

**Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
for the Counselling Service**

Signed off by Board: November 2025

Scheduled for review: November 2026

This policy is reviewed as necessary, always following a serious incident and at least once a year.

Woman's Trust Safeguarding Statement

Woman's Trust's safeguarding policy has been put in place to protect individuals' wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to work in an environment, or access our services without fear of harm, abuse, or neglect.

We are committed to safeguarding all individuals from harm. This includes our:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- All who use or encounter our services

Woman's Trust recognises that all people, regardless of race, age, ability, gender, identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse.

Those most in need of protection include:

- Children and young people; and
- Vulnerable Adults such as those with physical and mental impairments and those with learning difficulties.

It is important to understand that both children and vulnerable adults need safeguarding, however there are different approaches to take when addressing each one. In addition, it is important to understand the time and effort that needs to be spent on meeting the safeguarding duty which increases when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Every organisation that delivers charitable activities has a duty to safeguard volunteers, staff members, participants and donors, and everyone in the organisation has a role to play in safeguarding. Safeguarding is the action that is taken to make sure that Woman's Trust is managed in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying, abuse, and neglect. It is also about being ready to respond safely and well if there is a problem.

Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse

Abuse is a term to describe a range of ways in which people, usually adults, harm children or adults who are vulnerable. Often the harmful adult is a person who is known and trusted by the child or

vulnerable adult experiencing the harm. Child/vulnerable adult abuse are neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse, parental substance abuse or emotional abuse and inflicted or knowingly not prevented, which causes significant harm or death.

NSPCC (1999)

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to everyone. Whatever the reaction and however the abuse has become apparent, actual or suspected, it must be responded to in the correct manner according to the procedure outlined here. Even if the truth of the disclosure is uncertain, an appropriate response must be made.

1. Purpose of the Policy

In general, Woman's Trust does not work directly with children, or vulnerable adults as defined by legislation (see 2.b below). Therefore, this Policy relates mainly to the responsibilities of Woman's Trust counsellors, supervisors, staff and volunteers within the counselling service in relation to safeguarding **clients, children of clients** or **vulnerable adults** who might be a client's dependent, acquaintance or other family member.

- Women who fall within the definition of vulnerable adult (below) might access Woman's Trust services if the professional judgement of the assessor is that they have capacity to understand and engage voluntarily in the service and are able to access it safely and consistently. Counsellors and supervisors will need to be aware that some women using Woman's Trust services might be more vulnerable to abuse and have more difficulty in accessing support services to protect themselves from harm. This will need to be monitored carefully in the therapeutic work and in supervision.

2. Definitions

Child

The Children Act 1989 and in line with the United Nations Convention on the RIGHTS of the child (UNCRC)¹, 1989 under the policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

Children have the right to be protected from harm. If your organisation or group works with children or young people you must have a clear set of guidelines about how you will:

keep children safe

respond to child protection concerns.

"Your" safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are an important part of protecting children and young people. They must be supported by good governance, health and safety, financial management, staff supervision and management.

NSCPP (2022)

Adult

An adult in need of safeguarding is defined as;

- Anyone aged 18 and over
- Who is unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm, exploitation or neglect.
- Or are understood to be at risk, which may be due to frailty, homelessness, mental or physical health problems, learning or physical impairments, and/or impacted by disasters or conflicts.

Staff

The term 'staff' applies to all those who work in an individual capacity with Woman's Trust, this includes paid and unpaid staff and volunteers engaged on a short- or long-term basis. It also covers consultants and contracted temporary staff.

3. Key Principles:

Children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is a shared community responsibility.

The abuse of children and vulnerable adults is a clear infringement of human rights and in many cases might be a criminal offence.

All children have needs and rights:

- The need for physical care and attention
- The need for intellectual stimulation
- The need for emotional love and security
- The need for social contact and relationships
- The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- The right to be protected from discrimination
- The right to be treated as an individual

Woman's Trust will ensure that the welfare and safety of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and that all children and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to safeguarding from abuse.

