



Good Practice Guidance

Safeguarding Children

in

**Voluntary
Organisations**



Aim Higher

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Aim Higher recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the framework of the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Every Child Matters:

Change for Children was published in November 2004. This publication emphasised that no **single agency could be responsible for meeting the needs of all children and families.**

The Change for Children Programme focussed on reducing inequalities, improving outcomes for all children and helping them to achieve:

- **Be healthy:** enjoying good physical and mental health and enjoying a healthy lifestyle
- **Stay Safe:** being protected from harm and abuse
- **Enjoy and achieve:** getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- **Make a positive contribution:** being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- **Achieve economic well-being:** not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

It is difficult to acknowledge that abuse or harm could take place within your organisation but any group working with children is vulnerable. It is the responsibility of all of us to put the welfare of children and young people first, and to recognise behaviours that can put children at risk. Under the terms of the Children Act 2004, anyone up to the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.

All voluntary organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. These arrangements should include:

- Procedures for staff and others to report concerns they may have about the children they meet that are in line with the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board's procedures
- Appropriate codes of practice for staff, particularly those working directly with children
- Recruitment procedures in accordance with Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme. Working Together to Safeguard Children Guide to Inter Agency Working, and the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (www.erscb.org.uk)
- Training and Supervision of staff (both paid and voluntary).

We are aware that many children and young people are the victims of different kinds of abuse and that they can be subjected to social factors that can have an adverse impact upon their lives, such as domestic violence, parental substance misuse or neglect.

We aim to create a safe and fun environment within which children and young people can thrive in the security of clear guidance.

These guidelines are for the use of all paid staff, volunteers, visitors and the parents and carers of the children and young people we offer a service to and through them, we will endeavour to ensure that:

- Children and young people are listened to, valued and respected
- All paid staff and volunteers are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures and the Criminal Records Board (CRB), now called DBS clearance
- All paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate child protection training, support and, where appropriate, supervision.

The Guidelines are divided in to the following sections:

1. Understanding & Recognising Signs of Abuse
2. What to do with your concerns and how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse
3. Allegations made against staff
4. Safe Recruitment
5. Good Practice
6. Safe Behaviour Do's and Don'ts
7. Safeguarding children in the East Riding of Yorkshire
8. Contacts

All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child is at risk of or actually suffering abuse, you should tell the designated child protection officer within your Organisation.

**Your Designated Officers are: Gill Jagger/Nicola Robinson
Telephone Number: 07980 915161/07539 927351**

If the designated officer is not available, you must speak to a senior member of aim higher. In an emergency, or if you do not agree with the decision made by your child protection officer, you can make a referral directly yourself.

Referrals can be made by calling the Golden Number 01482 395500 If your concern is out of hours or at the weekend you can call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01377 241273.

1. **Understanding and Recognising Signs of Abuse**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children maybe abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

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 include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond 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 (including cyberbullying), 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.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

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, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

2. What to do with your concerns and how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse

In the event that a child or young person makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse about an adult or another child or young person it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour
- Do not try to question the child in detail. If a child tells you someone has hurt them, listen carefully and explain that you will have to tell someone else who will help them to stop this happening. Tell them that you believe them.
- Make a note of what is said as soon as possible, remembering the exact words used if you can. Do not make judgements, rather evidence based recordings. Sign and date your notes.
- Inform your designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible
- Where possible it is good practice to inform the parent/carer of the disclosure and referral, however, **do not inform the person named as the abuser if you feel this might place the child at risk of further harm.**
- Do not discuss concerns/allegations/disclosures with other people. The child/young person and family have a right to confidentiality with only people who 'need to know' sharing the information.

Sometimes you may just feel concerned about a child but do not know whether to share your concerns or not. In this situation you should always raise your concerns with your designated child protection officer, who will help you decide what to do.

It is not however the responsibility of the Child Protection Co-ordinator or other staff to investigate suspected abuse.

The responsibility for investigating allegations of abuse, whether they result from the disclosure of a child or young person or the concerns of an adult, lies with Children's Social Care social workers and police officers from the Family Protection Unit. It is normally the responsibility of your designated child protection co-ordinator to make a referral to these agencies but if you judge the situation to be urgent and/or you require immediate advice you can report your concerns directly.

Either the Children's Social Care worker or the Family Protection Unit officer will advise you if or when to inform the child's parents or carers about any concerns. If they decide to pursue a child protection investigation you should;

- Work closely and collaboratively with all professionals involved in the investigation, in order to keep the child safe;
- Attend a child protection conference, if you are invited, where you will be asked to provide information about your involvement with the child. This is one of the reasons why it is important to keep dated records of your concerns;
- Attend any subsequent child protection conferences.

