

# Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures

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<b>Date Approved</b>	November 2025
<b>Date for review</b>	August 2026
<b>Distribution</b>	Internal and External (tendering/Commissioning, inspection and audit) use

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## Contents:

Content	Page Number
1. Purpose	<a href="#">2</a>
2. Scope	<a href="#">3</a>
3. Definitions and Key Concepts	<a href="#">3</a>
4. Our Basis and Values	<a href="#">5</a>
5. Our Approach to Safeguarding	<a href="#">5</a>
6. Governance and Accountability	<a href="#">6</a>
7. Roles and Responsibilities	<a href="#">8</a>
8. Procedures	<a href="#">10</a>
9. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns	<a href="#">14</a>
10. Responding to Safeguarding Allegations Against Adults	<a href="#">19</a>
11. Reporting Serious Safeguarding Incidents	<a href="#">21</a>
12. Safeguarding and social media	<a href="#">22</a>
13. "Missing" Children	<a href="#">23</a>
14. Child Exploitation	<a href="#">24</a>
15. Racism and Racial Harassment as Safeguarding Concerns	<a href="#">25</a>
16. Suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness or Perplexing Presentation	<a href="#">26</a>
17. Female Genital Mutilation	<a href="#">26</a>
18. Forced marriage or honour-based violence	<a href="#">28</a>
19. Preventing Suicide and Managing Self Harm	<a href="#">30</a>
20. Prevent	<a href="#">30</a>
21. Multi Agency and Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews Four Nation Processes	<a href="#">32</a>

20. Events and Celebrity Supporters/ VIP Visits	<a href="#">37</a>
21. Information Sharing and Consent	<a href="#">38</a>
22. Education (England Only)	<a href="#">39</a>
23. Appropriate Touch	<a href="#">40</a>
24. Associated Legislation, Guidance, References and Documents	<a href="#">41</a>
25. Compliance and Oversight	<a href="#">43</a>
26. Version history	<a href="#">43</a>
Appendix - Glossary and Definitions	<a href="#">48</a>

This policy applies to Barnardo's and outlines how the organisation will fulfil our statutory duty to safeguard children and young people, incorporating legislation and best practice guidance, and [Children Act 1989](#) and [Children Act 2004](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#) [Children \(NI\) Order 1995/ Children & Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)), and best practice guidance ([Working Together to Safeguard People \[Wales\]](#), [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2023](#), [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#) and [Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in Northern Ireland 2024](#)).

We are expected to follow the multi-agency procedures, comply with this policy and assist in taking the necessary action to safeguard children experiencing or at risk of abuse. Barnardo's must maintain robust safeguarding systems and safe practice within agreed local multi-agency procedures.

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Working together to safeguard people for Wales, National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2023 and Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young people in Northern Ireland 2024) have set out the principles for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Children Act 2004 emphasises that we all share a responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

Further information about definitions, categories and indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix 1.

## 1. Purpose

The overall purpose of this policy is to protect the welfare of children and young people with whom we work. This includes responding to any concerns of safeguarding raised by children, young people and adults at risk and volunteers.

The aim of this policy is to make clear the duties, responsibilities and arrangements, which are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to ensure all staff, including contracted staff, voluntary staff, students and agency staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children. As an organisation we are committed to participating in a multi-agency approach to all safeguarding arrangements.

We will achieve the following three objectives by being vigilant in the execution of our duties:

- Creating a culture where children are valued and their right to safety and respect is

upheld.

- Actively managing risk to minimise circumstances where children using Barnardo's services may suffer harm.
- Working collaboratively with other organisations to ensure that children are safeguarded and protected.

We will work to incorporate best practice and legislation, for example, The Children's Act 2004, [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#) and [The NHS Patient Safety Incident Response Framework PSIRF](#)

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all those employed by volunteering or working on behalf of Barnardo's within Children's Services, Barnardo's Corporate Departments, the Board of Trustees and Volunteers. It ensures all staff, volunteers and other colleagues are clear about their role, responsibilities and expectations in responding to any safeguarding concerns which suggests a child is or may be at risk of harm.

Everyone who works or volunteers for Barnardo's or is a carer (fostering/adoption/short breaks) has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, alongside a duty to recognise, respond and report safeguarding concerns within expected timeframes. Everyone who works or volunteers for Barnardo's or provides a fostering/adoption placement will be supported to make decisions as to how to proceed in a way that is within the best interests and safety of the child or young person. Our colleagues are supported to exercise professional curiosity as knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify those who may be in need of help or protection.

The Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedure must be followed must be followed alongside local inter-agency procedures, protocols and any arrangements devised by local multi agency partnerships/Regional Safeguarding Children Boards/Child Protection Committees Scotland/Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland. Barnardo's Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure should be referred to where appropriate. All must also work in concordance with local multi-agency policies and procedures and local guidelines.

## 3. Definitions and Key Concepts

### Definition of Safeguarding

In this policy, safeguarding children and promoting their welfare means:

- protecting them from maltreatment,
- preventing impairment of their health and development
- ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Child or Children:** Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member

of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection. This is important to recognise as young people aged 16 and 17 years with safeguarding needs may be accessing adult services in provider organisations.

In "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018", a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, encompassing all living arrangements. This includes unborn children and extends to cover all living situations, ensuring comprehensive safeguarding for all young people.

**Mental Capacity:** safeguarding decisions should take account of the ability to give informed consent and comply with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. We will assess if children and young people have the mental capacity to make decisions and balance respecting their wishes with the responsibility to keep them safe. Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines support colleagues in these decisions. The [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) does not apply to those under 16; instead, the concept of "Gillick competence" is used to assess capacity. The Fraser guidelines apply specifically to advice and treatment about contraception and sexual health.

**Child Protection:** Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Forms of abuse experienced by a child may include:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Sexual
4. Neglect

For further expansion on definitions of abuse see Appendix 1 Children may be trafficked for the purposes of abuse or exploitation; child trafficking is an offense which can be prosecuted even if no exploitation or abuse occurs because of the trafficking.

**Significant harm:** was introduced in The Children Act (1989) as the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism, bizarre or unusual elements a violent assault, suffocation, or poisoning. More often significant harm is a compilation of events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected; for them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case it is necessary to consider any maltreatment alongside the family's strengths and supports.

**Racial violence:** physical assault or damage to property motivated by hostility to a person's race, ethnicity or religion (e.g., racially aggravated assault, harassment, or criminal damage under the Public Order Act 1986, Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Equality Act 2010).

**Racial harassment:** unwanted conduct related to race or ethnicity, including racist slurs, derogatory remarks, "jokes", taunting, unwanted touching (e.g., hair, hijab), racist graffiti, and racist online content.

**Racial trauma:** the psychological and emotional harm resulting from repeated exposure to racism.

**Harmful Prejudiced Behaviour (HPB):** abusive or discriminatory behaviour motivated by prejudice that can escalate into more serious forms of harm.

