

Children’s Safeguarding Policy

Last Review Date:	30 th June 2023	By Whom:	James Richards
Next Review Date:	30 th June 2024		

Change/event log:

Date	Nature of event or change	Change made by
1st Mar 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First issue 	
23rd Oct 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy review 	J. Langston
6th Mar 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change log added • Contents added • Additional words added to extend this policy to cover all protected characteristics 	J. Richards
10 th Feb 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where C+E is mentioned, added 'or relevant local authority' • Numbers and bullets re-configured with layout 	D. Thomas
26 th January 2022	Formatting, grammar, and spelling corrections only.	J. Richards
30 th June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3.1, bullet 12 added requiring all staff, volunteers, and contractors to undertake safeguarding training and/or refresher training periodically. • Detail added to 4 (3) • Section 2.1, bullet 7 added to require all Project Leaders to be up-to-date with safeguarding training. • Formatting, grammar, and spelling corrections. 	J. Richards

Contents

Children’s Safeguarding Policy	1
Introduction	3

1.	What is meant by children?	3
2.	The purpose of the policy	3
2.1	We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:	3
3.	Standards	4
4.	Designated Person aka Safeguarding Lead	5
5.	Disclosure management process	6
	Outline process:	6
	Disclosure allegations against a member of 4wardFutures staff, a volunteer, or a service user of 4wardFutures. (PHSA 3.6):	7
	Bringing the concern to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead	8
6.	The Referral Process	9
	What happens next?	9
	Further reading	10
	Appendix 1 Safeguarding Action Plan	11
	Appendix 2 Managing a Safeguarding Disclosure Process Diagram	12

Introduction

4wardFutures believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

1. What is meant by children?

A child for safeguarding purposes is any person between birth and under the age of 18. There are some exceptions to this: Children who are placed in local authority care are usually classed as children until aged 21, and those with some special needs are regarded as children while aged Under 25. Unborn children should also be considered in this policy.

4wardFutures recognises that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity and any other protected characteristic, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm, abuse, or discrimination.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2. The purpose of the policy

To provide protection for the children and young people who receive *4wardFutures'* services, including the children of adult members, users, and staff.

To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event of suspecting that a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including trustees, paid staff, members, advisors, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of *4wardFutures*.

2.1 We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to, and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where appropriate.

- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training and ensuring it remains up to date.
- Ensure that Project Leader's hold up-to-date safeguarding training records.

3. Standards

3.1 4wardFutures staff, volunteers, and contractors (PHSA 2.3) are required to:

- Where appropriate - and required by regulations - have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check when they commence employment. Where this has not been undertaken, staff members will not be allowed to work with children unless supervised by a member of staff who has had an appropriate DBS check. (PHSA 7.2).
- Demonstrate respect for all service users as individuals in all matters.
- Reflect on their own approach and style, recognising the inherent power their position bestows.
- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding, disclosure, and diversity matters. Ask a senior member of staff if they have any uncertainties about how to deal with a specific service user. (PHSA 7.1).
- Ensure that all service users experience a suitable and supportive environment to disclose of any issues which might affect the way in which they should be treated.
- Ensure all service users are aware of our Equality and Diversity policy and that they know how to complain if they become victims of harassment, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment.
- Ensure a diverse range of services and training that is sensitive to difference.
- Invite and encourage constructive feedback from service users about standards and styles of behaviour and promote an open and honest culture of respect for diversity.
- Deal with complaints of abuse, unfair treatment or harassment and bullying promptly, sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with procedures.
- Ensure that all persons working for or providing services to 4wardFutures are provided with a briefing on these safeguarding policies and procedures before any work is undertaken or any services delivered.
- Report any incidents immediately to any relevant partners or commissioners.
- Undertake safeguarding training and/or refresher training every 24mths minimum, or sooner if circumstances require it, e.g. changes to legislation or guidance. 4wardFutures staff may request evidence that this has been undertaken.

3.2 Service users are required to:

- Help prevent inappropriate behaviour by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others.

- Support an open, constructive environment within which diversity is valued positively.

3.3 Dealing with claims of abuse perpetrated by internal members of staff:

This Policy makes it clear how staff are expected to perform when dealing with all service users, including children. It specifically ensures that claims made of abuse by internal staff will be investigated and dealt with.

4. Designated Person aka Safeguarding Lead

The named contact for 4wardFutures is **Mark Waters**. In cases where the lead person is not available, there is an allegation against the lead person, or there is a difference of opinion with the lead person contact Julie Langston (PHSA 1.1,1.2, 3.5).

The named person will have full awareness of the policy and procedures guidelines and have attended training on safeguarding endorsed by the local Safeguarding Board.

The named contact will be a single point of contact for the organisation in relation to:

1. Child Sexual Exploitation
2. Female genital Mutilation
3. Prevent (threats from terrorism and extremism)
4. Domestic Abuse
5. Honour Based Violence
6. Forced Marriage
7. Mental Capacity Act
8. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
9. Trafficking / Modern Slavery

In the event of any concerns regarding a child then the named contact or deputy will be informed at the earliest available opportunity.

