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# The Advocacy Project

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

<b>Policy Name</b>	Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
<b>History</b>	Date adopted:
	Date of last review: July 24
	Date of next review: July 25
<b>Approval Authority</b>	CEO
<b>Responsible Office</b>	Head of Service

**Scope:** safeguarding policies, procedures, and guidance

**Reason for policy:** This policy aims to provide guidance on what constitutes a safeguarding concern and how to report and record it both internally and externally. This policy is only applicable to adults. Please also read the safeguarding children and young people's policy.

**Who should read this policy:** everyone working on behalf of The Advocacy Project including employees, agency workers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, social work students and trustees.

## Contents

1.	Introduction .....	3
2.	What is abuse?.....	4
3.	How you might notice abuse .....	5
4.	Responding to abuse.....	5
5.	Keeping Records.....	6
6.	What to do if a child makes an abuse allegation.....	6
a.	Reporting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) .....	7
b.	Reporting procedures if there is concern about a professional working with children.....	7
c.	Review .....	7
d.	Named persons.....	7
	Appendix 1: Safeguarding Contacts.....	8
	Appendix 2: referral form .....	11

## 1. Introduction

The Advocacy Project is committed to safeguarding, and we believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them. We work closely with families and other agencies to take all reasonable steps to minimize the risk of harm to children, young people. To fulfil our commitment to those we work with we will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation and we recognize that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

This policy refers to children and young people - Child: A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. In addition, an individual aged 18 to 24 years, who has been looked after by the Local Authority and who has a disability, also has protection under The Children Act 1989.

If a person over 18 years of age and not in the category above is at risk of abuse or neglect, please refer to **The Advocacy Project Adult Safeguarding Policy**.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Adult Policy
- Engagement protocol for working with children and young people in individual settings
- Data Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Self-harm and Suicidal Ideation Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

NSPCC defines safeguarding as the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and bad treatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- making sure children grow up with access to safe and effective care
- taking action to help all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

The Advocacy Project is committed to practice which protects children from harm. All staff and volunteers must work to increase awareness of issues which cause children harm, and act if we have concerns that a young person is being, or is in danger of being, abused. We acknowledge that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

We will make sure we respond to any concerns about abuse quickly and appropriately in line with current legislation and policies including but not limited to:

- Children's Act 1989
- Children's and Families Act 2014
- Working together to safeguard children 2023
- Local Safeguarding Children procedures from Safeguarding Children Partnerships

We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

- When children are suffering from abuse or neglect this may be shown through changes in behaviour, or in their play.
- We recognise that we have a duty to refer to the local authority (see Local Safeguarding Partnerships Borough Contacts) if there are signs that a child is or is likely to suffer abuse and/or neglect. We will allow any investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff will take care not to influence that outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask children questions
- We will follow LSCP procedures for concerns regarding domestic violence or abuse by a child
- We will follow the mandatory reporting duty in relation to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

**We will endeavour to safeguard children by:**

- By operating a culture of vigilance and reporting all safeguarding concerns. adopting child protection procedures to be used by staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know
- using safe recruitment practices such as Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS).
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers including supervision, support and training
- working to the DOH National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services(2002)

## 2. What is abuse?

A person may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children & young people may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

- **Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by lying about the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health.
- **Emotional abuse:** harming a child in ways that cause severe and long-lasting negative effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling children, or suggesting, that they are

worthless or unloved, inadequate, or only valued when they meet the needs of another person, expecting too much of them at their age or development level, causing them to feel frightened, or exploiting them.

- **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or persuading a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or being involved in making, pornography, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect:** longstanding failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which may negatively affect a child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter & clothing; or neglecting/ignoring a child's basic emotional needs.

### 3. How you might notice abuse

- A child or young person might tell you that they have been abused
- Someone else might tell you that a child has told them they have been abused
- A child might show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- Something in the child's behaviour may suggest they are being abused
- Something in the behaviour of a worker, parent or carer or the way they relate to a child may alert you
- You may see one child abusing another

### 4. Responding to abuse

If a child tells you they have been abused, or you worry they are at risk, you must record these concerns as soon as possible (within a maximum of 24 hours), whether the matter is taken to another authority or not.

