



Trowbridge Future
80 Charles Street
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8AH
Tel: 07765371051
e-mail: info@trowbridgefuture.org.uk
www.trowbridgefuture.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR TROWBRIDGE FUTURE

Under the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, child protection covers anyone under 18 and, if they have special educational needs at 18+ they would be covered as a vulnerable adult. See our documents on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults for further information.

Aim of Guidelines and Procedures

Trowbridge Future is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people. To ensure that those children/young people who attend Trowbridge Future and any other children/young people who may come to the attention of Trowbridge Future receive the protection and support they need if they are at risk of abuse.

The procedures provide clear direction to staff and helpers/volunteers at Trowbridge Future if they have any concerns that a child is in need of protection.

Recognising the Different Types of Abuse

Trowbridge Future recognises that children and young people suffer abuse when they are:

Physically abused

A form of abuse which may involve ...

- Hitting
- Shaking or 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

Sexually abused

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)
- 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.
- Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotionally abused

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglected

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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Some other forms of abuse you may need to be vigilant for are Breast ironing and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), County Lines, Sex Trafficking, Radicalisation, Arranged Marriages, Honour Killings, & Financial abuse.

Ways That Abuse might be Brought to Your Attention

- A child/young person might make a direct disclosure about him or herself
- A child/young person might make a direct disclosure about another child/young person
- A child/young person might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
- A member of staff might be concerned about a child/young person's appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a child/young person
- A parent or carer might make a disclosure about abuse that a child/young person is suffering or at risk of suffering
- A parent might offer information about a child/young person that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
- You may also get anonymous information making allegations and will need to judge how authentic and worrying the information is.

Ways that Allegations might be Made Against Child/Young Person Involved with Trowbridge Future

- A child/young person or parent/carer might make a direct allegation against another child or young person
- A child/young person or parent/carer might express discomfort with the behaviour of another child or young person that falls short of a specific allegation

- Another child/young person, member of staff or helper/volunteer may directly observe behaviour from one child/young person towards another that gives cause for concern
- The club may be informed by a parent or by the police or another statutory authority that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation
- A child or young person may volunteer information to the club that he/she has harmed another child or is at risk of doing so or has committed an offence against or related to a child.

Safeguarding or Bullying?

When faced with a situation of one child or young person behaving inappropriately towards another, a decision needs to be made about whether the problem behaviour constitutes bullying or a child protection concern.

This is a decision that needs to be reached by the named person for child protection, in consultation with the staff member or helper/volunteer responsible for the child/young person, the helper/volunteer/staff member's manager/supervisor and, if necessary, the local authority children's social care department.

- If the conclusion is that the behaviour is an example of bullying, and if both children/young people attend the group/organisation, it needs to be dealt with under the anti-bullying policy and procedure
- If it is behaviour that could be described as child abuse and has led to the victim possibly suffering significant harm, then it must be dealt with under child protection procedures. This should include all incidents of sexual assault and all but the most minor incidents of physical assault.

Procedures to Follow if Possible, Abuse is Brought to Your Attention

This procedure outlines what you should do if a child/young person makes a disclosure or allegation of abuse.

Talking to a child/young person who has told you that he/she or another child/young person is being abused

- Reassure the child/young person that telling someone about it was the right thing to do
- Tell him/her that you now have to do what you can to keep him/her (or the child/young person who is the subject of the allegation) safe
- Let the child/young person know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it
- Let the child/young person tell his or her whole story. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child/young person, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying
- Ask the child/young person what he/she would like to happen as a result of what he/she has said, but don't make or infer promises you cannot keep
- Give the child/young person the ChildLine phone number: 0800 1111
- Immediately contact your club leader/supervisor/manager and named child protection person to let them know what is happening.

Helping a child/young person in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention

- If the child/young person is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police
- If the child/young person is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them
- Try to cordon off the area where the incident has occurred and keep anything that might be useful evidence safe and 'untampered' with for the police to examine
- If he/she needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider
- If the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the child/young person

- If the allegation is serious sexual abuse, please try to prevent the abused person from showering, changing clothes or having a drink until the police arrive as you may be unwittingly destroying evidence
- Immediately contact your supervisor/manager or named child protection person to let them know what is happening
- A decision will need to be made about who should inform the child/young person's family and the local authority children's social care department, and when they should be informed. If you have involved the police and/or the health services, they should be part of this decision. Consider the welfare of the child/young person in your decision making as the highest priority.