You can find out more detail about the identification of abuse and what to do about it from your local Safeguarding Children Board website, www.erscb.org.uk

3. Allegations made against staff

All organisations that work or come in to contact with children and young people need to be aware of the possibility that allegations may be made against members of their staff or volunteers. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. They may be made by a child, young person or another concerned adult. Allegations may be made for a variety of reasons, some of them being that:

- Abuse has actually taken place
- Something happens to a child that reminds them of an event that happened in the past – the child is unable to recognise that the people and situation are different
- Your language or actions are misinterpreted by a child or young person because they are reminded of someone else
- Some children know how powerful an allegation can be and, if they are angry or upset with you, have made the allegation as a way of hitting out
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

It may be difficult to accept that abuse could occur in your organisation or that the person being named could be responsible but **all allegations should be brought to the attention of the child protection coordinator immediately.** In cases where the allegation is against the co-ordinator the complaint should be taken to a more senior member of the organisation or you should take the following action yourself:

- Make sure that the child or young person is safe and away from the person alleged to have abused them
- Contact Children's Social Care Services as explained above
- Contact the parents/carers of the child if advised to do so by the social worker or police officer in charge of the investigation
- Irrespective of any investigation by Children's Social Care Services or the police, you should follow the appropriate disciplinary procedures. Common practice is for the alleged abuser to be suspended from attending the organisation or workplace until the outcome of any investigation is known;
- Consider whether the alleged abuser has access to children anywhere else and whether those organisations or groups need to be informed;
- Act upon the decisions made in any strategy decision

All incidents should be investigated internally, after any external investigation has finished, to review practice and put in place any additional measures to prevent a similar thing happening again.

It is important that you also develop support systems for the person who faces an allegation. If your organisation has a management committee it could be that a member is nominated to fulfil this role. As well as providing immediate support advice could be given on accessing appropriate outside help such as counselling or legal services.

It is good practice for organisations to develop and encourage an environment where people feel safe to express their concerns about the practice of others. If a staff member, volunteer or participant has concerns they should not be victimised in any way for expressing them.

4. Safe Recruitment

To reduce the risk of abuse to children and the likelihood of allegations being made that are founded, every organisation should have clear and rigorous recruitment procedures. These procedures **should always** include the following:

- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) should complete an application form which asks for details of previous employment and the names of two referees. Referees should be reminded that they should not misrepresent the candidate or omit to say things that may be relevant to their employment.
- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) must have a new Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check before they start work with you – anyone who refuses to do so should not be employed
- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) should be interviewed to establish previous experience of working in an environment where there is contact with children and their perceptions of acceptable behaviour
- **Nobody** should start work before positive references have been received and the CRB process completed with a disclosure certificate received.
- All appointments to work with children should be subject to a probationary period.
- New members of staff should be clear about their responsibilities and wherever possible work to an agreed job description.
- These guidelines should be made available for all staff members and volunteers and be a part of any induction process.

5. Good Practice

All Voluntary Organisations **should**:

- Have a written Child Protection Policy – showing commitments
- Identify a designated Child Protection Officer/Co-coordinator who must undergo child protection training
- Display the name and contact details of the Child Protection Co-ordinator in a place accessible to all, including children, young people, parents & carers, so that they are aware of who to talk to if there are any concerns;
- Ensure that all staff working with children should attend basic child protection training and should have regular supervision from a more experienced staff member;
- Observe Health and Safety Regulations through risk assessments and written, safe working practices;
- Train someone in First Aid and have a fully stocked First Aid box
- Have an accident/incident reporting procedure
- Have an attendance register for every teacher if there are classes being run
- Encourage Management Committee members to visit classes unannounced
- Make sure everyone involved in the organisation actively promotes a culture of openness, where everyone (including children and young people) feels free to share their views and concerns
- Deal with any allegation about a child or adult in a confidential manner and only share the information with those who need to know

- Not allow any member of staff to be left alone with a child/children where they cannot be observed by others
- Not, under any circumstances, allow visitors to wander around the premises unaccompanied when there are children and young people present
- Endeavour, where possible, that there should always be at least two members of staff/volunteers with a group of children – It is vital that the ratio of child to adult is adequate to ensure safety. For children under 8 no more than 1:8 and under 5 no more than 1:6
- Be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose. Children should not be collected by anybody other than their parents unless prior notification has already been received
- Inform staff and volunteers that if a child has not been collected after a session it is reasonable to wait for at least half an hour. If the parent or carer has still not arrived and cannot be contacted they should contact the nearest duty team or the police and request advice and assistance
- Talk to young people and encourage their involvement and participation

If any outings or trips have been arranged you must ensure that:

- All vehicles being used are insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts
- All drivers have at least one escort and that they have up to date CRB checks and been subject to appropriate recruitment procedures.
- Roll call is taken at the beginning of the journey and again on the return trip. If more than one vehicle is used children and young people should use the same vehicle both ways
- Staff accompanying the trip have contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services
- If a child goes missing on a trip, staff should instigate an immediate search and alert appropriate security staff. If the child cannot be found within half an hour the police must be notified
- If, having notified security staff and the police, the child still cannot be found the parents/carers must be informed immediately
- The care of the remaining children is paramount and it is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible. A senior staff member must remain at the visit site to co-ordinate contact between security/police staff and the parents/carers.