If necessary, the named person will inform the relevant Social Services Department without delay and the management committee. The named person will also ensure that the child protection policy and procedures are kept up to date and reviewed.

If there are concerns about sharing the above information with a colleague, you can contact your local Consultation Service e.g., Cheshire East Consultation Service 0300 123 5012 (office hours) or 0300 123 5022 (out of hours), or the police direct, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000. Or area equivalent body as appropriate.

5. Disclosure management process

Outline process:

If someone, i.e., a child or other service user, discloses that they are being abused, whether in the home or the setting, then upon receiving the information, you should:

- React calmly.
- Reassure them that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what they say seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Do not ask about explicit details.
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Inform them what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and do not delay in passing on the information.

If you think abuse has or may have occurred act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a child subject to, or at risk of, abuse to make safe and deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the child is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT:

- discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.
- disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.
- discuss concerns or disclosures with other members of staff other than the safeguarding lead. (PHSA 3.2).

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is appropriately managed. Tell your safeguarding lead or another member of the team if your safeguarding lead is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed. Telephone 101 or 999 if an emergency.

The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. This is the 'report of the first account' and must be kept

securely. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social care teams and should include:

- a) The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident or allegation.
- b) The child's name, age, and date of birth.
- c) The child's home address and telephone number.
- d) Whether or not the person making the report is expressing his or her own concerns of those of someone else, making a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay.
- e) What the child said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
- f) The appearance and behaviour of the victim
- g) Any injuries observed.
- h) Details of witnesses to the incidents
- i) Have the parents been contacted? And if so, what has been said?
- j) Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- k) Where potential referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact that took the referral should be recorded.
- l) Whether any other children are also at risk. (PHSA 4.4) (PHSA 1.3).

Disclosure allegations against a member of 4wardFutures staff, a volunteer, or a service user of 4wardFutures. (PHSA 3.6):

4wardFutures will ensure that any allegations made against a member, or members, of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures as follows:

1. The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
2. The named person responsible for safeguarding should be informed immediately.
3. In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a trustee, director, or anyone senior within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
4. The named person should contact their local Consultation Service e.g., Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice, and/or in the event of an emergency arising, the police. Or area equivalent when working in another area.

5. The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. This is the 'report of the first account.' It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services. (see above for details).
6. Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, 4wardFutures will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident and/or outcome of an independent investigation.
7. Whistle blowing will not prejudice the position or prospects of 4wardFutures staff or volunteers (PHSA 3.3)

Bringing the concern to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to:

1. Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.
2. Deal with any immediate needs:
 - 2.1 Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
 - 2.2 Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
 - 2.3 Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost.
3. If the alleged perpetrator is also a child, ensure that another member of staff/manager is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
4. Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.
5. Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding children procedure i.e., meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedure.
6. Address issues of consent and confidentiality, taking care not to promise confidentiality.
7. A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised when:
 - 7.1 A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
 - 7.2 There is a suspicion that an abuse has taken place.
 - 7.3 The allegation involves a child.
 - 7.4 They are unsure if abuse has taken place.
8. Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.
9. All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints must be recorded, monitored and available for internal and external audit. (PHSA 2.1, 2.2).

6. The Referral Process

Services for Children and Young People, Children's Social Care, have a statutory duty under The Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child. When a child protection referral is made, they have a legal responsibility to investigate, and all agencies have a duty to co-operate with those investigations. This may involve talking to the child and their family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police. Concerns about children must not be taken lightly.

This involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of the following authorities as appropriate:

1. All referrals should be made to: Children's Social Care Tel: 0300 123 5012 (office hours) or 0300 123 5022 (out of hours)
2. The police if you think a crime may have been committed - Tel: 101 and specify it is a safeguarding issue (999 in an emergency)
3. The person making the referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:
 - a. The name of the child.
 - b. Date of birth and age.
 - c. Address and telephone number.
 - d. Why the child is considered to be at risk.
 - e. Whether the police are aware of the allegation, and whether a police investigation is underway.
4. If possible, use your local authorities' Safeguarding referral form e.g., Cheshire East Safeguarding referral form¹

What happens next?

At the end of the referral discussion, the referrer and Children's social care should be clear about the proposed action, who will be taking it, timescales and whether any further action will be taken.

Referral outcomes about a child, where there may be concerns, typically fall in to four categories and pathways:

- 8 No further action, which may include information to signpost to other agencies.
- 9 Early help - referrals for intervention and prevention services within the Common Assessment Framework and Early Help services range of provision.
- 10 Child in Need services - assessment to be undertaken by Children's Social Care (Section 17 CA 1989).
- 11 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.