All staff and volunteers of Woman's Trust have a responsibility to report concerns to the Counselling Manager, and/or CEO, and to the relevant agencies. See Appendix B for Organisational Structure.

This policy is designed to inform all staff, volunteers and supervisors about how to make informed and confident responses to specific child & vulnerable adult safeguarding issues.

Applies to: All staff and volunteers working at Woman's Trust.

Recruitment

Woman's Trust carries out safe recruitment checks on everyone who works for us. All roles require a disclosure and Barring service (DBS).

All who are interviewed for a post will need to demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding that is relevant to the role they are applying for.

For more information on Woman's Trust's recruitment process please see our recruitment policy.

4. Statement of Policy:

- 4.1 Woman's Trust recognises the need to co-operate with other agencies in performing the duties required by the guidance in "Safeguarding Children/Vulnerable Adults" (Children Act 2004 (2007); Safeguarding Adults; a National Framework of Standards for Good Practice and Outcomes in Adult Protection Work 2005)
- 4.2 Woman's Trust will establish and maintain policies and procedures to provide a safe environment for its staff, volunteers and counselling clients, be they vulnerable adults or not, and to ensure appropriate co-operation with relevant agencies should an incident of harm to a child or vulnerable adult be disclosed during a counselling session.
- 4.3 Woman's Trust reserves the right to refuse a placement or employment to anyone who might pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults. For that reason, Woman's Trust requires all its counsellors/art therapists and supervisors to be DBS Enhanced checked.
- 4.4 Woman's Trust will ensure that its employees, supervisors, counsellors and volunteers are fit to work with the range of clients who might access the counselling service, including those who fall within the definition of "vulnerable adults". Woman's Trust will have recruitment policies and procedures in place which follow best practice and have regard for legislation and guidance.
- 4.5 Woman's Trust will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their role in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and will include an appropriate statement in job descriptions.
- 4.6 Woman's Trust will provide information to make counsellors, supervisors, staff and volunteers aware of the signs of abuse (see Appendix A, 'Definitions and Signs of Child Abuse,' NSPCC 2010 (3), and 'Definitions of abuse and their signs and symptoms (adults)' QIA 2007). This information will also include Woman's Trust procedures for recording and reporting suspected (or known) abuse or concerns to their supervisor or line manager, or another appointed person.
- 4.7 Woman's Trust will deal with allegations of child or vulnerable adult abuse by staff, supervisors or counsellors/art therapists according to its own **Staff Disciplinary and Poor Performance Policy** and will, after following Woman's Trust guidelines on reporting, notify the police and/or Social Services. **Woman's Trust might also contact** the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- 4.8 Woman's Trust will operate according to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy's Ethical Framework on confidentiality around disclosures of abuse (see also, Woman's Trust Confidentiality Policy).

5. Accountability to Woman's Trust

- 5.1 Woman's Trust counselling service will ensure the safety and safeguarding of all children and vulnerable adults involved in its activities through adherence to the child and vulnerable adult safeguarding guidelines it has adopted, which are outlined below.
- 5.2 All staff and volunteers who work with clients who have children or vulnerable adult dependents must comply with this policy. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal.
- 5.3 The guidelines cover three main areas:
- 5.3.1 Staff and volunteers' recruitment, support and information
 - 5.3.2 Staff and volunteers' conduct and good practice guidelines
 - 5.3.3 Child & vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures

5.3.1 Staff and volunteers' recruitment, support and information

- a. All staff and volunteers at the service are required to have an Enhanced DBS check. This is to ensure that they are safe to be working with Woman's Trust clients (whether clients are vulnerable adults themselves or not) who have children or who care for vulnerable adults.
- b. Child & vulnerable adult safeguarding procedures are explained, and information needs are identified at induction. Awareness of child & vulnerable adult safeguarding issues will continue to be addressed through ongoing information and supervision.
- c. All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction process. This must be completed every 2 years. There will also be a requirement to complete a refresher course once a year. This will be delivered by an appropriately qualified member of the team.
- d. All staff and volunteers will also be asked to sign that they have read Woman's Trust's "Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy".

