



## Scope

This policy applies to anyone employed directly or indirectly by Acacia and includes Trustees, staff and volunteers. It is available to independent contractors and should be implemented in all situations. While this policy focuses on the workplace, the responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults extend to an individual's personal domestic life. Safeguarding is everyone's business.

## Purpose

This document's purpose is to provide comprehensive information regarding Acacia's safeguarding policy and procedures. Safeguarding remains a priority for us therefore we have been keen to develop a comprehensive policy which can be used as a 'go to' reference document – for this reason it is quite lengthy. A contents page has been included to help navigate the document more easily.

For quick access to our safeguarding reporting pathway for raising a concern please use PQ002a Safeguarding – What Do

Information on the Prevent Strategy is found in PQ002c Prevent Policy.

### Policy aims:

To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who Acacia personnel may come into contact with, and/or observe or hear information concerning the welfare of. To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles, practice & guidance required for the protection of vulnerable adults & children.

## Reference Documents

### Reference Documents:

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Working together to safeguard children 2024
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information 2015
- Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies of Healthcare Staff January 2019
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004
- The Children Act 1989
- Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff 2024
- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006



Care Standards Act 2000  
Mental Health Act 1983  
Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2018-2023  
Domestic Abuse Act 2021  
Modern Slavery Act 2015

## Approval

Operations Director:

Chair of Trustees:

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## Policy

### 1 What is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults?

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and / or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, adult and child protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Safeguarding Adults is defined as work which enables an adult who is, or may be, eligible for community care services to retain independence, wellbeing and choice AND to access their human right to live a life that is free from abuse and neglect.

People who might find themselves vulnerable to abuse are:

- People with learning disabilities
- Dementia sufferers

People with mental health problems

- Substance misusers
- Older people
- Homeless people

The Care Act 2014 enshrined the following key principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work:

**Empowerment:** People should be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions about what they want to happen and services plan safeguarding round this.

**Prevention:** Stop abuse before it happens by raising awareness about abuse and neglect, training staff and making sure clear, straight forward information is available about abuse and where to get help

**Proportionality:** Any response should be appropriate to the risk presented. Services must respect the person, think about what is best for them and only get involved as much as needed.

**Protection:** Organisations must ensure that they know what to do when abuse has happened to stop the abuse and help those at risk. They must support the vulnerable adult to get involved as little or as much as they want.

**Partnership:** Organisations should work in partnership with each other and local communities but only share client information to help keep the client safe.

**Accountability:** Safeguarding is everybody's business. Everyone must accept that we are all accountable as individuals, as services and as organisations.



Roles and responsibilities must be clear so that people can see and check how safeguarding is done.

Text transposed from Bradford SAB website.

## 2 What is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children?

It is the process of protecting all children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of health and development and ensuring that children grow up in circumstances that enable them to have the best life chances. The above legislation enshrines this in law.

It is about promoting best outcomes for children so that they move into adulthood successfully regardless of age, class, religion, race, disability or gender.

There are a number of situations where contact with children occurs including:

- Parents bringing their children with them to befriending or group sessions at our centres.
- Home visits to deliver Helping Hands at Home service.
- a parent under 25 accessing the YPP service and receiving a visit where children are present.

Staff may observe children in any of the above situations, and they may also be witness to other indirect observations whilst providing telephone or online services on a one-to-one basis. Staff will sometimes observe directly, infer from statements made or hear information that raises concerns about a child's welfare.

## 3 Our policy – an introduction

Acacia is a charity that works to improve the lives of families experiencing pre and postnatal depression. We believe that every individual who accesses our services should be treated with dignity and respect, have their choice respected and not be forced to do anything against their will. Acacia is committed to safeguarding all vulnerable adults and children coming into contact with the charity, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

Acacia personnel come into direct and indirect contact with parents. Some of these may be vulnerable adults. While the majority of Acacia services are delivered to adults, we also come into contact with their children directly and indirectly. This policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who, during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children or vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults.

For Acacia this means ...

1. ensuring that Acacia practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, freelancers and volunteers to work with vulnerable adults and have contact with children.
2. ensuring safe environments, checking the suitability of childcare providers contracted by Acacia, ensuring services are provided in safe environments and that sufficient safeguards are in place.
3. raising awareness of how and when to signpost vulnerable adults to appropriate services.
4. raising awareness of child and adult protection situations, and our procedures for identifying and reporting concerns or suspected cases.
5. building a culture that values and respects all children and adults and modelling appropriate conduct in line with our values.
6. setting out clear roles and responsibilities for safeguarding.

We set out below the processes and steps required and expected of all Acacia personnel in relation to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

## 4 Safe recruitment

### Staff and volunteers

It is Acacia's policy to ensure that thorough checks are made prior to appointment of staff, volunteers and freelance consultants, in order to prevent a person using their position to harm a child or vulnerable parent.

For all posts at Acacia the following vetting checks are carried out prior to confirming the appointment:

- a Self-Disclosure form to disclose previous spent/unspent convictions and disciplinary or capability procedures.
- Identity documents including photographic identity



- Proof of right to work in the UK
- References including a professional reference using a pro-forma template
- Qualification certificates if required for the role
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check for all client facing roles. All appointments to posts involving direct and/or indirect work with children and/or vulnerable adults will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS, and enrolment in the update service, enabling Acacia to monitor all staff/volunteers DBSs for any change in status during employment.

In line with Acacia's Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders, a criminal record does not prevent employment at Acacia. A thorough Risk Assessment is carried out if convictions are revealed on the declaration form or criminal record check.

During interview and in the job description, safeguarding responsibilities should be clearly defined and emphasised commensurate with the role, and safeguarding questions are a standard part of the interview process for all staff. At least one Acacia interview panel member must have completed Safer Recruitment training.

Acacia's Induction process ensures a thorough induction for new staff into the organisation. As part of Induction, the line manager must ensure new staff read key corporate policies, including Safeguarding/Child Protection/Vulnerable adult protection, Data Protection and Confidentiality policies, and understand their personal responsibilities within these, and that any training needs are identified and addressed.

Acacia's internal supervision process ensures that all staff receive regular ongoing management support and feedback on performance including safeguarding, to ensure that performance meets appropriate standards and training, and development opportunities/needs are discussed. Safeguarding training needs of staff are audited annually.

## 5 Safe environments

### a. Childcare providers

Acacia often contracts crèche workers from third party providers. Acacia policy is to use only established and approved providers, and all crèche workers should have been DBS checked.

### b. Safe environments

Acacia will ensure that all environments where services activities are delivered will not cause harm to vulnerable adults or children. As well as ensuring that suitable



staff deliver activities, all service delivery environments will be assessed in line with Acacia's Health and Safety policy.