**Concerns:** refer to any suspicion, allegation, or other apprehension relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse. Individuals do not need proof to raise concerns under the safeguarding of children and young people procedures. If a colleague suspects abuse of a child or young person by someone outside the organisation, even without a direct disclosure from the child or young person, they should report their concerns to their line manager, safeguarding lead or directly to the Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance team. Barnardo's has clear procedures for managing such situations, including contacting relevant authorities such as local children's social services or the police as necessary. Details of local and Corporate Safeguarding contacts alongside numbers for Local Social Care and Local Safeguarding Boards emergency duty numbers should be held within the services local safeguarding protocol.

If a service user (or their representatives, parents/carers) is concerned about possible abuse or neglect by a staff member, volunteer or any other person, the local service safeguarding protocol details how to access safeguarding policies on [Barnardo's website](#) or directly from the service. The protocol details how to contact the local safeguarding lead or Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance team for further advice and support.

**Parent:** refers to the person with legal Parental Responsibility for the child. Parental responsibility continues until the child reaches 18 years of age. In Scotland this is 16 years of age.

**Multi-Agency procedures:** are the locally agreed Child Protection Procedures which can be accessed via local webpages.

**Contextual Safeguarding:** is an approach to understanding and responding to children and young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that children and young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and children and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Therefore, children's social-care practitioners and child-protection systems need to engage with individuals and sectors that do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces (and the systems and services that can cause harm in these spaces) are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child-protection systems in recognition of the fact that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. [About us |](#)

## [Contextual Safeguarding](#)

### 4. Our Basis and Values

At Barnardo's we believe in children – no matter who they are, what they have done or what they have been through. Our purpose is to transform the lives of the UK's most vulnerable children. Our vision is to realise Thomas Barnardo's dream of a world where no child is turned away.

Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Adults at Risk Policy and associated procedures reinforce our values, corporate responsibility and uphold our statutory duties. They demonstrate our compliance with UK legislation and other four nations government legislation, policy guidance, research and good practice. This is challenging and sensitive work, and it is vital that our staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do to safeguard their welfare.

Barnardo's adopts a zero-tolerance approach to racism, racial harassment and racially motivated violence. These behaviours are recognised as safeguarding concerns that can cause significant harm to children and young people.

This policy is **specifically** for staff and volunteers working in **children's services** and **non-children's** services. Wherever they operate, staff and volunteers must have an awareness of Safeguarding and an ability to respond sensitively and appropriately to any concerns identified.

Our approach to safeguarding, as with all of what we do, is under-pinned by our four key values:

- Respecting the unique worth of every person
- Encouraging people to fulfil their potential
- Working with hope
- Exercising responsible stewardship

### 5. Our Approach to Safeguarding

Barnardo's are committed to the very highest standards in terms of Safeguarding, believing that Safeguarding is everyone's business. Colleagues and volunteers are supported to ensure they are confident to identify causes for concern and what signs to look for. This enables preventative measures to be taken in relation to safeguarding and the knowledge and skill to act on these concerns. We have an obligation to meet standards as outlined in relevant nation legislation and guidance (see page 2)

### 6. Governance and Accountability

#### Senior Management

There is a lead Executive Director Children's Services responsible to the CEO for safeguarding across the organisation, who is the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation and will work in line with national legislation and guidance. The Executive Director Children's Services is supported by the organisation's Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance, who, along with the Safeguarding and Compliance Team promotes safer working practices and oversight of allegations of serious incidents, case reviews, and appropriate training.

### **Audit and Assurance**

Barnardo's internal Audit and Assurance Team support the Charity to deliver its strategy. This is achieved through a programme of work to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization's governance, risk and internal control processes, across all directorates. Audit and Assurance make recommendations on key policies and procedures; including those related to safeguarding.

### **Procedures and Practice**

The organisation has clearly defined procedures for identifying and acting where there are safeguarding concerns about actual or suspected incidents or abuse.

### **Safeguarding Leads**

Each Region/Nation and department in the organisation ensures there are designated individuals who are competent to advise staff and volunteers and can respond to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that actions are always swift, respectful, professional and based on what we know to be good practice.

### **Safe Recruitment and Safe Practice procedures**

Recruitment is undertaken in line with Barnardo's [robust recruitment](#) safeguarding principles, including references spanning 5 years\* for regulated posts and Enhanced Disclosure checks including checks against the Children's Barred list for all Children's Services posts that meet the eligibility criteria. Further information can be found here: [Support from our People team - Inside Barnardo's](#)

In retail, Basic Disclosure checks are carried out in line with our License to Practice.

[Barnardos Safer recruitment](#) includes a robust process for all volunteering opportunities – [Corporate volunteering process - Inside Barnardo's](#)

Existing staff and volunteers are re-checked periodically (except for Scotland where from 1 April 2026, PVG needs to be renewed every Five Years <https://www.disclosure.gov.scot/changes>) and/or every three years. Barnardo's uses an online DBS employment check system that enables faster, easier and more secure turnaround on Disclosure checks. In retail, Basic Disclosure checks are carried out in line with our License to Practice.

*\*For regulated work in Family Placement and Residential services, references are required to cover an applicant's full employment/work history (including volunteering), where they have worked with children and/or adults at risk.*

Barnardo's has developed criminal record disclosure policies for each nation to ensure that it abides by the obligations of the Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland, and Access NI, as appropriate, and to ensure that it complies with the spirit and requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation.

All those who work for, or on behalf of Barnardo's, including paid and unpaid staff, volunteers, and chaperones are required to sign and abide by the organisation's Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

### **Learning Development Training**

All staff and volunteers are required to complete a mandatory e-learning safeguarding module within the first two weeks of employment. Within the first six months, they are also required to attend a one-day Safeguarding programme, and a two-day programme follows

this. Staff and managers working directly with children and young people are also required to attend bespoke safeguarding training courses in line with their specific responsibilities and must attend updated programmes every three years. These mandatory training and onboarding procedures ensure colleagues and volunteers are made aware of and understand their professional boundaries and that their practice reflects this.

It is the responsibility of the individual and their line manager to ensure mandatory training is completed. Managers who supervise volunteers and staff who do not work in Children's Services must ensure that safeguarding training is provided and regularly updated.

There are a range of training events delivered regularly by experienced training providers, topics include, Child Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the impact on children, working with Diversity and programmes on Attachment, Child Development and Trauma informed Practice.

**Mandatory training** includes colleagues receiving antiracism training integrated into safeguarding programmes. This includes recognising and challenging racist "banter", microaggressions and stereotypes, and understanding the impact of racism on children's mental health and education.

**Specialist training** for DSLs: DSLs and deputies must be trained on harmful prejudiced behaviour, **trauma-informed approaches, and early intervention strategies.**

**Partnership** working: Barnardo's will collaborate with specialist organisations (e.g., Show Racism the Red Card, Kick It Out, ACEN, SEEN) to deliver training, materials and advice.