Training and Induction

- a. All staff and volunteers must complete mandatory safeguarding training as part of their induction process. This is to ensure that they understand the meaning, importance, and appropriate procedures around safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. This training must be completed once every 2 years, in addition to a yearly in-house safeguarding refresher course.
- b. Safeguarding training is to be delivered by the appointed safeguarding lead who themselves is appropriately trained and qualified.

5.3.2 Staff and volunteers' conduct and good practice guidelines

All staff and volunteers should demonstrate exemplary behaviour to protect themselves from allegations of misconduct. Staff and volunteers should maintain their standards of behaviour and act as a role model. The following are examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

Always:-

- a. Record and act upon allegations made, or suspicions held, of abuse. Treat all people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- b. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with vulnerable people and children
- c. Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust.
- d. Allow clients to share in the decision-making process, and thereby empower themselves, as long as this does not mitigate against appropriate safeguards.
- e. Conduct yourself in a manner that sets a good example to clients. Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of/whilst responsible for clients.
- f. Always refer any safeguarding queries to a senior staff member and Supervisor.

Never:-

- a. Never use physical force against a client
- b. Never use physical punishment
- c. Never make gratuitous physical contact with a participant
- d. Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- e. Never engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- f. Never use inappropriate language and/or behavior
- g. Never use sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- h. Never reduce a person to tears as a form of control.
- i. Never offer or agree to create a relationship that it is different from your professional agreement

5.3.2 Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Procedures

Everyone at Woman's Trust has the responsibility to make sure concerns about children and vulnerable adults are passed to the appropriate agency that can help them without delay.

Where the risk level is high and the individual is in immediate danger, the person raising the concern has a duty to call 999 without delay.

If there is concern that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person. The individual with the concern must contact their line manager/Counselling Manager and

or their supervisor to discuss their concern. (Please refer to Woman's Trust safeguarding flowchart for safeguarding leads)

Concerns about children should be referred to the children's social services department of the local authority where the child lives. Similarly, concerns about vulnerable adults should be reported to the local authority adult services.

Where an allegation has been raised against a member of staff, the individual should first contact their line manager. If the allegation being made is against a line manager, the member of staff should raise the complaint to a member of the SLT senior leadership team.

Woman's Trust will follow the procedures set out by the National Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding standards to: -

- a. Ensure we have a lead member of staff for Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding who has received appropriate information and support for this role (the Counselling Manager). See Appendix B for Organizational Structure.
- b. Ensure every member of staff and volunteer knows the name of the lead staff member responsible for Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding and their role.
- c. Ensure that all staff, volunteers and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding training during the induction process and receive yearly refresher in-house training.
- d. Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse (see Appendix A) and in referring any concerns to the lead staff member. *However, staff and volunteers should remember that they are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.*
- e. Ensure that clients who are parents or who are carers for vulnerable adults understand the responsibility placed on Woman's Trust's staff and volunteers for Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding at Initial Session and via the Counselling Agreement.
- f. Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences or other safeguarding meetings.
- g. Log the safeguarding concern and every step that is taken on the safeguarding document immediately.
- h. Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff and/or volunteer.

6. Awareness of actual or likely occurrence of abuse

There are several ways in which abuse becomes apparent:

- a. Via a client who knows about abuse of her own child or vulnerable adult dependent or who knows of a child/vulnerable adult who has disclosed abuse.
- b. Someone else discloses that a child/vulnerable adult has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child/vulnerable adult has been or is being abused.

- c. A client's disclosures might indicate that her child or vulnerable adult dependent might be showing signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- d. A client's disclosure of her own behavior ¹which might indicate that it is likely that her child/ren or vulnerable adult dependent(s) is/are being abused.
- e. Hearing descriptions by a member of staff about her behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult, or the way in which she describes how she relates to them.

7. What to do upon suspicion or disclosure

Woman's Trust will always encourage the client to act on Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding issues herself. Woman's Trust will report their concerns to the relevant agencies where the client is unwilling or unable (or if Woman's Trust suspects the client might be unable) to ensure the safety of her child/ren or vulnerable adult dependent(s) and will always follow up on the client's disclosure anyway.