Issues that will need to be taken into account are:

- The child/young person's wishes and feelings
- The parent's right to know (unless this would place the child/young person or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
- The impact of telling or not telling the parent
- The current assessment of the risk to the child/young person and the source of that risk
- Any risk management plans that currently exist.

Keeping a record of your concerns

- Use the Example Form for Recording Concerns to record the concern and how it is dealt with. The relevant sections of the form should be completed and signed at each stage of the procedure. It can be used to forward information to the statutory child protection authorities if a referral to them is needed.
- The form should be signed and dated by all those involved in its completion and kept confidentially on the child/young person's file. The name of the person making the notes should be written alongside each entry.

Dealing with Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff, Helper/Volunteer or any Adult Involved at Your Club

This procedure outlines what you should do if a child protection allegation is made against an adult working for, or involved in, your club.

How you might find out about a possible case of abuse

- A child/young person or parent/carer making a direct allegation against a member of staff, helper/volunteer or member of the club's committee
- A child/young person or parent/carer expressing discomfort with the behaviour that is a cause for concern.
- The group/organisation being informed by the police or another statutory authority that a member of staff, helper/volunteer, member of the club's committee or adult involved with your club is the subject of an investigation
- Information emerging from the renewal of a Disclosure and Barring Service check (ex Criminal Records Bureau) that suggests that a member of staff, helper/volunteer, member of the club's committee or adult involved with your club may have committed an offence or been involved in an activity that could compromise the safety of the children/young people they work with at Trowbridge Future.
- A member of staff, helper/volunteer, member of the club's committee or adult involved with your club telling the organisation that they have been the subject of allegations, have actually harmed a child/young person, or committed an offence again.

What to do if an allegation is made or information is received

1. Is the child/young person in immediate danger or does she/he need emergency medical attention?

- If the child/young person is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police
- If the child/young person is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them
- If he/she needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider
- If the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the child/young person
- Immediately contact your club leader/organiser/manager or named child protection person to let them know what is happening
- The member of club leader/organiser/manager or named child protection person should also inform the child/young person's family if the child/young person is in need of emergency medical attention, and then arrange to meet them at the hospital or medical centre
- The parents/carers should be informed that an incident has occurred, that the child/young person has been injured and that immediate steps have been taken to get help.

2. Is the person at the centre of the allegation working with children/young people now?

- If so, the concern needs to be discussed immediately with Trowbridge Future's leader/organiser/manager and the named child protection person
- One of these people, in a sensitive manner, should remove the person about whom the allegation has been made from direct contact with children/young people
- It should then be explained to the person, in private, that there has been a complaint made against him/her, although the details of the complaint should not be given at this stage. The person should be informed that further information will be provided as soon as possible but that, until consultation has taken place with the relevant agencies and within the organisation, they should not be working with children/young people. It may be best, under the circumstances, for the person to return home on the understanding that the club leader/organiser/manager or named child protection person will telephone him/her later in the day.

Useful Contact Details for Trowbridge Future

	Name and Contact Numbers
Manager	<i>Meg Aubrey (Chief Executive)</i> Tel: 07765 371051
Designated Safeguarding Lead	<i>Deborah Mclean (Youth Manager)</i> Tel: 07387 787989
Police	Emergencies – Call 999 Non Emergencies – Call 101
MASH: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	Daytime: 0300 456 0108 Out of Hours: 0845 60 70 888
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk
ChildLine	0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222) or www.childline.org.uk

- The information provided to him/her at this stage will need to be very limited. This is because discussions need to take place first with other agencies who may need to be involved, such as the local authority children's social care department, the police and or the local authority designated officer (LADO)
- If the person is a member of a trade's union or a professional organisation, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body. Arrangements should be made for the person to receive ongoing support in line with the responsibilities the organisation has towards his/her welfare.

Reporting an Allegation or Concern

If the allegation is made by a child/young person or family member to a member of staff, helper/volunteer, or if a member of staff, helper/volunteer observes concerning behaviour by a colleague at first hand, this should be reported immediately to the club leader/organiser/manager and the named child protection person.

Trowbridge Future's Lead on Handling the Allegation

If a staff member or helper/volunteer has received an allegation or observed something of concern about the club leader/organiser/manager, the staff member or helper/volunteer should report the allegation or concern to the person more senior to their manager, i.e. chair of committee. If the person who is the subject of the concern is a named child protection person, the matter should be reported to the named person's manager.