**Cultural competence:** Training will emphasise cultural humility, intersectionality, unconscious bias, and institutional racism.

Team and other meetings have a standing agenda item of Safeguarding and can be used to discuss safeguarding issues, changes in regulation and best practice. Annual safeguarding team training days should be delivered by all services. All training and requirements for additional specialist training are recorded and discussed as part of an annual and mid-year Performance and Growth Review (PGR).

Barnardo's Learning and Development provides evidence-based briefings, information and tools to support safeguarding practice development. [Contact the Learning and Development team - Inside Barnardo's](#)

### **Supervision and One-to-One Meetings**

There is an expectation that all Supervision and one-to-one meetings will have Safeguarding as a standing agenda item for Safeguarding, as it relates to each role to be discussed and embedded in all the work undertaken. This will include reflection on safe practice and managing risk.

### **Managing Risk**

Barnardo's has an effective procedure for assessing and managing risks regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The organisation has a procedure in place for reporting, recording and reviewing allegations and significant incidents. These reports and the learning from them, informs our practice, the risk assessment and revisions to management procedures.

### **Records**

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child

or a vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm. The organisation has a clear policy on the management of records, confidentiality, and sharing of information, which adhere to the requirements of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 (see Data Protection Policy). Trustees, staff, and volunteers are clear about what information can be shared with relevant people within and outside of the organisation and have access to specialist advice if they are unsure.

### **Links with other Policies**

This Safeguarding policy and procedure are supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy working practices. Safeguarding policies are reviewed annually and are accessible via Barnardo's internal internet [Home Page - Inside Barnardo's](#) and [Barnardo's | Children's charity | Barnardo's](#) and are updated to support dissemination of policies and updated review to colleagues and volunteers.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Trustees** have a duty of care, which includes taking necessary steps to safeguard and protect children. They will act in the best interests of children and young people to ensure that all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them are taken. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect Barnardo's assets and reputation.

Barnardo's Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefitting from or working with the organisation are not harmed in any way through contact with it. The Trustees must ensure that there are appropriate Safeguarding Policies and that they are implemented effectively. They also have a personal duty of care in relation to Safeguarding. There is a named Trustee for Safeguarding.

**The Chief Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team** are the accountable senior managers responsible for the management of serious safeguarding incidents. The Executive Director Children's Services – Operations, is the designated corporate safeguarding lead for the organisation.

Barnardo's is required to respond to and comply with all statutory and mandatory guidance around safeguarding including adopting a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.

Barnardo's has a responsibility to contribute to Local Case Review and Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) processes and implement resulting recommendations.

**Children's Services Region/Nation and Commercial Directors and Corporate Department Heads/Managers** hold responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures and effective management of safeguarding concerns in their department/division or Region/Nation. Locality Assistant Directors and Heads/Assistant Heads of Business hold delegated operational accountability for services.

**Line managers** are responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding and child protection concerns are addressed through respective line management structures in accordance with this Policy and Procedure. Are responsible for ensuring staff receive a mandatory induction which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare and have received mandatory child protection training in accordance with their role and

responsibilities and ensuring all staff know who and how to contact key safeguarding professionals for advice and support around safeguarding children and young people's issues.

**Staff and volunteers** have responsibility for ensuring they know how to contact the key safeguarding professionals in their organisation to seek advice around safeguarding children's issues and attending mandatory safeguarding children training in accordance with their role and responsibilities. They must know how to access safeguarding supervision as per the Supervision Policy and ensure that they are familiar with their responsibilities under this policy. They must ensure that they are familiar with the localised pathways and procedures.

The **Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance** is the named professional providing a key role in promoting good professional practice within their organisation, providing advice and expertise for colleagues, and ensuring safeguarding training is in place. Working closely with their organisation's safeguarding leads, designated professionals, they are responsible for providing advice and support to Directors and other senior managers on best practice in adhering to this Policy, Procedure, safer working practices, oversight of allegations, serious incidents, and significant case reviews. Locality Assistant Directors are also available to offer support and advice. This role holds responsibility for ensuring mechanisms are in place for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this policy in Barnardo's.

**Safeguarding Leads** provide additional Safeguarding advice and support in their Region/Nation, Business Line or Department in ensuring that Policy and Procedures are adhered to and in ensuring that there is oversight of all Serious Safeguarding Incidents, Allegations and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews/Child Practice Reviews/Significant Case Reviews, in their area of responsibility.

**The People Team** is responsible for consultation and advice in relation to the implication of safeguarding in Human Resources and Learning and Development issues. They must ensure that employment policies incorporate the requirements of 'Safer Recruitment', including Disclosure and Barring Service (2012)

All **Early Years Settings in England** subject to Ofsted Registration must identify a manager in the setting (at Team Manager level or above), to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children and liaison with local statutory Children's Services agencies. This will include liaison with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Board which may be through the Locality Assistant Director and should also include communication with the Assistant Director Quality and Improvement. Settings registered with the Care Inspectorate in Wales must adhere to the National Minimum Standards for Registered Childcare for children up to the age of 12 and have a registered person who leads on Safeguarding.

## 8. Procedures

### Communicating Safeguarding Responsibilities

#### Action: Line Managers:

- a. Ensure that all staff/volunteers are aware of this Policy and Procedure and any relevant codes and practices.
- b. Ensure local contact numbers are displayed in an accessible place for staff and

volunteers to include, as relevant: Local Authority/Trust referral/duty teams (children and adults), the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) in England and Wales (sometimes referred to as Principal Officer in Wales), Gateway Services in Northern Ireland.

- c. Ensure all staff members are directed to access the local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements website in England and Local Safeguarding Children's Board in Wales, Child Protection Committee in Scotland, Safeguarding Board/Panel in Northern Ireland and familiarise themselves with the local arrangements and procedures.

### **Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries**

The Safeguarding Code of Conduct supports staff and volunteers by making clear what is expected of them in terms of their conduct and behaviour; it assists them to raise concerns without fear of recrimination and reduces the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations being made against them.

#### **a. Induction (All Departments)**

##### **Action: All staff / Volunteers:**

Ensure that you have read, fully understand, and agreed the content of the [Safeguarding Code of Conduct - Inside Barnardo's](#). It is your responsibility to speak to your line manager if you are not clear or require further clarification.

##### **Action: Line Managers:**

Ensure all staff and volunteers have fully understood accepted the terms of and signed the safeguarding code of conduct.