## 5a Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it. The traditional safeguarding approach does not consider extra-familial contexts, which has led to cases of abuse and exploitation falling under the radar. Please see Appendix 9 for further information.

## 6 Signposting vulnerable adults to support

Our staff come into contact with parents by phone or face to face and some staff and moderators may interact with parents via online forums, social media and other written communication.

Some of these parents may be particularly vulnerable, experiencing distress (for example due to family conflict or experience of domestic violence) or have mental health issues. For the majority of these adults their situation will not be of a nature that requires a member of staff to report a concern. However, we believe it is important to recognise the vulnerability of these adults. Acacia does not have appropriate expertise to deal directly with these issues although our intervention may be helpful, nor do we provide counselling support, so it is vital that staff understand how to identify signs, including domestic abuse and signpost effectively.

Acacia will provide up to date signposting information for use by staff and volunteers which details organisations that can be contacted to support parents in a range of situations ranging from domestic abuse/violence, to mental health, drugs and alcohol etc.

## 7 Child and adult protection – Recognising the signs

Our role in protecting children and vulnerable adults is to pick up cues that the child or adult may need protecting and pass appropriate information to those who can assess the situation and act when required. Staff are required to be aware of the different types and signs of abuse and the circumstances in which it can occur (**see Appendix 3, Recognising Abuse**).

### ***Understanding abuse and neglect***

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a



community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy and as appendices. All staff must be familiar with this information.

- **Definitions of abuse:** See Appendix 2: Statutory Definitions of Abuse.
- **Signs and symptoms of abuse:** See Appendix 3: Recognizing Abuse.
- **How to respond to someone wishing to disclose abuse:** See Appendix 4: Effective Listening.

## 8 Reporting Concerns – This information is available in PQ002a

It is the responsibility of the case holder who has identified the safeguarding concern to ensure that time frames are adhered to. This should take priority over other work commitments. Volunteers should raise the concern with their Locality Manager/Safeguarding Coordinator who normally take on the role of managing the safeguarding process, including CASS referral, and provide ongoing support for the volunteer. The volunteer should not attempt to do their own investigation.

If any of these actions are unable to be completed within the necessary time frame due to time constraints and/or other commitments, they must be communicated/handed over to an Acacia Line Manager/Locality Manager or Safeguarding Coordinator responsibility before you go off duty or begin work on another commitment (on rare occasions when no other option is available they may be handed over to a colleague to continue if there are no managers/DSL's available).

Don't forget that Acacia is a member of thirtyone:eight, who can be contacted for expert safeguarding advice on 0303 003 1111 (Our membership code is 5668). Please use this service if you need to access further advice/support with a safeguarding decision and especially in the rare instances where you can't contact your line manager or any of the DSL's



## 9. Acacia Safeguarding Pathway

### 1. Risk recognised

#### Actions to be Completed on Same Day

- **Add flag 'Risk Management - Active'**
- **Caseholder**
  - a. inform your Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy to review by email (request a review of the file at their earliest convenience within approx. 2hrs)
  - b. record this communication on IIZUKA using the 'Internal Communication' action
  - c. tick the 'risk management' box
  - d. complete the Risk Management/Safeguarding form within 'Available Actions' tab

#### Available Actions

> General

> **Risk Management/Safeguarding** ←

> Support

***It's the Caseholder's responsibility to record on IIZUKA and report any Risk on the same day the risk has been identified and then follow up with their Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy within a few hours:***

***Chase if no reply***

- **Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy**
  - review and input any recommendations
  - advise Case holder of review and recommendations.
  - record on IIZUKA using the 'Internal Communication' Action
  - tick the 'risk management' box

### 2. Safeguarding Concern recognized (Policy PQ002, Appendix 8, pg. 41)

#### Actions to be Completed on Same Day

- **Add 'Safeguarding - ACTIVE' Flag**
- **Case holder**
  - inform your Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy to review
  - record on IIZUKA using the 'Internal Communication' Action



- tick the 'Safeguarding' box
- Body Map attached: Yes/No

- **Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy**

- review and input any recommendations
- advise Case holder of review and recommendations.
- record on IIZUKA using the 'Internal Communication' Action
- tick the 'Safeguarding' box

- **If necessary, record and make a referral to the appropriate safeguarding services (Policy PQ002, Appendix 8, pg. 41)**

- CASS referral form – complete External Safeguarding Referral Made – request admin to send via NHS Account

### 3. Closing

- inform your Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy when discharging
- send email to your Line Manager/Safeguarding Deputy asking them to review the file. Once Line Manager has given feedback and no concerns around, discharge.

### Remove 'ACTIVE' Flag

### Add relevant Flag - Risk Management or Safeguarding CLOSED'

Safeguarding notifications should be reported to our NHS funders as part of our usual performance monitoring by the safeguarding lead. If there is a significant safeguarding event this must be reported to funders urgently rather than waiting for the usual end of quarter reporting process.

### Making an External CASS Referral (children)

All enquiries regarding children's safeguarding concerns should be made to CASS 0121 303 1888.

All Requests for Support (RFS) from CASS must be completed via their online form and submitted onto the **CASS portal**. Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT) staff and agencies will be able to attach relevant documents, screening tools or other assessments to this online RFS Form before it is submitted. Once submitted you will then receive an automated email response, attached will be a copy of your RFS form in a PDF format and any copies of attachments submitted.

You must complete all mandatory fields within the online form to submit it.

CASS has produced a helpful webinar with detailed guidance on how to complete the new online Request for Support Form. To view the webinar please use this link: <https://vimeo.com/874117246/3b5baf6c04>



As per the Acacia actions listed above, all Risk Management/Safeguarding concerns and actions/referrals must be documented promptly and flagged in iizuka Case Manager with any supporting documentation also being attached to their file. The Safeguarding Coordinator will review and follow up.

In the absence of a line manager/Safeguarding Coordinator, or if the suspicion in any way involves the line manager or Safeguarding Coordinator then the report should always be made directly to CASS, and if the Safeguarding Coordinator is under suspicion Hayley Bowen, the chair of trustees should be informed (no?...)

Don't forget to make use of ThirtyOne:Eight. The phone number is 0303 003 11 11. Our membership number is 5668.

### **Making an ACAP referral (Adults)**

The Birmingham Adults and Communities Access Point (ACAP) is the main contact for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect of adults with care needs in Birmingham, reachable at **0121 303 1234** or [ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk), with the [Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board \(BSAB\)](#) providing strategic oversight; for immediate danger, call 999, while non-emergencies can go to West Midlands Police (101).