All concerns should be reported to Head of Service Delivery or other member of SMT if the Head of Service Delivery is not immediately available. If you feel there is serious cause for concern you must contact the local authority's child protection team or the police.

You might have a safeguarding concern about a child or young person while working with an adult who is a parent or carer. In these instances, the concern should be raised to the local authority families and children's service where they live.

We also deliver work directly with children and young people in inpatient mental health settings, we have an **engagement protocol** in place for these settings, which staff must follow.

Where a concern relates to a professional working with a child or young person, the following steps must be taken:

- Tell the Head of Service Delivery or any other senior manager in their absence of your concerns.
- Where the concern is about a member of staff in a health or social care setting, you must call the safeguarding children manager at the site to tell them your concerns and your intention to

raising the concern in writing.

- Where a professional is involved, you must complete the safeguarding referral form in Appendix 2 and send to the safeguarding children manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Follow the reporting and escalation processes as outlined in the Safeguarding Adults Policy.

If you hear an allegation outside office hours and the situation is urgent (for example, if the child is too frightened to go home or there are serious doubts about their safety), **contact the social services child protection team immediately**. In a case where a criminal offense is being committed, eg assault, contact the police.

## 5. Keeping records

If you see worrying changes in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, or if a child makes a disclosure of possible abuse, you will need to make a clear and specific record, which should include:

- child's name, address and date of birth
- timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance without comment or interpretation
- exact words the child said
- observer's dated name and signature
- name of any other person present
- any actions you have taken

## 6. What to do if a child makes an abuse allegation

- Make sure the child or young person at risk is in no immediate danger.
- Dial 999 if the child or young person is in immediate danger or needs immediate medical attention.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what the child says, and always act as if you believe what the child is saying.
- Let the child know they are right to tell you about the abuse and reassure them they are not to blame.
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace.
- Only ask questions when you need to clarify something and avoid leading questions that suggest a particular answer (it is not your job to investigate abuse).
- Be honest about what will happen next, who you will tell and why. Do not promise to keep secrets.

- Work in line with Department of Health National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002) and The Advocacy Project's Confidentiality Policy.
- Record in writing what the child said using their own words as soon as possible. Record the date, time, any names mentioned and who the information was given to. Make sure the record is signed and dated.
- Tell the nominated safeguarding person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

#### **a. Reporting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

- If a girl tells you she has had FGM, or you have seen a physical sign suggesting a girl has had FGM, you should tell the Head of Service or Deputy CEO immediately and report the matter to the police by calling 101.
- In all other cases you should follow normal safeguarding processes.

#### **b. Reporting procedures if there is concern about a professional working with children**

If you have concern about a professional abusing a child then immediately inform the Head of Service Delivery or CEO, following the same procedures as shown above.

Every council must employ a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who is responsible for managing allegations and concerns about anyone who works with children and young people in their area. You should make any referrals that are about professionals working with children to the LADO on the day you receive a concern. Each LADO will have their own protocols that you will need to follow.

If it's felt there is sufficient cause for concern the Head of Service or the CEO will contact the LADO or the police.

If there is a concern about the immediate safety of a child, call the police on 999.

#### **c. Review**

The Advocacy Project will make sure that child safeguarding issues receive continuous attention and will review this policy regularly in line with procedures of the London Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

#### **d. Named persons**

The staff member who hears the safeguarding concern should raise it with social services and keep up with any updates, making sure to copy the Head of Services or CEO into all communications.

The Advocacy Project will make sure all staff and volunteers know this policy and these procedures and have access to appropriate training and support.