#### **b. Professional Boundaries**

##### **Action: All Staff / Volunteers**

- i. Professional Boundaries must be an integral part of supervision. It is an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the professional relationship established with children, young people or adults, the nature of the work and to ensure that any challenges in maintaining professional boundaries can be addressed in an appropriate manner.
- ii. Do not visit service users outside of planned working hours; invite them to your home or to be part of your family or social network (unless you are a foster carer or short break carer). Any exceptions to this must be discussed and agreed with your line managers.
- iii. Ensure that if you live and work/volunteer within your own community, you are clear about professional boundaries when any of your own family or children has friendships with service users' children or siblings, and that this is discussed with your line manager.
- iv. Inform your line manager if you have had a previous professional or personal relationship with service users to agree how best to manage confidentiality and risk and ensure that you operate in accordance with Barnardo's Policies and Procedures.
- v. Bring any risk of potential breakdown of professional boundaries, however unintentional, to the attention of your line manager.
- vi. Do not give out your personal mobile or home telephone numbers except in exceptional circumstances or emergencies and with the agreement of line managers and following a robust risk assessment.
- vii. Never agree to be part of service user or their family's social networking sites or agree to be e-friends, unless this is an agreed part of the work and has been risk assessed by line managers (exceptions apply when they are also your family members).

- viii. Do not share personal blog addresses or other modes of personal communication, with service users with whom you are working.
- ix. Ensure you adjust privacy settings on your own personal social networking sites to prevent inappropriate content being shared with service users.
- x. You must not approach service users in any social setting if they do not instigate the contact, especially where their behaviour indicates that they do not want to be recognised or indeed identified as a user of the service.
- xi. You must not enter a partner relationship with service users or members of their families. This constitutes a breach of professional boundaries and relevant codes of conduct/practice. If you become aware that the above situation has occurred in relation to a colleague, you must bring this to the attention of your line manager.
- xii. The organisation recognises that it is possible that the friends and family of staff members may become service users and, indeed, that staff members themselves may in some circumstances become service users. It is incumbent on staff members to speak to their Line Manager about such situations to avoid any conflicts of interest, breaches of confidentiality or professional boundary issues.

#### **Action: Line Managers**

- i. Discuss any potential challenges or blurring of boundaries, which may arise for any worker or volunteer who lives and works within the same community. Agree how any such difficulties will be addressed should they arise.
- ii. Ensure that if staff or volunteers require regular telephone contact with service users that this is done through appropriate use of Barnardo's issued equipment and not personal phones.
- iii. Agree clear boundaries about the nature of an individual's work and their relationship to service users.
- iv. Use the supervision process to help colleagues reflect on their professional relationship with children, young people and adults at risk and identify if there are any warning signs that professional boundaries may be in danger of being compromised.
- v. Work through with staff members sensitively, but honestly, the implications and issues where they or a member of their family is, or becomes, a service user.

### **Personal Relationships and Contact with Service Users Outside of Work**

#### **Action: Staff/Volunteers**

Declare any personal relationships with any service user(s) if they begin to attend your place of work or use services you provide.

#### **Action: Line Manager**

It is usually inappropriate for Barnardo's staff/volunteers to deliver a service or become the key workers to a friend, or family member. If this situation occurs, arrangements should be made for another staff member/volunteer to take over the case or key worker role. You must agree any exceptions to this (for example, where a parent of a service user volunteers with group work for disabled children) and the decision is recorded on the staff/volunteer file.

### **Self – Disclosure of Personal Experiences**

#### **Action: Staff/Volunteers**

It is not usually acceptable for a member of staff to self-disclose their personal experiences to a service user. There may be occasional exceptions to this where some self-disclosure is appropriate, and professional judgement should be exercised. Boundaries relating to this must be discussed with your line manager.

**Action: Line Manager**

Ensure that you discuss issues of self-disclosure with staff, so they are clear of the professional boundaries around this in relation to their role.

**Continuing a relationship after the service or piece of work is complete.**

**Action: Worker/Volunteer**

It is not normally acceptable for a member of staff to have contact with a service user in a personal capacity once the service or piece of work you have been involved in is complete. Any exceptions to this must be agreed with line management and identify why continued contact does not compromise professional boundaries in any way.

**Gifts and Hospitality**

You must not use a relationship with a service user or their family for personal gain. Gift-giving and accepting presents should only take place in line with [Gifts and Hospitality Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) and should be agreed with your line manager.

**Concern about a Breach / Potential Breach of Professional Boundaries**

**Action: Staff / Volunteers**

- i. Concerns about a breach or potential breach of professional boundaries by you or a colleague or external agency must be shared with your line manager. This should happen regardless of whether the breach of professional boundaries was due to initial intentions being well meaning. A breach of the professional boundaries may place a child/young person at risk of harm, and you have a duty to act upon your concerns to safeguard children and families.
- ii. Where you feel unable to report the concern(s) to your line manager, you should refer them to your manager's manager.
- iii. If you cannot raise issues through your line management or you consider the breach of professional boundaries not to have been dealt with appropriately, you should report via the use the [Whistleblowing Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#). The hotline is accessible via Safecall on **0800 G15 1571** or online through the '[Report a Whistleblowing Concern](#)'.
- iv. The organisation has clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in Sir Robert Francis's 'Freedom to Speak Up' review and which are also evident in staff training and codes of conduct; these principles underpin a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.

**Action: Line Manager**

- i. All potential breaches of professional boundaries must be taken seriously. The breach may not be a single event but a series of events and interactions, which together cause the individual to cross the boundary between what would be considered a professional relationship to a non-professional relationship.
- ii. Staff and volunteers must be supported to address any concern about a breach of professional boundaries without the automatic risk of disciplinary proceedings. However, staff must be made aware of all possible consequences depending on the severity and nature of the breach including possible disciplinary action; including and up to dismissal; referral to Regulatory bodies (e.g. HCPC, NISCC, SWE, SSSC, & Social Work Wales), relevant Local Authorities, Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland and/or the police as appropriate.
- iii. Conduct an investigation to establish the facts and decide whether there is a disciplinary case to answer – refer to [Resolution Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#)

- iv. Your [Support from our People team - Inside Barnardo's](#) can provide you with generic investigation guidance. Specific investigation guidance for managers on responding to external investigations into safeguarding/gross misconduct allegations is available [Resolution Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#).
- v. All breaches of professional boundaries are to be recorded on individual staff and volunteer files, including any outcome of action taken. In cases where there is found to be 'no case to answer' the outcome should still be recorded.

## 9. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

- a. A child or young person discloses information to you about abuse or harm that they are experiencing including historic abuse/harm (in person or on the phone, via e-mail, third party reporting, through the observation of signs/symptoms of abuse, neglect or unmet needs)
- b. The key principles for understanding and acting upon potential safeguarding concerns are Recognise, Respond, Report, and Record.

