

## Safeguarding children and young people policy and procedures

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### Document details and review

Organisation	Tell Us North
Responsible person	Chief Executive/Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date approved	January 2022
Approved by	Tell Us North Board
Reviewed	January 2022
Next review	January 2023

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

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

## 1.1 Tell Us North (TUN) recognises that:

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

## 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support the recognition of and prevention of harm by raising an awareness of abuse and neglect in children and young people.
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on the procedures they should adopt if they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or be at risk of harm.
- Offer protection for the children and young people who receive TUN services including the children of adult clients and members.

## 1.3 The policy applies to all directors, committee members, staff, associates, and volunteers working on behalf of TUN.

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

## 1.5 TUN will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Employing staff and volunteers using stringent recruitment processes.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers, complete mandatory safeguarding induction training regardless of their role.
- Having strong child protection policies and procedures, including a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers, staff, and volunteers.
- Recognising that of the children in need of child protection and social care support, many have parents with mental health issues, substance misuse concerns or incidences of domestic violence.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing effective management for TUN staff and volunteers through support, supervision, and training.
- Having effective complaints and whistleblowing policies in place.
- Including consideration of child visitors and young clients in TUN risk analysis and procedures on the use of Tell Us North office and facilities.

- 1.6 TUN will review its safeguarding policy, procedures and practice annually or where there is significant change.
- 1.7 This policy will be available on our website and any website created for a service we run. All Directors, committee members, staff and volunteers are required to review this policy as part of our ongoing safeguarding training and support.

## **2. Safeguarding children and young people procedures — purpose and aim**

- 2.1. These procedures set out how TUN will respond to a concern raised about a child or young person, which might be because of what someone says or how the child behaves. They apply to all Directors, committee members, staff, associates, and volunteers working on behalf of TUN

## **3. Tell Us North designated safeguarding lead for Tell Us North for safeguarding children and young people**

- 3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for TUN is the named person responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of children and young people. The DSL will make the decision about what action to be taken in the event of concerns being raised. In their absence the named deputy will be available for staff and volunteers to consult with.
- 3.2 The DSL and deputy are also the named leads for prevent under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

### **3.3 DSL for safeguarding children and young people for TUN**

Name	Siobhan O'Neil, Chief Executive
Telephone	07376561765
Email	siobhan@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk
Address	MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS

### **3.4 If the DSL is not available, you should contact the Deputy**

Post of deputy	TUN Board Member
Name of deputy	Kate Israel
Mobile Number	0191 215 0309

### **3.5 The role of the TUN DSL for safeguarding children and young people:**

- Ensuring the TUN Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures are followed and act as a source of advice on safeguarding matters.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers know how to contact the NSPCC, Children's Social Care, and Police force responsible for dealing with child protection concerns.
- Receiving reports of allegations against staff or volunteers.
- Making sure that concerns are acted on and clearly recorded in writing.

- Reporting concerns to the appropriate and responsible team:
  - Newcastle Initial Response Service.
  - Newcastle Emergency Duty Team.
  - Gateshead Children’s Social Care Referral and Assessment Team.
  - Gateshead Children’s Social Care Emergency Duty Team.
  - Children’s Social Care for any other relevant local authority where necessary, or the police.
- Urgent referrals should be reported immediately by those who become aware of them, even if the DSL is not available. It is the role of the DSL for safeguarding children and young people to ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to do this.
- Following up any referrals or allegations, confirming verbal and telephone referrals are made in writing and ensuring the issues have been addressed.
- Making sure that any records are kept safely, securely and in line with data protection requirements.
- Make the policies available on the Healthwatch and TUN websites.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is a standing item on the TUN Board meetings.

#### **4. Reference to other policies and procedures**

4.1 The TUN safeguarding children and young people policy and procedures should be read along with:

- TUN policies with particular reference to policies on safe [Recruitment and selection](#), [Health and safety](#), [Code of conduct](#) and [Whistleblowing](#).
- Staff and volunteers who work with children and young people should use the latest version of the relevant local multi agency procedures/practice guidance. If online procedures have been printed off, the date should be checked before use thus ensuring the version is recent. Paper copies should be discarded following use.

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

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

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

- **Physical abuse** — Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing harm to the 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** — can cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve the child having feelings of being unworthy, being unloved and inadequate, prevented from expressing their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of how they communicate, name calling, bullying, cyber bullying, causing fear, discriminatory (including homophobic, racist, sexist, or based on a person’s disability or faith).
- **Sexual abuse** — Sexual abuse involves forcing a child to take part in sexual activity rape, inappropriate touching or physical contact including indecent assault by

penetration, non-penetrative sexual activity such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and rubbing outside of clothing, watching pornography, sexual exploitation.