In the event that a room or rooms within the organisation are let out to other organisations, the letting organisation must work to approved child protection procedures and must agree to read and abide by these guidelines.

6. Safe Behaviour Do's and Don'ts

DO

- Treat everyone with respect
- Provide an example you want others to follow
- Encourage children, young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they don't like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Avoid situations that compromise your relationship with children and young people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust

- Respect a child or young person's right to personal privacy, protection and safe environment
- Provide access and space for children and young people to talk about concerns they may have
- Listen to children and young people

DON'T

- Permit abusive peer activities (for example, ridiculing, bullying, name calling)
- Have any inappropriate physical contact with children or young people
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on your good name to protect you
- Let suspicion, disclosure or allegations of abuse, go unrecorded or unreported
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts
- Believe 'it could never happen here'
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'

7. Safeguarding Children

The local East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (ERSCB) is responsible for coordinating the arrangements made by statutory and voluntary local organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The East Riding Council for Voluntary Youth Services (ERCVYS) represents the interests of community groups and the voluntary sector on the ERSCB. ERCVYS can be contacted via the East Riding Voluntary Action services (ERVAS) on www.ervas.org.uk. The ERSCB will also approach individual organisations as and when their advice and experience in particular areas could be valuable to the production of guidance and information to the public. ERCVYS is available to support all voluntary organisations in safeguarding children and developing policies as well as health & safety and Criminal records Bureau (CRB) checks.

The ERSCB coordinates free inter-agency and online training programmes on child protection related topics. The diary and booking forms for these courses can be accessed via www.erscb.org.uk. It is recommended that all designated child protection coordinators, senior officials and those working or volunteering directly with children and/or young people attend one or more of these courses. This will enable you to gain the knowledge necessary and increase your confidence to be able to offer advice and consultancy within your organisation.

8. Contacts

**THE GOLDEN NUMBER FOR REFERRING CHILD
PROTECTION CONCERNS
01428 395500**

EARLY HELP AND ADVICE TEAM (EHaAT)

(01482) 393339 For advice on information sharing, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings and Lead Professional

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

For children living in the East Riding, referrals should not be made direct to Children's Social Care, but by phone call, fax or email to the Customer Service Network, Monday to Friday 8am – 6pm. Urgent matters out of hours are dealt with by the Emergency Duty Team (EDT).

Customer Service Network: (Golden number)
(01482) 395500
EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM
(01377) 241273

Fax: 01482 395530

E-mail : childrens.socialcare@eastriding.gcsx.gov.uk

HUMBERSIDE POLICE

Public Protection Unit: 01430 808403

The Old Police House, Market Weighton

In an emergency dial 999 or out of usual office hours contact local police station

EAST RIDING SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

(01482) 396999

Safeguarding Advice Line
(01482) 396999

The safeguarding advice line **WILL NOT** take referrals but will advise practitioners on:

- Advice regarding complex child protection issues
- Advice regarding allegations made against people who work with children
- Making an enquiry to ascertain if a child is subject to a child protection plan
- Whether a Child Protection Conference should be convened
- Where the criteria for a Child Protection Conference has not been met a Child in Need Meeting should be convened

East Riding Safeguarding Children Board Training 01482 396994

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01482 396999
Allegations against professionals

East Riding Council for Voluntary Youth Service (ERCVYS) 01482 871077
www.ervas.org.uk

FISH (Family Information Service Hub) 01482 396469

www.fish.eastriding.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

These child protection procedures will only be effective if all of the staff and volunteers in your organisation understand and own them:

- Identify two designated Child Protection Officers (CPO) for your organisation
- Add CPOs name and contact details to this procedure
- Ensure CPOs attend training on child protection and update that training regularly
- Ensure CPOs name and contact details are posted where they can be seen by children, young people, their parents or carers
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have a copy of the procedures
- Ensure all staff and volunteers know what to do if they have concerns about a child or young person
- Ensure all existing staff and volunteers who have contact with children have an up to date enhanced CRB check
- Ensure that all new staff and volunteers who have contact with children have enhanced CRB disclosures before they start work
- Ensure that the premises used for your organisation/activity conform to health and safety guidelines
- Ensure that any letting arrangements are bound by contracts that include an agreement to adhere to the host organisation's child protection procedures
- Have an accident/incident reporting procedure
- Have an accident/incident reporting book
- Have trained First Aid personnel
- Have a current First Aid kit