### Action: Person receiving the information:

- i. Always offer reassurance, take seriously and listen to what they are saying. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the child or family not to act if you are worried that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm.
- ii. It is not your job to investigate, verify what is being said, or examine the child. Doing so may compromise any future investigation. This is the statutory responsibility of the local authority/child protection services and/or the Police. However, it is important to ascertain relevant information, and it may be necessary to undertake some brief enquiries before making a referral, including full name, age, mobile number, email address and any involvement with Barnardo's services and a brief outline of what happened to them.
- iii. Explain the process to the child in an age-appropriate manner: that you will need to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why and possible actions.
- iv. Consult with your line manager or other responsible manager, as soon as possible and certainly the same day, to agree the course of action but, do not delay if this would place a child at increased risk. You must record the incident in detail within 24 hours of being made aware.
- v. **If the child is present and is at immediate risk of harm**, take the appropriate course of action to secure the immediate safety of the child unless to do so would put you or others at risk. This could include:
  - a) Calming angry or upset children or adults.
  - b) Contacting 999 emergency services, if necessary, on their behalf.
  - c) Contacting local child protection/Duty Team/MASH/Gateway Services/Children's Services directly.
  - d) Seeking vital medical assistance.
  - e) Contact your Departmental or Region/Nation Safeguarding Lead Manager or Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance or Head Office Children's Services during normal office hours and the Police outside of office hours.
- vi. If you receive a telephone call from a child, please take as much detail as possible, including full name, age/date of birth, contact details, email address, mobile number, any involvement with Barnardo's services and if they say they are being harmed a brief outline of what is happening to them. If the child is in immediate danger, advise them to call the Police; you must also contact the Police to check that the child has referred the concern to them. If the child is not in agreement with this/not able to do this, you have a duty to call the Police and pass on any information you have.

**Action: Line Manager**

- i. If you are aware that the child is subject to a Care Order or an ongoing Child Protection Investigation, is named on the Child Protection Register (Scotland only) or has a Child Protection Plan, any new incident must be referred to the lead professional/allocated Social Worker/Local Child Protection services and information shared accordingly.
- ii. England and Wales  
In England and Wales, if you are concerned that the child is, or may be at risk of, being trafficked, or a victim of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, you must adhere to local inter-agency protocols and liaise with the local children's social care/duty service or Police to discuss whether a referral to [National Referral Mechanism is required](#).
- iii. Wales  
On 21st March 2022 the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020 came into force abolishing the common law defence of reasonable punishment, so it can no longer be used in Wales where a child has been physically punished. Children now have the same protection from assault as adults. Should you witness or hear a disclosure of an incident of assault on a child or have concerns then you should discuss with your line manager with a view to reporting to the local children's social care/duty service or Police if there are immediate concerns for the safety of the child.
- iv. Northern Ireland  
In Northern Ireland, it is only children who may be the victim of trafficking that can be referred to the [National Referral Mechanism](#). In these circumstances it is suggested that advice is sought from the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance regarding the process, and, in practice, staff can make referrals to the NRM.
- v. Scotland  
In Scotland, concerns of a child or young person's wellbeing can be shared as appropriated to the "named person" and Lead Professional if they are involved. Local arrangements and the terms used to describe this role, and function may vary from area to area. It is only children who may be the victim of trafficking that can be referred to the [National Referral Mechanism](#).  
The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 came into force on 7th November 2020. It did not introduce a new offence but removed the previous defence of reasonable chastisement available to parents/carers resulting in children having the same protections in terms of the law on assault as adults. Should you witness or hear a disclosure of what is referred to in the guidance as a minor assault discuss with your line manager in the first instance.  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/16/enacted>
- vi. If the child is not subject to a current Child Protection Plan or Child Protection or Care Proceedings, a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO) or at risk of being trafficked, or is not known to the service, you must make a clear assessment of whether the information received from the responsible worker is deemed to be a Child Protection referral i.e. the child is at risk of significant harm. If you are unsure of the course of action you should take, you must seek guidance through the line management structure (N.B. in Scotland, some areas operate on a voluntary basis, the 'Named Person' system where concerns of a child and young person's wellbeing can be shared as appropriate). Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) National Practice model GIRFEC 2022 provides a refresh of the values and principles, integrating children's rights, The Promise, consideration of the incorporation of the UNCRC and poverty <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>
- vii. If your assessment is that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, a

- referral must be made to the local children's social care duty team/local Child Protection service/Gateway Services. For further detail, see Section 3.3.
- viii. If your assessment is that a referral is not needed, you must identify what course of action is to be taken to respond to the concerns identified and ensure that all decisions and the reasons for them are recorded on the child's file in accordance with [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#). Where there is some form of assessed need refer to relevant services, using agreed local protocols.
  - ix. If there is a disagreement between Barnardo's manager responsible and responsible member of staff about the need to report concerns to Child Protection services, the line Assistant Director/manager's manager must be consulted to make a final decision.
  - x. Ensure all decisions and agreed actions are recorded on Content Server Service User Recording (SUR) or equivalent Service recording system in accordance with [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#)
  - xi. Ensure you are aware of the local referral processes for Children in Need of Protection within your area.

**c. Working with Children and Young People where there are Existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Concerns**

**Action: Line Manager**

If it is known that a child/young person is subject to a Child Protection Plan, is on the Child Protection Register, or deemed to be in a high risk situation (e.g. at risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking, radicalisation or missing) you must consider and record any risks or/potential risks to the child or/young person and identify any actions required on the child or/young person's Service User Record. Recording must be undertaken in accordance with the [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) and the Service's Local Recording Protocol. Consideration should be given into making a referral as detailed below.

**d. Referring Child Protection Concern**

**Action: All Staff / Volunteers**

In accordance with the [Information Sharing Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) - a child's need for protection must always be the primary concern.

- i. Decisions to inform the child and parent/carer about any referral will be informed by local inter-agency protocols; an assessment of any increased risk of harm to the child; and the possibility of prejudicing any subsequent police investigation. If in doubt about the decision and timing of informing a child and their family, seek advice from your line manager or local child protection services. In any event you must speak to your line manager as soon as possible and on the same day.
- ii. Following consideration of the above, if you assess there is a risk, tell the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and parent/carer, that the referral will be made.
- iii. Contact must be made with the appropriate Child Protection services or Police, following local inter-agency procedures.
- iv. Share with Child Protection services any other relevant information or known risks about the child and family within the context of their wider family and environment.
- v. Agree with Child Protection Services what the child and parents/carers will be told about the next steps, by whom and when and the actions which are required to be taken.
- vi. Referrals of suspected child abuse must always be confirmed by encrypted email or

recorded delivery, using local referral protocols to the MASH/Duty Team/local child protection service/Gateway Services/etc within 24 hours.

#### Northern Ireland

This should be done using the UNOCINI Assessment Framework / Form: [UNOCINI Guidance](#)

#### Scotland

If Child Protection Services do not make contact within five working days you must contact them for an update

#### Wales

In Wales, there are national safeguarding procedures that detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The procedure helps practitioners to apply the legislation and statutory guidance for practice, and the pathway for the safeguarding referral criteria have been reduced to 'a child at risk of harm' under the SSWBA, 2014. The definition of a "child at risk" is a child who:

- Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and
- Has needs for care and support (whether the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs).

