



PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 5 FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S POLICY

CAUTION

It is a criminal offence under Section 20 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 for a care or support worker to ill-treat or willfully neglect an individual in their care.

Willful neglect can include the conscious failure to act on and raise timely concerns relating to the welfare of a person in their care.

Introduction:

All children and young people deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential and have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation. Safeguarding children and young people incorporate protection from harm and ensuring the right treatment by all professionals, families and friends that come into contact with the child or young person.

In all our support, we will strive to ensure that children and young people remain safe and healthy.

Safeguarding children and young people ensure that:

- They are not discriminated against.
- That any act to control or restrain follows our restrictive intervention policy.
- They are not subject to degrading treatment.

We will always communicate carefully with children and young people, respect their views and value their opinions. We will treat all children, young people and family members with dignity and respect and offer a caring and courteous service whilst ensuring that their welfare remains our paramount consideration.

These procedures apply to all children and young people regardless of their race, religion, first language or culture, gender or sexuality, age, health or disability, location, or placement, political or immigration stature. It is the responsibility of all Bridge Case Management staff, and anyone involved with us to follow these procedures. Bridge Case Management will foster a business culture which respects children and works in partnership with their families, always ensuring a child centred approach.

Purpose:

- To ensure the safeguarding of children and young people who are supported by Bridge Case Management.
- To ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities should a disclosure of a child or young person occur.
- To ensure any concerns regarding the welfare of a child are reported without delay.

Definition:

The definition of a child or young person is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children and young people from maltreatment:
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

What is the safeguarding children Act of 1989 and 2004?

Safeguarding Children and why it matters? The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out the specific duties for local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

What is abuse?

Abuse is the discrimination of another person or the violation of a person's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

Abuse may be perpetrated because of deliberate intent, negligence, or ignorance. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. Incidents of abuse may be multiple, either to one person in a continuing relationship or service context, or to more than one person at a time.

Table 1 Examples of abuse:

Category of abuse	Examples of abuse	Indicators of abuse (taking into consideration age of child and possibilities of self-injury)
Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault • Hitting • Slapping • Pushing • Shaking • Bruising • Bite marks • Burning or scalding • Drowning • Suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries inconsistent with the explanation given for them. • Lack of explanation as to how the injuries occurred from parents and/or young person. • The parents/carers are uninterested by an accident or injury. • Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment. • Use of different Dr's and A&E departments • Multiple bruising, particularly in well protected areas. • Injuries to the child which can be identified as non-accidental or unexplained. • Fractures – may cause pain, swelling and discoloration over a bone or joint. History provided is vague, medical attention is sought after a period of delay, unexplained fracture. • Bite marks – They can leave a clear impression of the teeth. • Bruising – Multiple/repeat bruising, bruising on the arms, buttocks, or thighs. • Changes of behavior (in child and/or family member) • Malnutrition • Alopecia – Hair loss in a child may be directly linked to stress linked to maltreatment. Hair loss may also occur because of pulling the child's hair.
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape • Indecent exposure • Inappropriate looking or touching • Sexual photography • Subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts. 	<p>Children of all ages including young babies may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to feelings of guilt and/or fear. Sexual abuse is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Recognition is difficult unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional or behavioural.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonconsensual sex/sexual acts 	<p>Some behavioral indicators associated with this form of abuse are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate sexualised conduct. • Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age. • Continual or inappropriate or excessive masturbation. • Self-harm (including eating disorder) self-mutilation and suicide attempts. • Involvement in prostitution on indiscriminate choice of sexual partners. • An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes (e.g., sports events) <p>Some physical factors associated with this form of abuse are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or itching of genital area. • Blood on underclothes • Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed. • Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia, or clothing.
Emotional and psychological abuse	<p>Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also include the presence of other kinds of abuse. It may include conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved or imposing unrealistic expectations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental delay • Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer • Aggressive behaviour towards others. • Scapegoat within the family. • Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children. • Low self-esteem and lack of confidence. • Withdrawn or seen as a "loner" – difficulty relating to others.
Neglect	<p>Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and /or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. It may also include neglect of, or being unresponsive to, a child's basic emotional needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs i.e.: food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, and medical care. • A child seen to be listless, apathetic, and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause. • Child thrives away from home environment. • Child frequently absent from school • Left with numerous different carers or inappropriate carers e.g.: adults who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or who are violent. • Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.
Modern slavery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavery • Human trafficking • Forced labour and domestic servitude. 	<p>A child is in modern slavery if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced to work - through coercion, or material, or physical threat. • Dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as "property". • Physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.