## Appendix 1: Safeguarding Contacts

### Key boroughs where we deliver services

Borough	For	Contact	Number	Out of Hours	Email
Brent	Children	Brent Family Front Door	020 8937 4300	020 8863 5250	family.frontdoor@brent.gov.uk
Camden	Children	Children & Families Contact Service	020 7974 3317	020 7974 4444	LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk Secure email: LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk.cjsm.net
Ealing	Children	CYPS	020 8825 8000	020 8825 5000	sscallcentre@ealing.gov.uk
Hackney	Children and Young People	CYPS	020 8356 5500	020 8356 2710	fast@hackney.gov.uk
Hammersmith and Fulham	Under 18s and families	Family services frontdoor service	020 8753 6600	020 8748 8588	Familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk
Islington	Under 18s and families	Children and social care Children and families	020 7527 7400 020 7527 3080	020 7226 0992	csctreferrals@islington.gov.uk childrens.services@islington.gov.uk
Kensington and Chelsea	Under 18s and families	Family Support and Child Protection	0207 361 3013	020 7361 3013	socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk.cjsm.net
Wandsworth	Under 18	MASH	020 8871 7899	020 8871 6000	mash@wandsworth.gov.uk
Westminster	Children and Young People	Westminster Access Team	020 7641 4000	020 7641 6000	accesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk

NSPCC Freephone Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000



## Other boroughs

Borough	For	Contact	Number	Out of Hours	Email
Barking and Dagenham	Adults	Adult SocialCare Team	020 8227 2915	020 8594 8356	intaketeam@lbbd.gov.uk
	Under 18s	MASH Children	020 8227 3811	020 8227 3811	ISCB@lbbd.gov.uk
Barnet	Adults	Adult SocialCare	020 8359 5000	020 8359 2000	socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Children's Services	020 8359 7998		
Bexley	Adults	Safeguarding adults team	020 8303 7777	0208 303 7777	screeners@bexley.gov.uk
	Under 18s	MASH	020 3045 5440	020 8303 7171	Childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gcsx.gov.uk.
Bromley	Adults	MASH Adult	020 8461 7777	0300 303 8671	adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk
	Under 18s	MASH CYPS	020 8461 7373 / 0304		
Croydon	Adults	MASH Adults	020 8726 6400	020 8726 6500	Online forms
	Under 18s	MASH Children	0208 255 2888	0208 726 6400	childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk
Enfield	Adults	Multi Agency SafeguardingHub	020 8379 3196	020 8379 5212	Online forms
	Under 18s	Single Point ofEntry (SPOE) Children	0208 379 5555	0208 379 1000	childrensmash@enfield.gov.uk
Greenwich	Adults	AssessmentTeam	020 8921 2304	0208 854 8888	aops.contact.officers@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Children's Services MASH	020 8921 3172	0208 854 8888	mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Haringey	Adults	First ResponseTeam Adults	020 8489 0000	020 8489 0000	firstresponseteam@haringey.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Single point ofAccess	020 8489 4470	020 8489 4470	spa@haringey.gcsx.gov.uk
Harrow	Adults	Safeguarding Adults Services	020 8420 9453	0208 424 0999	safeguardingadults@harrow.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Children& Family Services	020 8901 2690	0208 424 0999	mash@harrow.gov.uk
Havering	Adults	SafeguardingAdults Team	0170 8433 550	01708 433999	safeguarding_adults_team@haverling.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Child ProtectionTeam	0170 8433 222	01708 433999	mash@haverling.gov.uk
	Adults	MASH Adults	018 9555 6633	01895 250111	socialcaredirect@hillingdon.gov.uk