There are some basic principles in reacting to suspicions, allegations, and/or disclosures.

What to do	What not to do
<p>Stay calm</p> <p>Listen, hear and believe</p> <p>Give time to the person to say what they want</p> <p>Reassure & explain that they have done the right thing in telling. Explain that only those professionals who need to know will be informed</p> <p>Act immediately in accordance with the procedure in this policy</p> <p>Record in writing as near as verbatim as possible what was said as soon as possible</p> <p>Report to the lead member of staff and volunteers</p> <p>Record your report and check with your client that it is an accurate account of what they told you.</p>	<p>Don't panic. Don't overreact. It is extremely unlikely that the participant is in immediate danger.</p> <p>Don't probe for more information. Questioning the participant may affect how the participant's disclosure is received later.</p> <p>Don't make assumptions, don't paraphrase and don't offer alternative explanations</p> <p>Don't promise confidentiality to keep secrets or that everything will be OK (it might not)</p> <p>Don't coach the client about what to say</p> <p>Don't try to deal with it yourself</p> <p>Don't make negative comments about the alleged abuser</p> <p>Don't 'gossip' with colleagues about what has been said to you</p> <p>Don't make a client repeat a story unnecessarily</p>

¹ Direct or implied statements like:- my feelings were aroused; I hit him/her; I refused to feed/sent to bed with no tea; I screamed/yelled at him/her, I called him/her a {bad name}; I threw {something} at him/her, etc

It is the duty of anyone working at the service to report disclosed or suspected abuse where the client is unwilling or unable to address these issues herself.

It is not for staff and volunteers to decide whether suspicion or an allegation is true. All suspicions or allegations must be taken seriously and dealt with according to this procedure.

8. Staff responsibility

- a. Following completion of the required training, all staff and volunteers should be able to recognise the signs and indicators of potential harm, abuse or neglect
- b. Staff and volunteers then have a duty to raise this with the designated safeguarding leads (Counselling Manager, CEO). The client should be informed and included in this process if this is possible and deemed in their best interest
- c. The responsibility for responding to and recording the concern lies with the designated safeguarding lead
- d. Clear records must be kept of the details of the concern, and the steps that have been taken to safeguard the client
- e. The designated safeguarding lead should provide an update to the member of staff who raised the concern
- f. The client should also be updated of any steps which have been taken to safeguard them

9. Personal Responsibility

8.1 Staff and volunteers made aware of suspicions, allegations or actual abuse are personally responsible for taking the appropriate action according to this procedure.

8.2 The incident should be reported immediately to the Counselling Manager and or supervisor who is then responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

8.3 Staff and volunteers should never try to deal with a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse by themselves, ***but follow the procedures set out below.***

10. Reporting suspected, alleged, or actual incidents of abuse

It may sometimes be difficult to accept that something that has been disclosed in confidence by a child, a vulnerable adult, or anyone else should be passed on to a colleague. However, the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult must be paramount and all staff and volunteers therefore have a duty to report suspicions, allegations or actual incidents to the Counselling Manager or Clinical Director: **follow the step-by-step guide outlined at item 12.**

Information should also be reported if you yourself have concerns that a child/vulnerable adult may be suffering harm or at risk of abuse, even if you are unsure about your suspicions.

Once this initial report has been made, **the Counselling Manager will consult with the relevant statutory agencies:-**

See Appendix B for organizational Structure

- Social Services Emergency Duty Team *or*
- Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Unit *and/or*
- NSPCC Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Helpline 0808 800 5000

It is important for the Counselling Manager to respond honestly and openly to questions asked by the investigating agency. The following information may be required:

- a. Staff members and volunteer's name, address, telephone number, position/role within Woman's Trust.
- b. As many details about the child/ vulnerable adult as possible, e.g. name, date of birth, address, home telephone number, school.
- c. What the reasons are for telephoning, e.g. the suspicions, allegations, what has been said, giving details of times and dates and the child's/ vulnerable adult's emotional state, or what the client has reported that the child/vulnerable adult has said in response to the concerns. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- d. What has been done so far
- e. Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 36 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

The relevant statutory agency will then give instructions as to what to do next and take the responsibility for further action.