Conducting an Investigation

Once any urgent necessary steps have been taken, attention can be given to dealing with the full implications of the allegations. There are up to three possible lines of enquiry when an allegation is made:

1. A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
2. Enquiries and an assessment by the local authority children's social care department about whether a child/young person is in need of protection.
3. Investigation by an employer and possible disciplinary action being taken against the person in question.

This includes implementing a plan to manage any risk posed by the individual to children and young people in the workplace until the outcome of the other investigations and enquiries is known. Or if this was an incident from an activity that was already risk assessed, then you would need to re-risk assess the activity.

When to involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The named child protection person should report the allegation to the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day if the alleged behaviour suggests that the person in question:

- May have behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child/young person
- Has possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child/young person
- Has behaved towards a child/young person in a way that suggests that he/she may be unsuitable to work with children/young people.
- This should also happen if the individual has volunteered the information him/herself.
- The LADO may be told of the allegation from another source. If this is the case, then the first information received by Trowbridge Future may be when the LADO makes contact in order to explain the situation
- Whoever initiates the contact, there will be discussion between the LADO and Trowbridge Future's named person to share information about the nature and circumstances of the allegation, and to consider whether there is any evidence to suggest that it may be false or unfounded
- If there is any reason to suspect that a child/young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and there are no obvious indications that the allegation is false, the LADO, in cooperation with Trowbridge Future will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care department to ask for a strategy discussion
- The LADO and named person will take part in the strategy discussion. The named person and any other representative from Trowbridge Future should cooperate fully with this and any subsequent discussion with the children's social care department
- It should be asked from the outset that the children's social care department shares any information obtained during the course of their enquiries with Trowbridge Future if it has any relevance

to the person's employment.

Dealing with a criminal offence

- If there is reason to suspect that a criminal offence may have been committed (whether or not the threshold of 'significant harm' is reached), the LADO will contact the police and involve them in a similar strategy discussion, which will include the named child protection person
- The named person and any other representative from Trowbridge Future should cooperate fully with any discussion involving the police and should ask for similar cooperation from the police in terms of the sharing of information relevant to the person's employment
- Discussions with the police should also explore whether there are matters that can be acted on in a disciplinary process while the criminal investigation takes place, or whether disciplinary action must wait until the criminal process is completed.

Talking to parents about the allegation or concern

- If the child/young person's parents/carers do not already know about the allegation, the named person and the LADO need to discuss how they should be informed and by whom.

Talking to the person who is the subject of the allegation

- The person at the centre of the allegation should be informed as soon as possible after the initial consultation with the LADO. However, if a strategy discussion with children's social care or the police is needed, this might have to take place before the person concerned can be spoken to in full. The police and children's social care department may have views on what information can be disclosed to the person
- Only limited information should be given to the person in question, unless the investigating authorities have indicated that they are happy for all information to be disclosed or unless there is no need for involvement from these statutory agencies
- The named person will need to keep in close communication with the LADO and the other agencies involved in order to manage the disclosure of information appropriately.

Taking disciplinary action

- If the initial allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, the named child protection person and club leader/organiser or manager of the person at the centre of the allegation should still consider whether formal disciplinary action is needed
- If the local authority children's social care department has undertaken any enquiries to determine whether a child/young person or children/young people are in need of protection, the named person should take account of any relevant information from these enquiries when considering whether disciplinary action should be brought against the person at the centre of the allegations

The following timings should be kept to wherever possible, depending on the nature of the investigation:

- ❖ If formal disciplinary action is not needed, other appropriate action should be taken within three working days
- ❖ If disciplinary action is required, and can be progressed without further investigation, this should take place within 15 days
- ❖ If Trowbridge Future decides that further investigation is needed in order to make a decision about formal disciplinary action, the named child protection person should discuss with the LADO the possibility of this investigation being done by an independent person to ensure that the process is objective. Whether or not the investigation is handled internally or independently, the report should be presented to the named person within 10 working days
- ❖ Having received the report of the disciplinary investigation, the named person should decide within two working days whether a disciplinary hearing is needed

- ❖ If a hearing is needed, it should be held within 15 working days
 - ❖ The named person should continue to liaise with the LADO during the course of any investigation or disciplinary proceedings and should continue to use the LADO as a source of advice and support.
- While criminal proceedings are underway or while an investigation is on-going, there should be no decisions made about the person's future work arrangements until this is concluded. The police are required to complete their work as soon as reasonably possible and to set review dates, so the named person should either liaise with the police directly or via the LADO to check on the progress of the investigation and criminal process
 - The police are also required to inform the employer straight away if the person is either convicted of an offence or acquitted or, alternatively, if a decision is made not to charge him/her with an offence or to administer a caution. In any eventuality, once the outcome is known, the named person should contact the LADO to discuss the issue of disciplinary proceedings
 - If the allegation is substantiated and if, once the case is concluded Trowbridge Future dismisses the person or ceases to use their services, or the person ceases to provide his/her services, the named person should consult with the LADO about referral of the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). This should take place within a month.