#### ***Contacting ACAP (During Office Hours)***

- **Phone:** 0121 303 1234 (Press option 1)
- **Email:** [ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:ACAP@birmingham.gov.uk) (Type 'Safeguarding' in the subject)
- **Text Relay:** Dial 18001, then the full number (0121 303 1234)

#### ***Out of Hours/Emergency Contacts***

- **Emergency (Immediate Danger):** 999
- **West Midlands Police (Non-Emergency Crime):** 101
- **Emergency Duty Team (EDT - Out of Hours Social Care):** 0121 675 4806

## **10 Allegations of Physical Injury, Neglect or Emotional Abuse (children)**

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse:

- Contact DSC/Thirtyone:eight/CASS/Police for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns (e.g. poor parenting) encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of imminent injury.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact CASS directly for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by CASS (who will confirm their advice in writing).



- Make sure you document everything in iizuka, including dates, times, names of people spoken to, job titles, phone numbers etc and don't forget to inform the Safeguarding Coordinator.

## 11 Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse:

- Contact CASS and/or Police Child Protection Team directly. Do NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Further advice may be obtained from the Safeguarding Coordinator /Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by CASS/Thirtyone:eight if for any reason you are unsure what action to take.
- Document everything in iizuka.

## 12 Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery is the illegal trade of human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or reproductive slavery, forced labour, or a modern-day form of slavery. British and foreign nationals can be trafficked into, around and out of the UK. Children, women and men can all be victims of modern slavery. It is a criminal offence in the UK (Modern Slavery Act 2015).

Any of our staff and volunteers could spot a victim of modern slavery and have a duty of care to take appropriate action.

For more comprehensive advice, including what to do if you suspect someone is a victim, please see Appendix 6.

## 13 Female Genital Mutilation

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is child abuse, and it is illegal. (FGM Act 2003) Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers are required to report cases of FGM in girls under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. If you suspect FGM in a child or adult you must notify a safeguarding Coordinator. Further information can be found in Appendix 5

## 14 Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse and is illegal (Sexual Offences Act 2003). It can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, accommodation or gifts, to serious organized crime and internal child trafficking. Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their family background or other circumstances.

Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. Practitioners should be aware that particularly young people aged 16 and 17 may believe themselves to be acting voluntarily. More comprehensive information can be found in Appendix 7.

## 15 Allegations of Abuse Against a Person Who Works With Children

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above the Safeguarding Coordinator in accordance with BSCP procedures will need to liaise with CASS in regard to the suspension of the worker and making a referral to an Allegations Management Adviser (AMA). Thirtyone:eight can also provide essential independent advice and support.

## 16 Confidentiality

Recognising that "the welfare of the child is paramount" (Children's Act 1989, The Children Act 2004), therefore considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Acacias Confidentiality policy therefore requires staff to act in any situation in which a child or a vulnerable adult is at risk.

While all staff should be open to the possible abuse of vulnerable adults in all situations, we envisage that there will be very few instances where staff will need to report adult protection concerns as most of our clients would not be categorised as vulnerable adults from a safeguarding perspective. The situations where this is most likely to happen and where staff/volunteers will be expected to act are

- An adult has been assessed as being at high risk of suicide (see guidance on reporting concerns)
- A vulnerable client discloses historic or current domestic abuse and which you believe puts them in imminent danger



- There is a significant risk that the adult will seriously physically harm another person.

In respect of vulnerable adults all action, including referrals to Social Services and the police, must be subject to the consent of the service user. In every situation it will be assumed that a person can make their own decisions, and action will only be taken in the absence of consent from the service user where;

- they or others are in physical danger
- after seeking advice from an appropriate agency you have been advised to report the concern as it is believed that the vulnerable adult is unable/incapable of making an informed decision for himself or herself.

Staff should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to anyone wishing to tell them about something serious.

Acacia's complaints procedure is an important way in which concerns can be raised and should be easily accessible to clients.

## **17 Awareness of how and when to take action**

Staff should follow the Acacia Guidance on Recognizing Abuse to help them assess the risk of harm and take action if required.

All incidents should be recorded and flagged in iizuka and reported to your Safeguarding Coordinator. This information will be stored securely in compliance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and kept in accordance with Acacia's Case Manager processes.

Allegations of abuse or concerns raised against members of staff, volunteers, trainers or trustees, will always be treated seriously. Where there is an allegation against a member of staff/volunteer, your Safeguarding Coordinator should be informed, and a disciplinary investigation will be carried out. There may also be criminal (police) investigations. Where the allegation concerns any of the DSC's the chair of the trustees will be involved in the investigation and must be informed by emailing [chair@acacia.org.uk](mailto:chair@acacia.org.uk).

## **18 Reporting possible abuse or neglect of a vulnerable adult**

If you think someone is in immediate danger call the Police on 999.



If it is not an emergency and you want to report adult abuse, please call the “Adults & Communities Access Point” (ACAP) on 0121 303 1234 and press option 2 on your keypad

In an emergency outside office hours, on weekends and during Bank Holidays phone the Emergency Duty Team on 0121 675 4806 or the police and tell them you are worried about possible adult abuse. They will then put you in touch with the right person to talk to.

The Emergency Duty Team is available at the following times:

5.15pm to 8.45am (Monday to Thursday) or 4.15pm to 8.45am (Friday to Monday)

If you think there has been a **crime**, but it’s **not an emergency**, contact [West Midlands Police](#) as soon as possible on **0345 113 5000** or **101**.

### **Other teams and contacts**

Please be aware that you can also contact directly the hospital social work teams, the mental health social work teams where they are the appropriate team for the person you are concerned about. Please see contact details below.

### **Adult Mental Health Social Services for reporting a safeguarding concern**

**Central Birmingham – Phone: 0121 303 5188**

**South Birmingham (Safeguarding Adults Board) – Phone: 0121 301 2830**

**North Birmingham – Phone: 0121 464 5123**

#### **Hospital social-work teams**

Good Hope Hospital	Phone: 0121 424 7880
Heartlands and Solihull Hospital	Phone: 0121 424 1622
Moseley Hall Hospital	Phone: 0121 442 3509
Royal Orthopaedic Hospital	Phone: 0121 685 4194
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital	Phone: 0121 507 4623 or 0121 507 4622 or 0121 507 4626
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	Phone: 0121 371 4593
West Heath Hospital	Phone: 0121 627 8237

### **19 Acacia Culture**

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to value diversity and respect the contribution of each individual. However, it is important to recognise the difference between being



accepting of a person's culture and customs and identifying instances where there is a genuine concern regarding a vulnerable adult and or child.

Employees/volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns about anything of concern within Acacia. This includes employment practices and staff behaviour. Concerns will always be taken seriously. Unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. The Discipline and Grievance Procedure sets out how to raise concerns both informally and formally, how concerns will be investigated and support for individuals raising a concern as well as for employees who are the subject of a complaint. Employees will not suffer any negative treatment for giving constructive criticism or raising a genuine grievance.