11. Statutory Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Procedures

What happens next is up to the relevant statutory agency, usually Social Services. However, where Woman's Trust feels that not enough action has been taken, and the child or vulnerable adult is still at risk, concerns will be reported again and the appropriate responsible agency contacted for advice.

12. Recording suspected or actual incidents

No matter what happens to a suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse (i.e. whether it is processed through a statutory agency or not), all details will be recorded.

Important information to record will include:

- a. The date and time of disclosure, suspicion, allegation or actual abuse incident;
- b. Details given to you about the above e.g. date & time of when things occurred;
- c. An indication of the parties involved;
- d. Details of what action you and Woman's Trust have taken;
- e. Details of reporting on, e.g. to which statutory agency and when.

If for any reason it is decided not to consult with a relevant statutory agency, a full explanation of why will be documented.

Recording will be factual, with no reference made to subjective opinions.

Records will only be shared with those who need to know about the suspicion, allegation or actual incident of abuse.

13. Procedure for reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse

In the following procedures,

Procedure Stage 1 should be followed by counsellors.

Procedure Stage 2 should be followed by a counsellor's supervisor or whoever is the first person contacted by the counsellor.

Procedure Stage 3 relates to counsellors, supervisors and the Counselling Manager.

Procedure Stage 1: To be followed by Woman's Trust Counsellors

If concerns about child or vulnerable adult abuse arise during one of your sessions:-

- a) Remind the client that harm to others, including children/vulnerable adults (as appropriate), is outside the limits of Woman's Trust's confidentiality boundaries. Let the client know that you will contact your supervisor and manager to consult with her (within 24 hours) about what to do. Reassure the client that it is Woman's Trust's aim to work with her and support her to enable her to contact Social Services and inform them herself, if this is necessary.
- b) Get clear information about the situation from the client for an initial verbal report to your supervisor.
- c) Contact your supervisor and counselling manager within 24 hours. If your supervisor or manager are not contactable, contact the CEO.

Procedure Stage 2: To be followed by Woman's Trust Supervisors (Appointed Individuals)

Basic Principles

If possible, clients will be kept informed by their counsellor and/or the Counselling Manager at all stages of the process. Woman's Trust is aware that there are cases where it would not be appropriate to do so, for example, if, in the opinion of either Social Services, the police, or Woman's Trust, that would put a child or vulnerable adult at further or greater risk. Woman's Trust will follow each disclosure or suspicion of child or vulnerable adult abuse until the point where Woman's Trust can do no more within the organization.

When an Appointed Individual (a supervisor, Counselling Manager, or CEO) is contacted due to concerns about child or vulnerable adult abuse: -

- a) Contact the two other Appointed Individuals as soon as possible or at least within 24 hours. Once they have been contacted, a discussion will take place as soon as possible, *ideally within 4 hours*.
- b) If the group is satisfied that there are grounds for serious concerns (i.e. that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of serious or lethal injury or significant psychological damage), a verbal report will be made to Social Services within 2 hours, followed by a written report which will be emailed/posted within 36 hours to the Social Services representative already contacted.
- c) If the group is unclear, they should consult (within 24 hours) on a 'for instance' basis with an identified Child Safeguarding social worker who has agreed to provide this assistance to Woman's Trust staff.
- d) If the group is satisfied that no child or vulnerable adult is at risk of serious or lethal injury or significant psychological damage, but there are safeguarding concerns, **Procedure Stage 3** will be put into action.
- e) The Counselling Manager will file a written record of the incident, and any reporting, which will be kept on the client's ID a separate Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Report File for 6 years. After which it will be shredded.
- f) The CEO will be kept informed of the progress of the case and its outcome. The CEO will inform the trustees if the progression of the case gives rise to any legal liabilities for Woman's Trust.