Managing risk and supporting the person at the centre of the allegation

- The first priority of Trowbridge Future must always be the safety and welfare of children and young people. However, as an employee or helper/volunteer, the person who is the subject of the allegation has a right to be treated in a fair, sensitive and non-judgemental manner and to have his or her privacy respected as far as this ensures the safety of the child/young person and other children/young people
- Information about the allegation must only be shared on a need to know basis with those directly responsible for supervising and managing the staff member or volunteer. Any other information (for example, explanations to other helpers/volunteers or staff members as to why the person is not at work or working to different arrangements) should be agreed and negotiated with the individual concerned
- If the person is a member of a trades union or a professional organisation, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body as soon as possible after being informed that he/she is the subject of an allegation. Arrangements should also be made for him/her to receive ongoing support and information about the progress of the investigation
- The possible risk of harm to children and young people presented by the person who is the subject of an allegation needs to be carefully managed both during and after any conclusion to the investigation processes following the allegation. This means that Trowbridge Future may need to consider suspending the person if there is cause to suspect that a child/young person may be at risk of significant harm, or if the allegation is serious enough to warrant investigation by the police, or if it is so serious that it could lead to dismissal. However, a decision to suspend should not be taken automatically, as there may be other ways of managing any risk presented by the person
- The situation should be discussed fully between the named person, the club leader/organiser/individual's manager and the LADO, who will seek the views of the police and the children's social care department on the question of possible suspension. The conclusions of the discussion should also be carefully documented. Grounds for suspension should be clearly set out if this is the conclusion. If suspension is not the conclusion, then a clear plan should be made as to how any possible risk posed by the individual is to be managed. This could involve, for example, changes to the person's duties so that they do not have direct contact with children/young people, and/or increased levels of supervision whilst at work
- If it is decided, once the case has been concluded, that a person who has been suspended or who has taken sick leave due to the stress induced by the allegation, is able to return to work, the named person and the club leader/organiser/manager of the person who has been the subject of the

allegations should consider how best to support the individual in this process. A plan to facilitate a return should be drawn up in consultation with the individual him/herself, and should take into account the need to manage any remaining child protection risks and also to support the person concerned after what will have been, and will remain, a very difficult experience

- If the decision is that the person cannot return to work and has to be dismissed or chooses to resign, the named person and the LADO should discuss the need for the matter to be referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and/or to any professional body to which the person may belong. Trowbridge Future does not enter into compromise agreements with individuals who resign following the conclusion of investigations into allegations made against them, and will always comply with its statutory obligations to share information about the individual in the interests of protecting children and young people
- If an allegation made by a child or young person is found to be without substance or fabricated, Trowbridge Future will consider referring the child/young person in question to the children’s social care department for them to assess whether he/she is in need of services or whether he/she may have been abused by someone else. If it is felt that there has been malicious intent behind the allegation, Trowbridge Future will discuss with the police whether there are grounds to pursue any action against the person responsible.

Keeping a record of the investigation

- All those involved in dealing with the allegation should keep clear notes of the allegations made, how they were followed up, and any actions and decisions taken, together with the reasons for these
- These notes should be compiled gradually as the situation unfolds, with each entry being made as soon as possible after the event it describes. The notes should be signed and dated by the person making them, and the person’s name should be printed alongside
- The notes should be kept confidentially on the file of the person who is the subject of the allegation. Discussion should take place with the LADO to determine whether any aspects of the notes may not be shared with the person concerned. If there are no reasons not to do so, a copy of the records should be given to the individual
- The notes should be held on file for a 10-year period, whether or not the person remains with Trowbridge Future for this period.

Evidence and References

This procedure is consistent with the government guidelines set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, DCSF, July 2018.

Child protection resources from The Safe Network standards

Safe Network templates and documents can be used to ensure that your organisation has taken appropriate steps to protect children and young people identified as being at possible risk of abuse or neglect.

Name:	Meg Aubrey	Position:	Chief Executive
Signed:		Dated:	