Acacia's whistle blowing and FTSU policy provides guidance for staff on confidential reporting of concerns about wrong doing in the workplace.

### **Online forums and Facebook**

Acacia works to ensure that our online forums and Facebook page are safe and supportive places where parents feel comfortable to express themselves and share their experiences.

While we encourage lively debate, we do not tolerate behaviour which makes other users feel uneasy or unable to contribute to the page. As such, we reserve the right to remove posts which are aggressive in tone, abusive towards other users or disruptive to how the forum or page operates. Racist, sexist, homophobic or bullying posts will be removed without delay. This is common practice and corresponds with Facebook's terms and conditions.

## **20 Roles and responsibilities**

Safeguarding and Child Protection Responsibilities are set out as follows:

- Trustees are accountable for Acacia and therefore all safeguarding within the organisation. Hayley Bowen is the Trustee Lead for safeguarding.
- All Locality Managers act as Deputy Safeguarding Coordinators for their locality and are supported by the Assistant Operations Director as Safeguarding Coordinator
- The Safeguarding Coordinator provides advice and support to staff and volunteers unsure about how to proceed with a particular case. They will also help to ensure that proper procedure is followed including good documentation in iizuka.



- The Safeguarding Coordinator must stay abreast of developments on safeguarding best practice, advise on changes to policy and practice and coordinate Safeguarding audits and reporting.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who, during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children or vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.

### ***Awareness of Acacia's policies***

All staff are required to read Acacia's Safeguarding/Child and vulnerable adults protection policy, to know their responsibilities in their role, and to provide signed confirmation of this on the Induction checklist (FQ035). Staff working directly with families should receive additional training to identify signs of abuse and know how to report concerns. All staff are responsible for maintaining their safeguarding knowledge and where they feel that they require additional training this must be raised promptly through Acacia's supervision/support system.

## **21 Training**

All staff and volunteers will receive training and updates according to their roles and responsibilities in compliance with the recommendations of Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies of Healthcare Staff January 2019. These are as follows:

Volunteers:	Acacia's level one/two safeguarding children/adults training including supplementary training in FGM, Modern Slavery (MS), CSE, Prevent and DV
	Befrienders will receive the above training plus e-learning safeguarding children/adults' level 2/3.
Staff with no client contact:	Acacia level one/two - induction and annual update
Staff with direct client contact:	Level two/three safeguarding children/adults training, FGM, MS, CSE, Prevent, DV



Deputy coordinator/lead Coordinator: As above plus level 3 safeguarding children/adults training including Designated Lead Training.

All safeguarding training will be monitored, recorded and maintained by the Operations Director and Volunteer Co-ordinator. Update training will be at least every two years with opportunities for more frequent updating. Learning from serious case reviews is disseminated via email, OMT and internal workshops. Safeguarding is a standing item at all operational management and staff meetings for updating and dissemination of learning.

## 22 Safeguarding Supervision

It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinators and case holders have access to safeguarding supervision. Coordinators hold joint responsibility to provide appropriate supervision to volunteers in their centres.

*Supervision is defined as: A formal process of professional support and learning which enables individual practitioners to develop knowledge and competence, assume responsibility for their own practice and enhance patient/client protection and safety of care in complex clinical situations (CQC, 2013).*

The purpose of supervision is to provide an opportunity for sharing, learning and reflection, and for increased collaboration and support. The aim of supervision is the improvement of the quality of work to achieve the agreed outcomes.

Acacia aims to promote and develop a culture that values and engages in regular safeguarding supervision as and when required.

DSC's/SC receive safeguarding supervision as part of their regular external one to one and group clinical supervision. They provide peer review/supervision for each other as a team.

All designated coordinators and other client facing staff receive peer review of safeguarding cases and at least annual performance development review.

All client facing staff receive safeguarding supervision as part of their regular clinical supervision.



Safeguarding Coordinators will share safeguarding cases and serious case review learning and reflection as part of their regular Operational Management Team meetings, and this is minuted.

Volunteers receive de-brief and safeguarding supervision from their locality managers as and when needed.

Group supervisions for all staff/volunteers incorporating learning for case review/case discussions are held during the year as part of the all-staff meeting.



## Appendix 1

### Acacia's Safeguarding/Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy, and Practice Guidelines Policy Statement

#### Our commitment

Trustees of charities which work with children and vulnerable adults have a duty of care to their charity which will include taking the necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for those children and vulnerable adults. They must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect the reputation and assets of the charity.

*[Charity Commission's Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities.*

*Updated 6 December 2017]*

As a Leadership team we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child." As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in the safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure we have robust safeguarding and child/adult protection policy which is current and regularly updated.

#### The policy

Acacia's Safeguarding/Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy, and Practice Guidelines applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Acacia.



### **The purpose of the policy:**

- to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who Acacia personnel may come into contact with or observe or hear information concerning the welfare of.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of vulnerable adults.;

### **We believe that:**

A child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind and that the welfare of the child / young person is paramount.

All children and vulnerable adults, 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.

Every parent who accesses our services has a right to a life free from fear, to be treated with dignity and respect and to have their choice respected and not be forced to do anything against their will.

People have the right to decide how they live and the risks they take in their lives without outside intervention, provided they do not harm others and provided there is no evidence to suggest that they are the victim of a criminal offence or are putting themselves in danger because they do not have the mental capacity to make that decision.

We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Working in partnership is essential in promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

### **We will seek to keep children and young people and vulnerable adults safe by:**

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection and vulnerable adult safeguarding practices through procedures for staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection safeguarding vulnerable adults and good practice with service users, staff and volunteers
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involve carers or representatives as appropriate.
- Staying up to date with developments on safeguarding best practice, reporting and auditing our safeguarding activities annually and reviewing and updating our core safeguarding policy and practices every year.



## Appendix 2

### Statutory Definitions of Abuse Children

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**There are four core types of child abuse:** Government Guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or failing to protect a child from that harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. It can also include female genital mutilation (FGM). Please see Appendix 5 for advice and responsibilities regarding FGM.

#### **Emotional Abuse and Bullying**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age- or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 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.

#### **Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, 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). It can also include online abuse/bullying and cyber bullying.

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.

### **Sexual Abuse (including grooming, child sexual exploitation, trafficking)**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including both penetrative or non-penetrative acts such as kissing, touching or fondling the child's genitals or breasts, vaginal or anal intercourse or oral sex.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing; shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Other Categories**

Two further categories of abuse are identified in the Working Together 2018 guidance:

#### ***Child Criminal Exploitation***

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.