		<p>Forms of modern slavery are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced labour - any work or services which people are forced to do against their will under the threat of some form of punishment. • Human trafficking – involved transporting, recruiting, or harboring people for the purpose of exploitation, using violence, threats, or coercion. • Child slavery – many people often confuse child slavery with child labour, but it is much worse. While child labour is harmful for children and hinders their education and development, child slavery occurs when a child is exploited for someone else's gain. It can include child trafficking.
Bullying	<p>Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can cause considerable stress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-harm. • Developmental delay • Antio-social behaviour in school or at home • Lack of self-esteem and confidence • Bouts of unexplained anger or upset

Forced Marriage:

Forced marriage is when someone faces physical pressure to marry (e.g., threats, physical or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressures. Forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales. This includes:

- Taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether the forced marriage takes place).
- Marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity and/or is underage to consent to the marriage.

Forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison.

Radicalisation:

In older children - When an individual or group adopts increasingly extreme political, religious, or social views or ideals that reject the status quo or reject or undermine the usual ideas and expressions of choice. Signs could include:

- Being overly secretive about their online viewing – this being one of the core ways in which groups are known to communicate.
- Displaying feelings of isolation or expressions of an “us and them” mentality – a sign of the sense of social isolation.
- Becoming more argumentative or domineering in their viewpoints, being quick to condemn those who disagree and ignoring views that contradict their own.
- Questioning their faith or identity.
- Downloading or promoting extremist content.
- Social isolation – losing interest in activities they used to enjoy, distancing themselves from friends and social groups.
- Altered appearance – change in style or dress and/or personal appearance.

Female Genital Mutilation:

Procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

An estimated 137,000 women and children in the UK are affected.

The girls may be taken to their country of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to “heal” before they return to school. There are also worries that some girls may have FGM performed in the UK.

Safeguarding Process Flow:

PLEASE REFER TO THE BRIDGE CASE MANAGEMENT SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL PATHWAY.

What should you do if you are concerned a child or young adult is at risk of being abused?

1. If you feel someone is in danger or at risk of immediate harm, dial 999 and seek emergency assistance, and then follow the steps set out in the flow chart.
2. If you are concerned that a client is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect, regardless of intent, you must report your concerns immediately. You must:
 - a. If from a Case Manager, alert your Line Manager and the Safeguarding Lead within 2 hours of learning of the incident or concern (unless there is a good reason for being unable to do so, in which case, contact must be made by the end of the working day).
 - b. 1) Update our internal safeguarding form and inform the Safeguarding Lead by the end of that working day. 2) Ensure the safeguarding referral is sent to the local authority, using their safeguarding referral form, by COP that day. 3. Update Bridge Case Managements Case Manager system with the following statement: *Safeguarding referral made by XXXX on XXXX, please refer to our safeguarding register for full information.*
 - c. If outside of office hours, please notify either the Clinical Directors and/or the Safeguarding Lead by phone and complete our internal safeguarding form – Please remember that you should NEVER sleep on a concern.
3. It is your responsibility to report your concerns in a timely manner, in line with the timescales set out in this policy.
4. If a client discloses to you that they are suffering from harm through the deliberate intent, negligence, or lack of understanding or another, you must share your concern with the Case Manager, Clinical Directors and/or the Safeguarding Lead immediately. Where safe and appropriate to do so, ensure the client is aware of what you are going to do and reassure them of the timescales of action. Your concerns must be reported within the same working day.
5. It is the responsibility of the Case Manager and the Safeguarding Lead to consider the client's immediate safety and risks. The Case Manager must be satisfied that a sufficient plan is in place to safeguard the client from any immediate risks, and co-ordinate the implementation of any such plans.
6. The Case Manager, where appropriate, refers the concern to the local authority governing the area in which the client lives. The Case Manager must work in line with the local authority's safeguarding process, guided by the Safeguarding Lead.
7. The Case Manager will keep you informed, where appropriate, and agree with you, a clear plan for keeping the adult at risk safe until appropriate action can be taken.
8. The Safeguarding Lead will ensure the safeguarding register is kept fully up to date with the actions and final outcome of the investigation by Bridge Case Management and the local authority (LADO).