Procedure Stage 3: To be followed by Woman's Trust Counsellors, Supervisors and Counselling Manager

- a) Notwithstanding **Basic Principles**, Woman's Trust will, once the incident has been reported and/ or recorded, work with a client through counselling sessions or support groups (as appropriate) regarding the safety issues affecting her child/ren, or any vulnerable adults/s she cares for, over **a minimum period of six weeks, no matter where she has reached in her allotted 18 weeks counselling contract**. Within this period her counsellor will offer to focus on childcare, the effects of domestic violence on children and where appropriate, make referral/s to agency/agencies which run programs aimed at teaching and strengthening parenting skills, or supporting carers of vulnerable adults.
- b) After six weeks counselling a review will be held with the client and counsellor to assess the usefulness, uptake and the outcome of the six weeks counselling (with the aid CORE if deemed appropriate).
- c) Following that, a further discussion must take place between the counsellor and supervisor within 48 hours.
- d) The supervisor will then contact or meet with the Counselling Manager within 48 hours to discuss any possible need for further action or contact Social Services. If the Counselling Manager is unavailable, the supervisor will meet with the CEO.
- e) If further action is considered necessary, **Procedures 1 and 2** will be followed again within 36 hours.
- f) Procedure 3 will *not* be followed again but a decision will be made, based solely on the merits of the case, about whether or not the client may complete her 18 sessions if she has not already done so, *or* if she should/could be offered further sessions, *or* referral on to another agency, *or* private counselling if appropriate and affordable.
- g) The client will be informed of all final decisions within 36 hours.
- h) The CEO will be kept informed of the progress of the case and its outcome. The CEO will inform the trustees if the progression of the case gives rise to any legal liabilities for Woman's Trust.

Social care professionals need to be aware of their own feelings in cases of abuse. It is natural for people to deny, retract or ignore that abuse is taking place, but it is important to be aware that anyone could be an abuser.

Data Storing

All data relating to safeguarding is stored on our secure database, where we add notes to the client's file.

We also hold a centralised record of all safeguarding issues which have been raised, along with actions taken on a password protected excel document on Sharepoint.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Name: Sona Barbosa
 Role: Head of Therapeutic Service
 Email: sona.b@womanstrust.org.uk
 Phone: 07729548740

Related Policies:

Counselling Confidentiality Policy
 General confidentiality Policy and Agreement
 Counselling Access to Records

Counselling Record Keeping
Woman's Trust Policy Statement DBS Checks

Appendix A Definitions of abuse and their signs and symptoms (adults and children)

Domestic Violence (1)		<p>Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •psychological •physical •sexual •financial •emotional <p>Controlling behavior is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behavior.</p> <p>Coercive behavior is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”*</p> <p>*This definition includes so called ‘honor’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.</p>
Child Abuse (2)		<p>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). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.</p>
	Physical abuse	<p>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.</p>
	Emotional abuse	<p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child can 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 the child 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 occur alone.</p>

	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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); • protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. <p>It may also include neglect of, or irresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p>
Bully (3)		Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies
Vulnerable Adult (4)		"People with care and support needs"
Inappropriate Behavior (5)		Following the London Child Protection Procedures April 2016 this policy also includes concerns" relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (see ss16-19 Sexual Offences Act 2003); • 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (see s15 Sexual Offences Act 2003) • Other 'grooming' behavior giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socializing etc); • Possession of indecent photographs / pseudo-photographs of children"
How to recognize the signs of abuse (6)		The signs of abuse are not always very clear. The following points might be helpful in identifying possible abuse. Generally:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks of being left home alone or with strangers. • Poor bond or relationship with a parent, also known as attachment. • Acts out excessive violence with other children. • Lacks social skills and has few if any friends. <p>For children under 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age • Reaches developmental milestones late, such as learning to speak, with no medical reason • Significantly underweight but eats well when given food. <p>5-11 year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information. • Reluctant to go home after school. • Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home. • Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up. • Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school. • Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns. • Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc. • Wets or soils the bed.
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(1) Home Office Home Office 2024 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet>

(2) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e7501ab418ab055592a7b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf

(3) <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/definitions-signs-child-abuse>

(4) <https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/index.html>

(5) <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse>

Appendix B – see separate document on organisational structure.

Appendix C – see separate document on Safeguarding flowchart.