### **Extremism/Radicalisation**

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of the armed forces as extremist. For more information regarding radicalisation see Acacia's **PQ002c Prevent Policy**

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### **Statutory Definitions of Abuse Vulnerable Adults**

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The following definition of abuse is laid down in No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

***'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'***. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'.

According to Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies August 2018 an adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse, harm or neglect because of their needs for care and/or support and are unable to safeguard themselves. Adult safeguarding means to work with an individual to protect their right to live in safety, free from abuse, harm and neglect. This can include both proactive and reactive interventions to support health and wellbeing with the engagement of the individual and their wider community. The aim is to enable the individual to live free from fear and harm and have their rights and choices respected.

### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

## **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

## **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty. It can include bullying, cyber bullying etc.

## **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

## **Neglect or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired

## **Self-Neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and can include behaviour such as hoarding and non-attendance at necessary health/dental appointments. Consideration must be given to the impact on other family members and/or the wider community, mental capacity legislation and whether this gives rise to a safeguarding concern.

## **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

## **Domestic Abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, honour-based violence, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality (Gov.UK, 2013). The offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial



relationships was introduced into the Serious Crime Act (2015) and recognition of violence against women domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) is part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

### ***Domestic abuse includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)***

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genital organs or any other injury to the female genital organs for nonmedical reasons. FGM is most often carried out on young girls aged between infancy and 15 years old. Whilst there is a mandatory requirement to report incidents of FGM for children and young people this is not a requirement for adult women. If a professional has safeguarding concerns about an individual who has experienced FGM a referral should be made in line with usual local safeguarding arrangements (FGM Act 2003) . See Appendix 5.

### **Organisational/Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

### **Modern slavery**

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. See Appendix 6.



## Appendix 3

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### Recognizing Abuse - Children

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Abusive behavior comes in many forms, but the common denominator is the emotional effect on the child. Children need predictability, structure, clear boundaries, and the knowledge that their parents are looking out for their safety. Abused children cannot predict how their parents will act. Their world is an unpredictable, frightening place with no rules. Whether the abuse is a slap, a harsh comment, stony silence, or not knowing if there will be dinner on the table tonight, the end result is a child that feels unsafe, uncared for, and alone.

#### **Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)**

Child abuse is not always obvious. But by learning some of the common warning signs of abuse and neglect, you can catch the problem as early as possible and get both the child and the abuser the help that they need.

Of course, just because you spot a red flag doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused. It's important to dig deeper, looking for a pattern of abusive behavior and warning signs, if you notice something off.

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

#### **Physical**

Physical abuse involves physical harm or injury to the child. It may be the result of a deliberate attempt to hurt the child, but not always. It can also result from severe discipline, such as using a belt on a child, or physical punishment that is inappropriate to the child's age or physical condition.

Many physically abusive parents and caregivers insist that their actions are simply forms of discipline – ways to make children learn to behave. But there is a big difference between using physical punishment to discipline and physical abuse. The point of disciplining children is to teach them right from wrong, not to make them live in fear.

#### The difference between discipline and physical abuse

In physical abuse, unlike physical forms of discipline, the following elements are present:

*Unpredictability.*



The child never knows what is going to set the parent off. There are no clear boundaries or rules. The child is constantly walking on eggshells, never sure what behavior will trigger a physical assault.

*Lashing out in anger.*

Physically abusive parents act out of anger and the desire to assert control, not the motivation to lovingly teach the child. The angrier the parent, the more intense the abuse.

*Using fear to control behavior.*

Parents who are physically abusive may believe that their children need to fear them in order to behave, so they use physical abuse to “keep their child in line.” However, what children are really learning is how to avoid being hit, not how to behave or grow as individuals.

**Signs may include:**

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation\*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse\*

**Sexual**

Sexual abuse is an especially complicated form of abuse because of its layers of guilt and shame. It's important to recognize that sexual abuse doesn't always involve body contact. Exposing a child to sexual situations or material is sexually abusive, whether or not touching is involved.

While news stories of sexual predators are scary, what is even more frightening is that sexual abuse usually occurs at the hands of someone the victim knows and should be able to trust—most often close relatives. And contrary to what many believe, it's not just girls who are at risk. Boys and girls both suffer from sexual abuse. In fact, sexual abuse of boys may be underreported due to shame and stigma.

Aside from the physical damage that sexual abuse can cause, the emotional component is powerful and far-reaching. Sexually abused children are tormented by shame and guilt. They may feel that they are responsible for the abuse or somehow brought it upon themselves. This can lead to self-loathing and sexual problems as



they grow older—often either excessive promiscuity or an inability to have intimate relations.

The shame of sexual abuse makes it very difficult for children to come forward. They may worry that others won't believe them, will be angry with them, or that it will split their family apart. Because of these difficulties, false accusations of sexual abuse are not common, so if a child confides in you, take him or her seriously. Don't turn a blind eye!

### ***Signs may include***

Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse

Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour

Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing

Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults

Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home

Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia\*

### **Emotional**

Emotional abuse can severely damage a child's mental health or social development. Examples of emotional child abuse include:

1. Constant belittling, shaming, and humiliating a child
2. Calling names and making negative comparisons to others
3. Telling a child he or she is "no good," "worthless," "bad," or "a mistake"
4. Frequent yelling, threatening, or bullying
5. Ignoring or rejecting a child as punishment, giving him or her the silent treatment
6. Limited physical contact with the child—no hugs, kisses, or other signs of affection
7. Exposing the child to violence or the abuse of others, whether it be the abuse of a parent, a sibling, or even a pet

### ***Signs may include:***

Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.

Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.

Nervousness, frozen watchfulness

Obsessions or phobias

Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration



Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults  
Attention-seeking behaviour  
Persistent tiredness  
Always on phone/tablet/computer – hides screen from you  
Running away/stealing/lying

### **Neglect**

Child neglect—a very common type of child abuse—is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, or supervision. Child neglect is not always easy to spot. Sometimes, a parent might become physically or mentally unable to care for a child, such as with a serious injury, untreated depression, or anxiety. Other times, alcohol or drug abuse may seriously impair judgment and the ability to keep a child safe.

Older children might not show outward signs of neglect, becoming used to presenting a competent face to the outside world, and even taking on the role of the parent. But at the end of the day, neglected children are not getting their physical and emotional needs met.

### **Signs may include**

Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food,  
Untreated illnesses,  
Inadequate care, etc

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

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## **Recognizing Abuse - Vulnerable Adults**

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### **Physical**

A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries  
Signs of under or overuse of medication and/or medical problems unattended

### **Sexual**

Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse  
Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour  
Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting  
Infections or sexually transmitted diseases  
Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse  
Self-harming

### **Psychological**

Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful  
Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer  
Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes  
Unexplained paranoia

### **Financial or Material**

Disparity between assets and living conditions  
Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents  
Sudden inability to pay bills  
Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf  
Recent changes of deeds or title to property

### **Neglect or Omission**

Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger  
Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores  
Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition  
Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care  
No callers or visitors, hoarding.

