, which is governed by a professional organisation or regulatory body to ensure that professionals meet the required standards of practice and competence for that occupation.
Prevent Concern	Children and young adults can be vulnerable to exposure to or involvement with groups or individuals who advocate intimidation as a means to a political or ideological end. These groups can include those promoting "violence from extreme right-wing or other ethnic or religious organisations" Prevent Strategy (2011). Prevent is part of the Government counter terrorism strategy CONTEST and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent focuses on all forms of terrorism and extreme ideologies and operates in a pre-criminal space, providing support and redirection to vulnerable children and adults at risk of being groomed into terrorist activities before any crimes are committed.
Extremism	Defined in the Prevent Strategy 2011 as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
Terrorism	Defined by the Terrorism Act 2000 as: an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system.
Radicalisation	Defined as the process by which children and young people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. Radicalisation should be considered as an 'additional vulnerability' under Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2015). There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.
Trafficking and Modern Slavery	The United Nations defines trafficking in children and adults as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, or abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purposes of exploitation. Modern slavery is a complex crime that takes a number of different forms. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.
Gang Exploitation	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. Safeguarding procedures can provide a key tool for all agencies working with young people to assist them when working together to prevent young people from being drawn into gangs, to support those who have been drawn into the margins of gangs; and to protect those who are at immediate risk of harm either as members or victims of gangs. Gang activity can also be used as the means through which children and young people are sexually exploited and/or trafficked.
Young Carer	A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).
Private Fostering	Private fostering falls within safeguarding as it relates to the legal status, wellbeing and protection of children under 16 years, or under 18 years if disabled, who reside for more than 28 days in the care of someone who is not a parent, close relative, or someone with parental responsibility. The duty here is to ensure reporting of these children to the relevant local authorities. In Scotland, private fostering is the term used when a parent/guardian places a child who is under school leaving age (16 years) in the care of someone else, who is not a close relative or officially approved Foster Carer, for a period of more than 28 days
Allegation	An allegation is information, which comes to light from any source which suggests that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, or had the potential to harm a child or adult at risk. Although there are some differences in how allegations are handled across the four nations, the process for responding to allegations remains the same.
Well Being under the Social Services and Well Being Act Act	Wellbeing under the SS&WB Act means well-being in relation to any of the following: (a) physical and mental health and emotional well-being; (b) protection from abuse and neglect; (c) education, training and recreation; (d) domestic, family and personal relationships; (e) contribution made to society; (f) securing rights and entitlements; (g) social and economic well-being; (h) suitability of living accommodation. **In relation to a child**, "well-being" also includes— (a) physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development; (b) "welfare" as that word is interpreted for the purposes of the Children Act 1989.

	In relation to an adult, "well-being" also includes— (a) control over day to day life; (b) participation in work.
Serious Safeguarding Incident	A Serious Safeguarding Incident occurs under the following circumstances: • Unexpected or avoidable death of child/young person/adult at risk in receipt of services from IFS • Serious harm to child/young person/adult at risk where a life- threatening outcome required intervention, • Actions of a Service user which caused death or serious injury to a child or adult • An incident likely to result in adverse media attention and/or potential reputational damage for IFS. • An incident that is serious enough that it may lead to a Serious Case Review, and/or any case which indicates organised crime or large-scale abuse, • An incident likely to raise concern about professional practice or implications for IFS's policy; • An incident which raises concern about possible radicalisation of any member of staff/volunteer/adult/child/vulnerable adult • Where a registered provider (residential or early years) is required to close by an external body.

Signed:

Therese Liddle
Chair of Trustees