For further information:

Further reading

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following relevant policies: **Equality and Diversity**

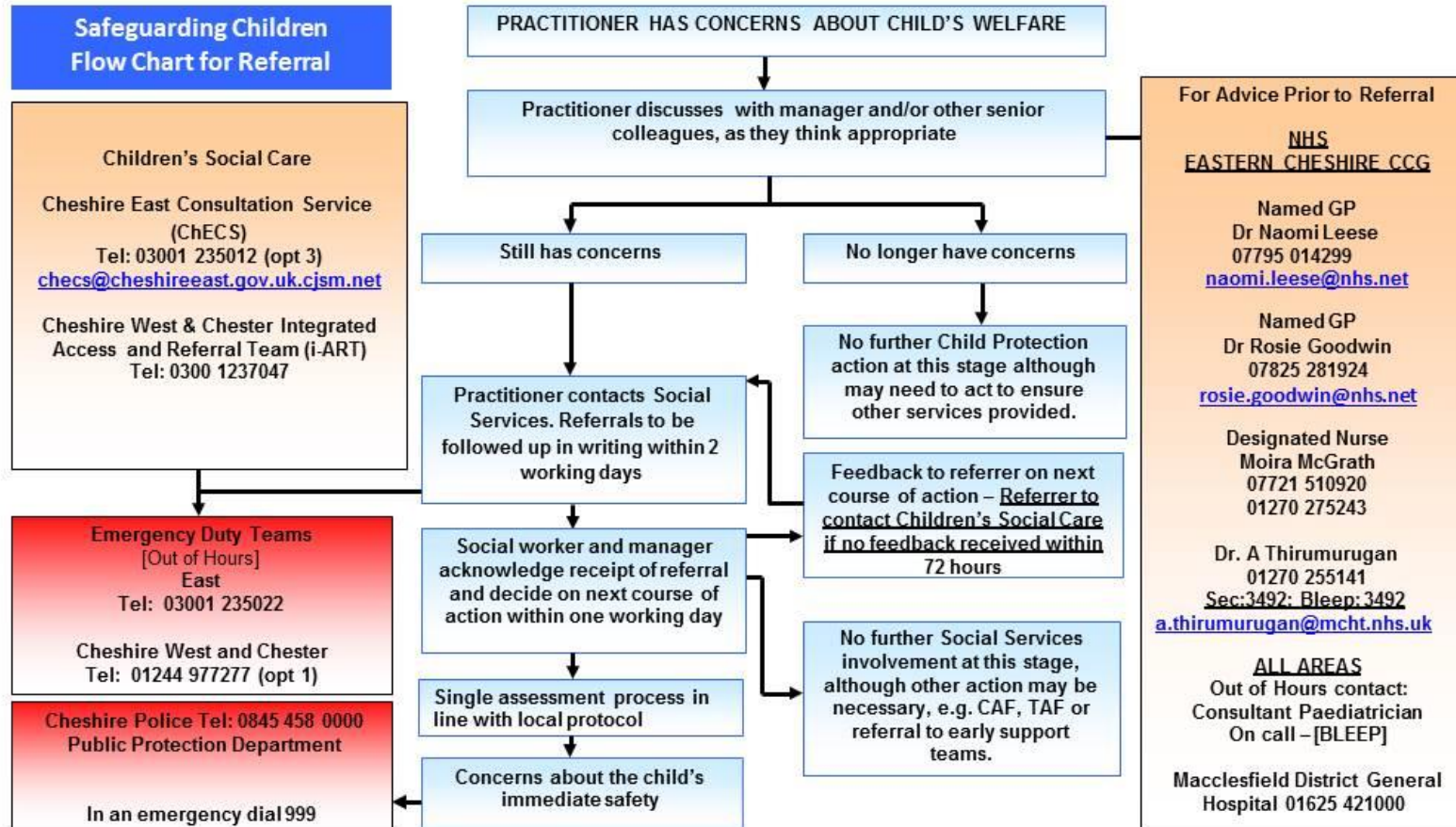
Local Safeguarding Boards: The Local Safeguarding Boards are multi-agency organisations that provide strategic leadership for the development of safeguarding policy and practice e.g., Cheshire East Council: Cheshire East Consultation Serviceⁱⁱ

Appendix 1 Safeguarding Action Plan

Action	Responsible Person	Date to be completed by	Date completed	Evidence
Incidents, allegations, and complaints are monitored, and lessons learnt are fed into planning	PAA	Ongoing		
All staff and volunteers are trained on safeguarding [including who the lead is, how to act, Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty] through induction training and mandatory refresher courses (PSA 1.2, 1.3, 8.2)	PAA	Ongoing		See under 'Safeguarding' on SharePoint
Staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk receive regular support and supervision (PHSA 8.3)	PAA	Ongoing		
All staff understand the practical implications of the safeguarding policy and procedure	JL		25.3.20	Reminder on SharePoint

Appendix 2 Managing a Safeguarding Disclosure Process Diagram

What To Do if you are worried a child is being abused



ⁱ <http://www.cheshireeastlscb.org.uk/professionals/procedures-and-guidance.aspx>
http://www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire/cheshire_east/p_referrals.html

ⁱⁱ <http://www.cheshireeastlscb.org.uk>