### **Discriminatory**

Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect  
Poor quality or avoidance of care

### **Institutional**

Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc  
Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication  
Inappropriate use of restraint  
Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids  
Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans  
Public discussion of private matter  
Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

### **Modern Slavery**

Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Trafficking is the movement of people by means such as force, fraud, coercion or deception with the aim of exploiting them. It is a form of Modern Slavery. People can be trafficked for many different forms of exploitation such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, and forced criminality, forced marriage, domestic servitude, forced organ removal. Trafficking can occur within the UK as well as countries outside the UK. Often those trafficked are very guarded about



giving any personal information and are rarely or never seen alone. There is always someone chaperoning them. See Appendix 6.

### **Domestic Violence**

Victims of domestic abuse may show signs of;

- physical injuries
- 
- excuses for frequent injuries
- stress, anxiety or depression
- absent from work and social occasions
- personality changes – being jumpy or nervous
- low self-esteem
- lack of independent communication
- self-blame
- increased alcohol or drug use
- lack of money
- damage to property.



## Appendix 4

### Effective Listening – The Basics

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Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

#### HELPFUL RESPONSES

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

#### DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?

## Appendix 5

### FGM

#### 1. Introduction

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names such as:

- female circumcision
- cutting
- sunna
- gudniin
- halalays
- tahur
- megrez
- khitan.

FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and it is a criminal offence in the UK (FGM Act 2003). We know:

- there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM
- it's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades
- children are rarely given anesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained
- it's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:

- when a baby is new-born
- during childhood or as a teenager
- just before marriage
- during pregnancy.

A child who's at risk of FGM might ask you for help. But some children might not know what's going to happen to them. So, it's important to be aware of the signs.

Signs FGM might happen:

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad.

- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'.
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM.
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays.
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school.
- A girl struggles to keep up in school.
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home.

Signs FGM might have taken place:

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting.
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college.
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations.
- Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed

Negative effects of FGM

- severe and/or constant pain
- infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- pain or difficulty having sex
- infertility
- bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- organ damage
- problems during pregnancy and childbirth, which can be life-threatening for the mother and baby
- mental health problems, such as depression, flashbacks and self-harm
- death from blood loss or infections.

Why FGM happens

FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth.

Who's at risk?

Girls living in communities that practice FGM are most at risk. It can happen in the UK or abroad.

In the UK, the Home Office has identified girls and women from certain communities as being more at risk:

- Somali
- Kenyan
- Ethiopian
- Sierra Leonean
- Sudanese
- Egyptian
- Nigerian
- Eritrean
- Yemeni
- Kurdish
- Indonesian.

Children are also at a higher risk of FGM if it's already happened to their mother, sister or another member of their family.

What to do if you are suspicious that FGM has or will take place

If you are concerned you must inform your safeguarding lead as soon as possible. The lead will ensure that the right notifications and action take place. The lead is able to access specific advice from the NSPCC's dedicated FGM helpline 0800 028 3550 or email [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk).

In the UK there is a legal duty to make a notification if someone under 18 years informs you that FGM has been performed on her. It is illegal to perform or force someone to undergo FGM. If you believe a person is at immediate risk of FGM you must call the police on 999. If it is not an emergency the police can be contacted on 111 for advice.

Alison Byrne is a Specialist Midwife for FGM based at Heartlands. The clinic sees all women, not just those who are pregnant or in the perinatal period. For information and advice, her phone number is: 07817 534274.

FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) is an African-led women's rights organisation who can offer guidance on emergency support and advice for those who are concerned about someone else and those personally affected by FGM <https://www.forwarduk.org.uk/i-need-help/> or Phone:+44 (0)208 960 4000, text 07834168141 - Monday to Friday 9:30 to 5:30 pm.

## Appendix 6

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## Modern Slavery

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### Identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery

#### Guidance for health staff



#### What is modern slavery?

Modern Slavery is the illegal trade of human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or reproductive slavery, forced labour, or a modern-day form of slavery.

#### Who is trafficked?

British and foreign nationals can be trafficked into, around and out of the UK. Children, women and men can all be victims of modern slavery.

#### Why are people trafficked?

Children, women and men are trafficked for a wide range of reasons including:

- Sexual exploitation
- Domestic servitude
- Forced labour including in the agricultural, construction, food processing, hospitality industries and in factories
- Criminal activity including cannabis cultivation, street crime, forced begging and benefit fraud
- Organ harvesting

#### How might you encounter a victim of modern slavery?

- A person may tell you about their experience
- You detect signs that suggest a person may have been trafficked
- A trafficked person may be referred to you

#### Signs of trafficking for adults, children and young people include:

- A person being accompanied by someone who appears controlling, who insists on giving information and coming to see the health worker

#### The person:

- Is withdrawn and submissive, seems afraid to speak to a person in authority and the accompanying person speaks for them
- Gives a vague and inconsistent explanation of where they live, their employment or schooling
- Has old or serious injuries left untreated. Has delayed presentation and is vague and reluctant to explain how the injury occurred or to give a medical history
- Is not registered with a GP, nursery or school
- Has experienced being moved locally, regionally, nationally or internationally
- Appears to be moving location frequently
- Their appearance suggests general physical neglect
- They may struggle to speak English



### In Addition:

#### Children and young people

Have an unclear relationship with the accompanying adult

Go missing quickly (sometimes within 48 hours of going into care) and repeatedly from school, home and care

Give inconsistent information about their age

#### Adults

Have no official means of identification or suspicious looking documents

### What are the possible health care issues of trafficked people?

Victims of modern slavery may only come to your attention when seriously ill or injured or with an injury or illness that has been left untreated for a while. Health care issues may include:

- Evidence of long term multiple injuries
- Indications of mental, physical and sexual trauma
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Pregnant, or a late booking over 24 weeks for maternity care
- Disordered eating or poor nutrition
- Evidence of self-harm
- Dental pain
- Fatigue
- Non-specific symptoms of Post- Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Symptoms of psychiatric and psychological distress
- Back pain, stomach pain, skin problems; headaches and dizzy spells

### How might you suspect that a person is a victim of modern slavery?

In all cases, trust and act on your instinct that something is not quite right. It is usually a combination of triggers, an inconsistent story and a pattern of symptoms that may cause you to suspect trafficking.