There is a new duty for relevant partners of a local authority to report children at risk. If a partner has reasonable cause to suspect a child is at risk, it must inform the local authority of that fact.

When a child has been reported under Section 130 of the SSWBA 2014, the local authority shall make enquiries to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 i.e. practitioners will still need to use the Children Act 1989, section 47 in the same way as they do now when responding to safeguarding referrals.

- vii. Ensure you inform your line manager (or another responsible manager) as soon as possible and certainly on the same day and record all actions, decisions, risk assessments, and contact in accordance with the [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) For regulated services and Family Placement services, ensure that you inform the relevant inspectorate within designated timeline.
- viii. If you become concerned that the situation has escalated, and it seems that the child or young person is at increased risk of significant harm you must immediately contact the police on 999 and local child protection services to seek guidance on what to do.
- ix. If you are not satisfied that the child protection service's response adequately safeguards the child then you must inform your line manager, as soon as possible and certainly the same day, who can make representations on Barnardo's behalf. See **Escalation Procedures in section 6.3.d.**

#### **e. Escalation of Child Protection Concerns where there are Professional Disagreements**

##### **Action: Person Making Referral**

- i. If the decision of the child protection service does not agree with your service's assessment of the level of concern this must be recorded on Content Server Service User Recording (SUR) or Service recording system in accordance with the [Children's](#)

[Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) Discuss with your line manager to clarify what action needs to be taken. If your line manager is not available, refer your concerns up the line management chain until you are able to speak to a manager.

- ii. If you disagree with your manager's decision and have evidence to suggest that the child is not adequately safeguarded you should seek advice from the line Assistant Director, the Safeguarding Lead, the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance or another senior manager in Barnardo's Children's Services. You should do this with your direct line manager's agreement, if possible, but you have the right to raise your concerns regardless of your line manager's consent. This should also be recorded on the file. In this event the [Whistleblowing Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) may be used.

#### **Action: Line Manager**

- i. All notes of discussion/disagreement must be recorded on the Service recording system in accordance with the [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#)
- ii. If you disagree with the decision made by the Local Authority/Child Protection Services, you must contact the local authority manager for discussion. Follow up your concerns in writing within 24 hours.
- iii. Further, inform your line Assistant Director and discuss possible actions and options available. In Scotland, discuss the need for a referral to the Children's Reporter on grounds outlined in S.67 Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011).

#### **Action: Assistant Director, Children's Services**

- i. If the response is still not deemed satisfactory, contact your equivalent level manager in the statutory agency to discuss your concerns.
- ii. Follow up your concerns in writing with the statutory agency within 24 hours.
  - a) If agreement is still not reached through this route, then discuss next steps with your Region/Nation Director to consider making representation to the relevant Director in the Local Authority, Trust, Child Protection Committee or Safeguarding Panel.
  - b) In Scotland you may consider an immediate referral to the Children's Reporter on care and protection grounds as outlined in S.67 Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.
  - c) Many areas have locally agreed Escalation/Conflict Resolution Procedures, and you must familiarise yourself with these and follow them.
- iii. If intervention at this level still fails to resolve the concerns, discuss with the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance.

## **10. Responding to Safeguarding Allegations Against Adults and Volunteers Who Work for or on Behalf of Barnardo's**

- a. A safeguarding allegation is one where information comes to light from any source, which suggests that an adult working for or on behalf of Barnardo's has or may have:
  - Caused significant harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
  - Committed a criminal offence against a child or adult or
  - Behaved in such a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.This includes historical information about abuse an adult may have experienced as a child whilst in receipt of services from Barnardo's.
- b. The management of an allegation of abuse may involve one or all of the following:
  - A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
  - Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.

- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

**Action from member of staff or volunteer who has a concern about an adult working for or on behalf of Barnardo's who works with or is in contact with a child or young person.**

- Inform your line manager or other responsible manager and the relevant senior manager at Assistant Director or Director Level immediately. Action must have been taken and recorded within 24 hours (including weekends and bank holidays).
- If the allegation involves a staff member or volunteer in Retail or Fundraising C Media, then immediately alert the Area Business Manager (Retail) or Assistant Director/Deputy Director (Fundraising/Media).
- It is not your job to investigate the allegation. Your job is to listen, ensure you have the basic details so you can record what was said, and respond appropriately. For further information see Guidelines for responding to Allegations against Adults.
- If for any reason you do not feel able to alert a line manager, then the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure must be followed. Tel:0800 158 8060.

**Action: Responsible Manager:**

- Upon receiving information, ensure the safety of any child or young person. If a crime has clearly been committed, the Police and the Local Authority Child Protection Services/Trusts/Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will need to be contacted as a matter of urgency and within 24 hours. If there are other children who could be at risk (e.g. other children in the household/service), these details must also be shared.
- Advice and guidance should be sought from the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance or Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Compliance. The relevant People Team should be advised of the allegation. In consultation with the LADO/local Child Protection Services/Trusts, a risk assessment should be conducted within 24hrs to decide whether the person concerned can continue in their role or whether a period of suspension is required, or a temporary redeployment is appropriate. Already stated in 4 below.  
For Wales, please see additional information contained [here](#)
- Do not inform the member of staff/volunteer against whom the concern/allegation has been made of the nature of the allegation until consultation has been undertaken with the relevant local authority and where necessary police. The responsible Director must ratify any decision. In consultation with the LADO/local Child Protection Services/Trusts and Barnardo's People Team, a risk assessment should be conducted within 24hrs to decide whether the person concerned can continue in their role or whether a period of suspension is required, or a temporary redeployment is appropriate.
- If the allegation concerns a volunteer, then a decision must be made as to whether to suspend their volunteering activities. This must be confirmed in writing.
- If the allegation involves harm or risk of harm to a Barnardo's service user then you must consider whether the Service User Record should be sealed and the relevant IS Account Manager, or in their absence the IS Helpdesk, requested to arrange this. Advice must be sought from the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance.
- Consult with the People Team to agree next steps regarding the member of staff/volunteer. Any officer, tasked with undertaking further enquiries or investigating under disciplinary procedures must be competent in child protection matters and be of sufficient seniority to enter discussion with external agencies. Any action must be agreed with the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Social/Health Care Trust as appropriate. These procedures must be followed in conjunction with Barnardo's [Resolution Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#)
- Consideration must be given as to whether the allegations represent a possible crime