Hillingdon	Under 18s	MASH	018 9555 6633	01895 250111	lbhmash@hillingdon.gov.uk
Hounslow	Adults	Safeguardingadults team	0208 583 3100	020 8583 2222	safeguardingadults@hounslow.gov.uk
	Under 18s	Early help	020 8583 6600	020 8583 2222	earlyhelp@hounslow.gov.uk or childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk
Kingston upon Thames	Adults	Adult safeguarding	0208 547 5005	020 8770 5000	adult.safeguarding@kingston.gov.uk
	Children	Children's Single Point of Access (SPA) Team	0208 547 5008	020 8770 5000	Online forms
Lambeth	Adults	Adult Social Care Services	0207 926 5555	020 7926 5555	Online forms adultsocialcare@lambeth.gov.uk
	Children	Children Socialservices	0207 926 5555	020 7926 5555	helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk
Lewisham	Adults	MASH Adults	020 8314 7777	020 8314 6000	scait@lewisham.gov.uk
	Children	MASH Children	020 8314 6000	020 8314 6660	mashagency@lewisham.gov.uk
Merton	Adults	Merton's Safeguarding Adults hotline	0845 618 9762	0845 618 9762	safeguarding.adults@merton.gov.uk
	Children	Children MASH Team	020 8545 4226/ 4227	020 8770 5000	mash@merton.gov.uk
Newham	Adults	Adult socialcare team	020 3373 0440	020 3373 0440	Accessto. AdultsSocialCareTeam@newham.gov.uk
	Children	CYPS	020 3373 4600	020 8430 2000	
Redbridge	Adults	Health and Adult Social Services	020 8708 7333	020 8554 5000	adults.alert@redbridge.gov.uk
	Children	MASH Children	020 8708 3885	020 8708 5897	cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk
Richmond upon Thames	Adults	Adult socialservices	0208 597 7971	020 8744 2442	adultsocialservices@richmond.gov.uk
	Children	Family services:Children	020 8831 5008	020 8770 5000	online form
Southwark	Adults	SafeguardingAdults team	0845 600 1287	020 7525 5000	RAD@southwark.gov.uk
	Children	Children	020 7525 1921	020 7525 5000	mash@southwark.gov.uk
Sutton	Adults	MASH Adults	020 8770 4565	020 8770 6770	Online form
	Children	Children Safeguarding Partnership	020 8770 5452		suttonlscp@sutton.gov.uk
Tower Hamlets	Adults	Social care for Adults	020 7364 5005	020 7364 7070	Online form or email adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk
	Children	Child protectionMASH	020 7364 5000	020 3276 3501	towerhamletsMASH@met.police.uk
Waltham Forest	Adults	Multi Agency SafeguardingHub	020 8496 3000	020 8496 3000	Online form
	Children	ChildrenMASH	020 8496 2310	020 8496 3000	MASHrequests@ walthamforest.gov.uk

NSPCC Freephone Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

## Appendix 2: referral form

### Safeguarding Children and Young People referral form – CONFIDENTIAL

Child or young person's name	
Address or location (if known)	
Telephone (if known)	
Age/DoB (if known)	
Gender (if known)	
Does the concern relate to an unborn child?	
Is the child or young person privately fostered?	
Is the child or young person adopted?	
Is the child or young person or their family experiencing any of the following difficulties:	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Parental substance misuse <input type="checkbox"/> Parental mental illness <input type="checkbox"/> Risk of female genital mutilation <input type="checkbox"/> Risk of sexual exploitation <input type="checkbox"/> Risk of radicalisation <input type="checkbox"/> No recourse to public funds
<b>Why you are concerned about this person</b> > Be specific and factual when describing what you saw or were told > Explain what you know and how you know this information > Outline why you are worried for this person/others > Include quotes where possible > Explain injuries you are aware of	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Specify date and time of incident/s if known</li> <li>➤ Mention if you're aware of other similar incidents against this person, by this alleged perpetrator or within this ward/setting</li> </ul>	
<b>Does the child or young person have any additional support needs (disability, impairment or condition)?</b>	
<b>How does the child or young person communicate (including any steps to make the service accessible, such as translators)?</b>	
<b>Are you concerned other children or young people might be at risk? If yes, please explain?</b>	
<b>Provide the details of the other children or young people who might be at risk.</b>	
<b>Provide the details of the parent/carer (if known)</b> -Name -date of birth -relationship to child or young person -does the parent/carer have any support needs	
<b>Has the child or young person given consent for you to report your concern to the local authority?</b>	
<b>Has the child or young person indicated what they want to happen?</b>	
<b>Where known, provide the name, job title and contact details of social worker / GP / consultant / responsible clinician</b>	

<b>Details of alleged perpetrator/s (if known)</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Relationship to adult at risk</b>	
<b>About the person completing this form</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Job title</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Date</b>	