**If you have *any* concerns about a child, young person or adult take immediate action to ask further questions and seek out additional information and support.**

### Remember:

- Trafficked people may not self-identify as victims of modern slavery
- Trafficking victims can be prevented from revealing their experience to health care staff from fear, shame, language barriers and a lack of opportunity to do so. It can take time for a person to feel safe enough to open up
- **Err on the side of caution regarding age** - if a person tells you they are under 18 or if a person says they are an adult, but you suspect they are not, then take action as though they were under 18 years old
- Support for victims of human trafficking is available

## What do you do next?

### In all cases for children, young people and adults:

- Do not raise your trafficking concerns with **anyone** accompanying the person
- Ensure you address the health needs of the person by continuing to provide care
- Ensure the person knows that the health facility is a safe place
- React in a sensitive way that ensures the safety of the person
- Think about support and referral

### Use an interpreter if translation is necessary

Only use an independent, qualified and police checked interpreter or Language Line.

**Do not** use anyone accompanying the person as an interpreter. This applies to children, young people and adults.

- Try to find out more about the situation and speak to the person in private without anyone who accompanied them
- When speaking to the person reassure them that it is safe for them to speak
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Only ask non-judgemental relevant questions
- Allow the person time to tell you their experiences
- Do not let concerns you may have about challenging cultural beliefs stand in the way of making informed assessments about the safety of a child, young person or adult
- Speak to your line manager and/or safeguarding lead for advice

If you suspect that a client or other may be a victim of modern slavery, take the following action:

### Children and young people under 18 years

For concerns about a child or young adult follow all child safeguarding guidelines and speak to your designated Safeguarding Lead, **specifically highlighting your concern for child trafficking.**

**Consider whether to ring the police directly.**

### Adults

Contact the Salvation Army 24 hour confidential helpline for professional advice and support and referrals on 0300 303 8151 operating 7 days a week

Only make referrals if the person is able to give consent and has agreed to the referral Consider using maternity services to admit pregnant women for observation

This guidance has been produced by the Department of Health with guidance from a steering group comprising representatives from: British Association of Sexual Health and HIV, Child Trafficking Advice Centre NSPCC, College of Emergency Medicine, Department of Health, Home Office; UK Human Trafficking Centre Serious Organised Crime Agency, Ministry of Justice, Royal College of General Practitioners, Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Nursing, Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health, Royal College of Psychiatrists, Salvation Army; Poppy Project, Section for Women's Health Institute of Psychiatry Kings College London.

## Appendix 7

### Child Sexual Exploitation

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Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and internal child trafficking. Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their family background or other circumstances.

Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. Practitioners should be aware that particularly young people aged 16 and 17 may believe themselves to be acting voluntarily and will need practitioners to work with them so they can recognize that they are being sexually exploited.

They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops.

It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including oral and anal rape. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. Technology can, for example, be used to record abuse and share it with other like-minded individuals or as a medium to access children and young people online in order to groom them.

Sexual exploitation has strong links with other forms of crime, for example, online and offline grooming, the distribution of abusive images of children and child trafficking.

The perpetrators of sexual exploitation are often well organised and use sophisticated tactics. They are known to target areas where children and young people gather without much adult supervision, e.g. parks or shopping centres, takeaway restaurants or sites on the Internet.

Sexual exploitation results in children and young people suffering harm, and causes significant damage to their physical and mental health. It can also have profound and damaging consequences for the child's family. Parents and carers are often traumatised and under severe stress. Siblings can feel alienated and their self-esteem affected. Family members can themselves suffer serious threats of abuse, intimidation and assault at the hands of perpetrators.

There are strong links between children involved in sexual exploitation and other



behaviours such as running away from home or care, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, absence from school and substance misuse. In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, migrant children, unaccompanied asylum seeking children and those involved in gangs.

If a client gives you reason for concern regarding themselves or others with regard to possible child sexual exploitation it is paramount that you make your safeguarding lead know as soon as possible. The lead must make a prompt assessment of risk and respond appropriately either by ringing the police immediately 999/111 or by reporting CSE through CASS and the normal Acacia safeguarding channels and processes.

## Appendix 8

### Contacting MASH/CASS

#### 1. Introduction

Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (Tel: 0121 303 1888), which is part of **CASS**. They can also be contacted for advice.

**All Requests for Support (RFS) from CASS must be completed via their online form and submitted onto the CASS portal.** Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT) staff and agencies are able to attach relevant documents, screening tools or other assessments to this online RFS Form before it is submitted. Once submitted you will then receive an automated email response, attached will be your RFS form in a PDF format and any copies of attachments submitted.

All mandatory fields must be completed within the online form. The link to the online RFS Form will be via the Birmingham Children's Trust Site and the Safeguarding Children's Board websites. There is guidance to support you to complete the form on their website along with some other useful support information.

CASS has produced a helpful webinar with detailed guidance on how to complete the online Request for Support Form. To view the webinar please use this link: <https://vimeo.com/874117246/3b5baf6c04>

The MASH/CASS Team receive all referrals where there are concerns that may need a coordinated response involving more than one agency to support the child and family. The team will collate information from relevant agencies and decide the appropriate response to each referral:

- **Early Help;**
- Assessments as a **Child in Need** whose health and development are likely to be impaired without the provision of services (including a child in need of protection from significant harm).

Children's social care has the responsibility to clarify with the referrer the nature of the concerns and how and why they have arisen. The Booklet **Right Services Right**



**Time** sets out the local definition of the levels of need and the types of intervention they require. The child must be seen by a qualified social worker as soon as possible following a referral and the child's needs and safety remain paramount at all times.

## **2. The Duty to Refer**

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Under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 all professionals have a responsibility to refer a child to children's social care if they believe or suspect that the child:

- Has suffered significant harm
- Is likely to suffer significant harm
- Has a disability, developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the child's parent) under the Children Act 1989
- Is a Child in Need whose development would be likely to be impaired without provision of services.

When professionals make a referral to the MASH, they should include any pre-existing assessments such as an early help assessment or a Common Assessment (CAF) in respect of the child. Any information they have about the child's developmental needs and the capacity of their parents and carers to meet these within the context of their wider family and environment should be provided as a part of the referral information.

## **3. Making a Referral**

The permission of the parents/carers should be sought before discussing a referral about them with other agencies, unless permission-seeking may itself place a child at risk of significant harm. Where a professional decides not to seek parental permission before making a referral to children's social care, the decision must be recorded in the child's file with reasons, dated and signed, and confirmed in the written referral.

All initial contacts in relation to children who are identified as having additional, complex or significant needs must be made to CASS at 0121 303 1888.

New referrals and referrals on closed cases should be made to CASS. Referrals on open cases should be made to the allocated social worker for the case (or in their absence their manager or the duty social worker).