- **Neglect** — is the persistent failure to meet a child's needs whether physical or psychological-, acts of omission, leaving in soiled clothes, failing to feed properly, leaving alone, failure to protect them from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure access to medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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

- **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator through violence or the threat of violence. The victim which, can involve both male and female may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology. Included also are children who have been trafficked for the purposes of exploitation.

- **Honour based violence**

Honour based violence and abuse can take many forms, for example, threatening behaviour and verbal abuse, control (financial psychological and physical), family disownment, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment, isolation and restriction or freedom committed due to so called 'honour'. Murders in the name of 'so-called' honour, (often called honour killings) are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family.

- **Radicalisation**

The process of a person being influenced or coerced into supporting or being involved in violent extremist ideologies including terrorism.

- **Trafficking**

Any child tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and transported for exploitative reasons such as, forced to work or sold is considered to be a trafficking victim.

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

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

5.3 **Everyone has a responsibility of reporting child abuse/suspected child abuse.**

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

## **6. How to recognise the signs of abuse**

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

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

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

## **7. Risk assessment: mapping TUN work where there may be contact with children and young people under 18**

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

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

7.2 **Examples of work currently undertaken by TUN where a concern may arise:**

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

## **8. How to respond to a child or young person who is telling you about abuse**

- Respond in a way appropriate to the child's age and understanding.
- Reassure the child or young person concerned; abuse is not their fault.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told or have witnessed as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.

- Tell the child or young person that the information will be treated seriously.
- Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.

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

- Call an ambulance if required.
- Call the police if a crime has been committed.
- Keep yourself, staff, children, and clients safe.
- Preserve evidence.
- Inform the DSL in TUN.
- Record what happened on the [Children's Safeguarding Log](#).

## 9. Reporting abuse or allegations of abuse

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

### 9.2 Advice

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

### 9.3 In Newcastle

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

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

### 9.4 In Gateshead

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

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

### 9.5. Raising a concern

9.5.1 If you are concerned about a situation, you should refer the matter immediately to the DSL, who will decide whether to report the matter further. The concern should be written down using the [Children's Safeguarding Log](#). If further investigation is necessary, the DSL will refer the matter to Children's Social Care.

## 9.6 Make a referral

9.6.1 If you think a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed, you should make a referral to children's social care using the agreed local children's safeguarding partnership process.

## 9.7. In Newcastle

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

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

Initial Response Service	0191 277 2500 (weekdays 8.45am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 278 7878 (out of hours)
Northumbria Police	101 (or in an emergency 999)
Website	<a href="https://nccportal.newcastle.gov.uk/forms/referral/public">https://nccportal.newcastle.gov.uk/forms/referral/public</a>

## 9.8. In Gateshead

9.8.1 All professionals must make a referral using the following link  
<http://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9298/Child-protection-child-in-need-child-care-concern-referral>.

9.8.2 For advice contact the Gateshead Children's Social Care Referral and Assessment Team or if it is outside office hours as below call the children's social care emergency duty team or the police.

Children's Social Care	0191 433 2653 (weekdays 8.30am to 5pm)
Emergency Duty Team	0191 477 0844 (out of hours)
Northumbria Police	101 (or in an emergency 999)
Website	<a href="http://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9179/Report-concerns-about-a-child">www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9179/Report-concerns-about-a-child</a>

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

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

9.8.4 If you have intelligence to share with the police, email:  
[forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk)

## 9.9. Urgent

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

## **10. Responding to allegations of abuse against a TUN member of staff or volunteer**

- 10.1 If you hear of an allegation against a TUN member of staff or volunteer you should refer the matter immediately to the DSL who will decide what action to take.
- 10.2 If it is outside office hours and the matter cannot wait until the next working day, then you should contact the relevant authority:
  - Newcastle Emergency Duty Team on 0191 278 7878.
  - Gateshead Emergency Duty Team on 0191 477 0844.
  - The NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 for advice about a child.
- 10.3 You should not question the person making the allegation any further however if it is a child, you should respond appropriately to their age and understanding.
- 10.4 The allegation should be written down using the [Children's Safeguarding Log](#).
- 10.5 If there is a risk of significant harm to a child or further investigation is necessary, the DSL will refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for managing child abuse allegations against staff and volunteers.