- that needs to be reported to the Police; discussions will need to take place regarding the primacy of the Police investigation and the impact on internal timescales for subsequent investigation, etc.
- viii. As soon as possible, agree with the Health/Social Care Trust/Child Protection Agency who will ensure that parents/carers or children are kept informed about the allegation and how they will be kept updated on any progress of the case and its outcome.
  - ix. Any other local authority with responsibility for the child and any relevant partner agencies must also be notified of the allegation and/or investigation within 24hrs. In some circumstances, the Local Authority or Health and Social Care Trust where the Barnardo's staff, volunteer, or carer resides may become involved if the allegations have implications for the care of their own children.
  - x. Ensure the Allegations Against Adults Reporting Form has been completed via [Safeguarding/Safety Online Reporting Tool \(SORT\) - Inside Barnardo's](#) and signed off by the Senior Manager (Assistant Director or above), as soon as possible (always within 24 hours).
  - xi. The reporting form on SORT must be monitored and regularly updated by the Assistant Director/Regional Business Manager responsible when there is significant new information, and/or reviewed quarterly and when the outcome of the investigation is known.
  - xii. Ensure that staff and volunteers involved with an investigation are aware of the support options available. Refer to Inside Barnardo's for information on 'Sources of Support'.
  - xiii. Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that any support offered is kept separate from the managers involved in the investigation (Children's Services Volunteering Advisors must be contacted to signpost appropriate support).
  - xiv. Notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in English authorities or senior managers in the relevant Local Authority or Health and Social Care Trusts in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland of the conclusion of any internal investigation. Consideration should be made to reporting under Duty of Candour legislation.
  - xv. Scottish Social Service's Council (SSSC) expect, where appropriate, for them to be informed of an allegation at the initial stage to allow them to take their own actions if required.
  - xvi. At the conclusion of a case all required regulatory referrals or notifications (including Ofsted, Care Inspectorate Wales, CQC and the Charity Commission) must be made and a decision made and recorded by Children's Services and the People Team as to whether the person will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (England, Wales and Northern Ireland). In Scotland, any referral will be made to Care Inspectorate Scotland registered services) and Scottish Social Service's Council (SSSC) (for any member of staff registered) and Disclosure Scotland. For Family Placement the regulatory body must be notified once they become aware of the allegation.

## 11. Reporting of Serious Safeguarding Incidents

- a. A serious safeguarding incident is defined as:
  - Credible Suicidal Ideation and/or action by a Service User
  - Serious Self Harm or action by a Service User that has or is suspected to have life changing consequences.
  - Actions of a Service User which caused death or serious injury to a child or adult.
  - Incident where a Service User has sustained serious injuries.
  - A situation that indicates organised crime or large-scale abuse or where any child in "our care" is at risk of Child Sexual/Criminal Exploitation or Online Harm/Abuse
  - A situation which raises concern about possible radicalisation of any Service User
  - A situation where a Service User has been the victim of a Hate Incident (including

- serious incidents of racial violence or racial harassment)
- A situation that is characterised by an escalating and/or unmanaged/unmanageable risk of death or life changing injury to a Service User
  - A Barnardo's Regulated Service is required to close or under threat of closure by the Regulator following safeguarding concerns.
  - A "Near Miss" where an unplanned event or incident did not result in serious injury, but had the potential to do so and only a fortunate/timely break in the chain of events prevented a serious outcome for the Service User

Full criteria of reporting an SSI are detailed within the SSI Threshold Guidance within resources on [Safeguarding/Safety Online Reporting Tool \(SORT\) - Inside Barnardo's](#) for how to complete an SSI.

**Action: Line Manager**

- i. If a member of your team is involved in a serious safeguarding incident and/or any of the above situations apply, you must complete a Serious Safeguarding Incident Form on [SORT](#) within 24 hours
- ii. If the incident also relates to Health and Safety, a Barnardo's Incident Reporting Form (BIRF) should be completed [SORT](#)
- iii. Follow [SORT](#) for the range and process of internal reporting mechanisms.
- iv. These processes have in-built reviews and senior management oversight.

## 12. Safeguarding and Social Media

**What do we mean by social media?**

'Social media' in this document means any electronic communication that enables people to stay in touch online. This includes apps in which you and others contribute to both shared and private conversations with organisations, communities and individuals.

**Background**

Social media has become an important part of everyday life. It is an exciting and engaging way of keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as people, groups and brands beyond daily life. Social media at Barnardo's covers both private conversations (e.g. WhatsApp) and public conversations (e.g. Facebook). Although these are obviously very different types of communications, our safeguarding responsibilities apply to both cases.

Many of the children and young people in our care expect to use social media as a default method of communication – even more than talking face to face or on the phone. As we have started using social media more regularly, the number of stories about inappropriate use of technology, grooming behaviour, racist online abuse and racist digital content and an inability to challenge colleagues has grown, which means that Barnardo's needs clear practice guidance for colleagues and organisations around safer working practice in this area.

**Individuals who work with children and young people, or adults who are their parents and carers, whether in a voluntary or paid capacity, must always keep their professional role in mind regardless of the method of communication with a child.**

All communications with a child, regardless of how they take place, should be considered carrying the same weight. As a professional supporting a child or young person, you should ensure you document online conversations, chats or interventions as well as you would through any other channel, for instance face-to-face or phone

conversations. **All communication with a child or young person, regardless of channel, must be recorded in their care record.**

### **What happens if a Barnardo's person abuses their access to social media?**

This policy refers to best, safe and poor practice regarding the use of social media. Barnardo's Safeguarding Code of Conduct outlines the behaviour expected of all staff, colleagues and volunteers, and treats any breach the same whether it is online or offline.

Inappropriate use of social media may breach Barnardo's Safeguarding Code of Practice, IT Code of Practice and Data Protection Policy and could put the lives or livelihoods of children at risk. Failure to use social media appropriately may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to, and including dismissal, or result in the termination of an individual's working agreement or involvement as a volunteer with Barnardo's, as appropriate. In certain circumstances breaches may also result in reports to Regulatory bodies, relevant Local Authorities and/or the Police, as appropriate.

Make sure you are confident in your use of social media before you begin, and never feel pressured to communicate with children, service users, families or other professionals through any channel that you are not personally comfortable with. Advice on usage of any Social Media platform can be sought from the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance. Family Placement have a social media policy that provides guidance.

## **13. Missing Children**

### **a. A Child who is Not Looked After by Barnardo's (Fostering/Adoption/Residential) Goes Missing During a Barnardo's Activity**

#### **Action: Responsible Staff Member:**

- i. Assessments should be completed for all activities in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures. Where there are additional concerns about an individual child, an individual Risk Assessment should be completed in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures and shared with relevant parties.
- ii. If a child or young person goes missing, and after initial search still cannot be found, the staff member must consider with their line manager and parents/carers, whether to notify the Police immediately or make further enquiries in relation to places where the child may have gone. This judgement should be informed by the level of the child's vulnerability or an assessment of risk to themselves or others (see paragraph 8 (1) C (2)). If contacting the Police, details of the risk assessment must be shared along with the child's details.
- iii. If a child is subject to a child protection (Section 47) enquiry or on a child protection plan, child protection registers, or a supervision requirement, (Interim Supervision Order and/or Compulsory Supervision Order in Scotland) then the Local Authority/Trust must be informed immediately. If it is out of hours, the Duty/Out of Hours on call service should be contacted.
- iv. If a child or young person has vulnerabilities, or has gone missing on several occasions, and the situation could lead to serious harm, this should be recorded as a serious incident using SORT.
- v. Staff should ensure that once the child or young person is found, parents, carers, and any other relevant agencies are notified immediately and that he/she is treated positively on their return.