The referrer should provide information about their concerns and any information they may have gathered in an assessment that may have taken place prior to making the referral. The referrer will be asked for information about some of the following:

- Full names (including aliases and spelling variations), date of birth and gender of all child/ren in the household
- Family address and (where relevant) school / nursery attended
- Identity of those with parental responsibility and any other significant adults who may be involved in caring for the child such as grandparents
- Names and date of birth of all household members, if available
- Where available, the child's NHS number and education UPN number
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- Any special needs of children or parents/carers
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in child or family's life
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition
- Whether the child needs immediate protection
- Details of alleged perpetrator, if relevant
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of child and parents/carers
- Known involvement of other agencies / professionals (e.g. GP)
- Whether the parents know about, and whether they have consented to, the referral
- The child's views and wishes, if known.



Other information may be relevant, and some information may not be available at the time of making the referral. However, there should not be a delay in order to collect information if the delay may place the child at risk of significant harm.

For all referrals to children's social care, the child should be regarded as potentially a child in need, and the referral should be evaluated on the same day that it was received. A decision must be made by a qualified social worker supported by line manager within **one working day** about the type of response that is required.

All referrals from professionals should be confirmed in writing, by the referrer, within 48 hours.

***(Referrals are monitored by Acacia's Safeguarding Coordinators and Acacia staff must ensure that all safeguarding recording has been made promptly in iizuka case manager for monitoring/review including relevant flags).***

If the referrer has not received an acknowledgement within three working days, they should contact the CASS Team again.

#### **4. Receiving a Referral**

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The CASS social worker will assess the referral and consider any previous records in relation to the child and family in their agency. The social worker will establish:

- The nature of the concerns
- How and why they have arisen;
- The child's views, if known
- What the child's and the family's needs appear to be
- Whether the family are aware of the referral and whether they are in agreement with it or not
- Whether the concern involves abuse or neglect; and
- Whether there is any need for urgent action to protect the child or any other children in the household or community.



A decision to discuss the referral with other agencies without parental knowledge or permission must be authorised by the MASH team manager, and the reasons recorded.

This checking and information gathering stage must involve an immediate assessment of any concerns about either the child's health and development, or actual and/or potential harm, which justify further enquiries, assessments and / or interventions.

If the child appears to be a child in need (including a child in need of protection from significant harm) the MASH team manager will refer the matter to the Assessment and Short-Term Intervention Team.

Interviews with the child, if appropriate, should take place in a safe environment. All interviews with the child and family members should be undertaken in their preferred language and where appropriate for some people by using non-verbal communication methods.

The children's social care manager should be informed by a social worker of any referrals where there is reasonable cause to consider Section 47 Enquiries and authorise the decision to initiate action. If the child and / or family are known to professional agencies or the facts clearly indicate that a Section 47 Enquiry is required, children's social care should initiate a strategy meeting/discussion immediately and, together with other agencies, determine how to proceed.

The police must be informed at the earliest opportunity if a crime may have been committed. The police should assist other agencies to carry out their responsibilities, where there are concerns about the child's welfare, whether or not a crime has been committed.

## **5. Concluding a Referral**

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At the end of a referral assessment, all those involved should be clear about the proposed action, who will be taking it, timescales and, if no further action will be taken, the reasons for this decision.



Where there are concerns about a child, the referral will be directed into one of four pathways:

- No further action, which may include information to signpost to other agencies
- Early help - referrals for intervention and prevention services within the Common Assessment Framework and **Early Help services** range of provision
- Child in Need services - assessment to be undertaken by children's social care (Section 17 CA 1989)
- Child Protection services - assessment and child protection enquiries to be undertaken by children's social care (Section 47 CA 1989) with active involvement of other agencies such as the police.

Within **one working day** a qualified social worker should have assessed the referral and the relevant line manager should have made a decision about what should happen next. The children's social care manager must approve the outcome of the referral and ensure that a record has been commenced and/or updated.

The social worker should send out written information about the decisions and, if the child is a Child in Need, about the plan for providing support. This should be sent to the child's parents/carers, all the relevant agencies and the child if appropriate.

In the case of referrals from members of the public, feedback must be consistent with the rights to confidentiality of the child and their family.

If the referrer disagrees with the decisions made by children's social care about the outcome of the referral, they may consider making a complaint under the local Complaint procedure or raise the matter under the local **Escalation Policy**.

The child and parents/carers should be routinely informed about local procedures for raising complaints and, if they wish to make a complaint, about local advocacy services.

## Appendix 9

### Contextual Safeguarding

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**Contextual safeguarding** is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it. The traditional safeguarding approach does not consider extra-familial contexts, which has led to cases of abuse and exploitation falling under the radar.

**Extra-familial contexts** include young people's peer groups, support networks, online contacts, and local community or neighbourhood. Safeguarding concerns in these contexts could consist of harassment or violence from their peers, a risk of grooming – whether online or in person – high levels of crime or gang violence in your local area, or even a local park where frequent incident reports have been made.

As well as involving wider consideration of contexts, contextual safeguarding entails a different method of intervention from the traditional approach. In the past, all interventions have taken place with the young person and their family, regardless of where the harm originated from. However, it has been shown that this is inadequate in cases of extra-familial abuse; parents do not have any control over these outside contexts and cannot change them.

A more effective method is to intervene with the outside environment itself, to prevent harm from occurring in the first place. For example, if you know that a certain park has high levels of criminal activity, you could contact the council and ask for bushes to be cut back, higher levels of lighting, and more patrols by park wardens. This is an example of a contextual safeguarding provision in practice.

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#### Why is Contextual Safeguarding Important?

Contextual safeguarding does not just focus on one individual, but on how to protect *all* young people from environments that cause safeguarding issues. In other words, it addresses the underlying causes, not just the effects. It uses partnerships between educational settings and other public sector services, but also with retailers, transport providers, and communities, so that everyone is aware of possible warning signs and how to report them.

Additionally, this ensures that all those who have influence over extra-familial contexts – for example, bus and taxi drivers and shop owners – use their influence to make these settings safer. As a result, young people are protected by ensuring that the potential for harmful situations is reduced.



Contextual safeguarding is particularly important for adolescents, because as young people age, they spend more time socialising away from their families. Consequently, their social networks – and any harm associated with them – become more significant.

The relationships that they make during this period of time influence what they expect from future relationships, so if they socialise in safe, supportive environments then they will form safe, supportive relationships (and the same applies for harmful, abusive relationships). By ensuring that young people are in nurturing environments – both within educational settings, and outside them – you can reduce the risk of future harm.

Successes that have been seen so far in this practice have led to it being embedded in social care and safeguarding systems across the country.

### **How Does Contextual Safeguarding Influence My Role to Safeguard Children?**

*Contextual safeguarding is an important addition to the current safeguarding approach and has been found to make it even more effective. Keeping the context in mind when working with young people ensures that warning signs from extra-familial situations do not fall under the radar, and young people are protected from harm in all areas of their lives.*