### **10.6 The Newcastle LADO:**

Name	Melanie Scott
Telephone number	0191 277 4636
Email	<a href="mailto:melanie.scott@newcastle.gov.uk">melanie.scott@newcastle.gov.uk</a>

### **10.7. The Gateshead LADO:**

Name	Nicholas Leon
Telephone number	0191 433 3554
Email	<a href="mailto:nicholasleon@gateshead.gov.uk">nicholasleon@gateshead.gov.uk</a>

## **11. Recording and managing confidential information**

- 11.1 TUN is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around safeguarding children and young people or child protection should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information, please see the TUN Confidentiality Policy.
- 11.2 All allegations and concerns should be recorded on the [Children's Safeguarding Log](#). The information should be factual and not based on opinion. It should record what the person tells you (including dates and times if available), what you have seen, and should record witnesses if appropriate.
- 11.3 The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with data protection. Paper information will be secured in a locked filing cabinet in the

organisation. Access to this information both paper and electronic will be by the DSL and relevant TUN manager. The Chief Executive of TUN will keep information regarding any allegations about staff members.

## **12. Safer recruitment — Disclosure and Barring Service**

- 12.1 The safeguarding regulations of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 came into effect from October 2009 and are in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. In **England**, the statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (Department for Education, 2018) highlights the responsibility of all organisations working with children to have safer recruitment practices in place.
- 12.2 All staff and volunteers will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure. TUN will adhere to all duties under the relevant legislation and guidance in its recruitment, confidentiality, disciplinary and complaints procedures.
- 12.3 In accordance with its duties under the Act, if TUN dismisses or moves a member of staff or a volunteer because they have harmed a child or adult (or would have dismissed or moved them if the person had not left), TUN will notify the DBS. The DBS process and referral form will be used.
- 12.4. For further details see Disclosure and Barring Policy.

## **13. Training, induction and supervision of staff and volunteers**

- 13.1 TUN will provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- 13.2 All TUN staff and volunteers carrying out supervised or unsupervised activities with children will complete accredited safeguarding children training (provided by a Local Safeguarding Children Partnership) to an appropriate level, on a three- year cycle.
- 13.3 When assessing the training need of the staff member or volunteer, any adult safeguarding training that has been undertaken will be taken into account.
- 13.4 The recommended training includes the training provided by the **Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership** [www.nscb.org.uk/training-courses](http://www.nscb.org.uk/training-courses) or **Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership** [www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9209/Training-](http://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/article/9209/Training-)
- 13.5 Safeguarding issues will be discussed in supervision when appropriate.
- 13.6 TUN staff and volunteers will take up training on trafficking and sexual exploitation or use sexual exploitation resources as appropriate.
- 13.7 TUN staff and volunteers will take up training on FGM as appropriate, either online [www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/female-genital-mutilation](http://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/female-genital-mutilation) or with the Home Office [www.fgmelearning.co.uk](http://www.fgmelearning.co.uk)

## **14. Other useful information**

**North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual**  
[www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion](http://www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion)

**Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership**  
[www.nscb.org.uk](http://www.nscb.org.uk)

**Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership**  
<https://gateshead.gov.uk/lscb/home.aspx>

**Government guidance: Working together to safeguard children**  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

**Disclosure and Barring Service checks** (previously called CRB checks)  
03000 200 190  
[www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)

**Disclosure and Barring Service**  
To make DBS referrals and for online guidance  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)

**NSPCC safeguarding standards and guidance**  
Support for voluntary and community organisations on safeguarding, activities, risk assessment and standards, previously known as the Safe Network.  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2017/nspcc-safeguarding-standards-and-guidance-england>

**NSPCC safeguarding in faith communities**  
Guidance on safeguarding within the beliefs, teachings and cultural context of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and interfaith.  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-faith-communities>

**NSPCC helpline**  
0808 800 5000 for advice

**NSPCC Childline**  
0800 1111 for free confidential advice for anyone under 19

**NSPCC serious case review summaries**  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/case-reviews>

**Police anti-terrorism hotline**  
0800 789 321

## **Appendix A**

## **Safeguarding Concern Form**

Name of Organisation:

Date:

Time:

Name of individual the concern is about:

Date of birth / age (if known):

Address (if known):

**Describe your concern (including the setting in which the concern was noted and anyone present):**

**Any observations to support cause for concern:**

**Description and location of any visible marks, bruising etc:**

**Name of alleged abuser and relationship with individual (if known):**

**Outline actions taken; include discussion with DP, Safeguarding Trustee or Children's Services etc. and agreed next steps:**

Name of the person completing the form:

Signed:

Date:

Name of Designated Person in receipt of this form.

Signed:

Date:

## Appendix B

## Safeguarding children at risk

**Safeguarding is everyone's business** – if you are concerned about a child, you have a duty of care and must take appropriate action.

A person is a child until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and all organisations who work with or come in to contact with children should ensure every child has equal protection from harm. A child protection response may be necessary in any case where a child or young person under the age of 18 years may have been abused or may be at risk of abuse.

If you are concerned about a person over the age of 18 years, refer to Adult's safeguarding policy and procedures.