**b. Unauthorised absence of a Looked After Child from Barnardo's Care (Fostering/Adoption Placement/Residential Unit)**

**Action: Responsible Foster/Adoptive/Short Break Carers/Residential Unit Staff/Line Managers**

i. Ensure that all children "looked after" by Barnardo's have an individual child risk assessment, a missing risk assessment, and Safer Caring Plan in addition to their care plan based on a full assessment of the child's current and future needs, highlighting any potential risk to self and others. Where it is assessed that there is a potential risk that the child might go 'missing', the Care Plan must identify specific procedures relating to individual children and responding to them missing from care. Fostering; Missing Policy Templates.

ii. If it is considered that a child/young person is missing and there is no indication that the child/young person will return in a short space of time, managers and staff should determine the level of a child/young person's vulnerability and the potential danger to the child or the public:

This assessment should be taken into consideration:

Guidance/ information contained in the child /young person's Care Plan.

- a) The age, maturity, physical or cognitive ability of the child.
- b) The legal status of the child.
- c) Previous behaviour patterns, including whether the child is a risk to self or others, and the general vulnerability of the child.
- d) Whether the child is perceived to be running to/from someone or something.
- e) The risk of offending or behaviour that may put the child at increased risk e.g. substance abuse.

- f) The risk of the child being targeted by organised groups, e.g. abduction for the purpose of trafficking, child criminal exploitation, radicalisation, sexual exploitation and/or the risk of forced marriage.
- g) Environmental factors such as weather, time of year, community events/tensions.

iii. Any child or young person should be reported to the Police immediately, if:

- a) He/she/they is overdue for medication.
- b) He/she/they has an assessed disability that increases their level of vulnerability.
- c) He/she/they shows a high level of vulnerability from their risk assessment.
- d) He/she/they is under the age of eleven years or has special medical needs or who is considered a risk to themselves or others.

iv. Where a decision is made not to contact the Police, this must be agreed with a line manager and the child's Social Worker should be contacted to agree a course of action including a risk assessment process.

v. If it is out of hours, inform the Out of Hours Duty Social Work service, FP helpline or Emergency Duty Team for the Local authority. Every attempt should be made to contact relevant others who may know where the child/young person may be.

vi. A list of significant names and addresses (previously returned from), known contacts, associates, 'bolt holes,' phone numbers etc., should be kept on the child's file and checked when a child is missing. (If the child is in a residential unit, a full search of the property must be undertaken).

vii. Ensure you provide all requested information to the Social Worker/Police and update them when you have any additional/new information. You must also ensure a photograph is provided. The child's Social Worker/placing authority, in conjunction with the Police, retain responsibility for coordinating the plan of care and response to the missing episode, including any necessary media strategy. Full co-operation must be provided. If you have a concern regarding any action/lack of

action being taken, this must be escalated to the placing authority manager through your line manager. See escalation above.

- viii. Where a child or young person breaches their bail or remand conditions, provide statements, as required to the Police.

**Action: Manager of Barnardo's Family Placement or Residential Service:**

- i. Managers of children's residential units are expected to maintain records of each occasion when a 'Looked After Child' is identified as 'missing' or having taken 'unauthorised absence'. These records should be made available for inspection in line with regulatory requirements across all nations. All information about the child should be recorded in family placement on the Charms file.  
The records should include:
  - a) Description of the child/young person.
  - b) When and where the child/young person was last seen and with who.
  - c) A recent photograph
  - d) Family addresses
  - e) Known acquaintances.
  - f) Any previous history of absconding and information about where found.
  - g) The name and address of the child/young person's GP and Dentist
  - h) The name and address of the child/young person's school.
  - i) Circumstances which increase the risk to a child/young person should be drawn to the attention of the Police.
  - j) Who has parental responsibility for the child/young person.
  - k) Full details and contact telephone numbers of parents, foster carers and social workers, including out of hours contact numbers.
- ii. Managers must ensure that every service they are responsible for communicates the Policy & Procedure to all staff and carers and that each person knows who to contact in the case of any child going missing. This must be in line with local inter-agency protocols.
- iii. Ensure all services have a process in place to respond to a missing episode once the child returns. This must include a 'return interview', which may/may not be conducted by the placing authority. Return interviews are essential to the future safeguarding of the child and all staff/carers should engage accordingly.
- iv. The manager must ensure that all children who go missing are reported to the Police in line with local Missing Protocols/placing authority protocols alongside these procedures.
- v. The likelihood of being missing must be included in the risk assessment in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy and Behaviour Management Policies.
- vi. If the child is missing from a school setting, then Educational statutory guidance must be adhered to.

**14. Child Exploitation**

All services may identify service users who are subject to or at risk of Criminal or Sexual Exploitation. However, some children/young people may be at higher risk of this e.g. care leavers, homeless young people. At times, these young people may lead chaotic lives, and some engage in risky behaviour. However, no child or young person is ever responsible for the abuse to which they are subjected.

**Action: Staff/Volunteers/Carers/Managers**

- a. If staff/volunteers/carers in non-Criminal/non- Sexual Exploitation specialist services become aware of a child/young person who may be at risk of Criminal or Sexual Exploitation, they should report this to their line manager in the first instance.  
Indicators may include:
  - i. Missing from home for periods of time

- ii. Appearing with unexplained gifts
  - iii. Associating with other young people involved in Criminal or Sexual Exploitation
  - iv. Having older boyfriends/girlfriends
- b. On receipt of a referral, an initial assessment should be completed with the child/young person. This will ascertain the background, level of risk and future planning for the child/young person. If there are immediate concerns from a child/young person, the Police/Social Care Department should be contacted.
- c. In matters where there are increasing concerns that a child/young person is involved in Criminal or Sexual Exploitation and may be experiencing significant harm, this may be reported as a serious safeguarding incident.

## Private Fostering

### Action: Staff/ Volunteers/Managers

- a. If you suspect that a child is in a private fostering arrangement (see definition section) you have a statutory duty to notify the relevant Local Authority in terms of ensuring their welfare and protection.
- b. If such concerns arise, these should in the first place be raised with your line manager or other responsible manager and agree next steps.

## 15. Racism and Racial Harassment as Safeguarding Concerns

Barnardo's recognises racism, racial harassment and racially motivated violence as safeguarding concerns. Such behaviour undermines children's safety and wellbeing and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

### Principles

**Zero tolerance:** Racism is never "banter" or "just joking".

**Hidden harm:** Lack of reports does not mean harm is absent; children may be fearful or mistrustful of reporting.

**Disproportionality:** Children from racially minoritised and global majority groups are more likely to experience racism.

### Reporting, Recording and Risk Assessment

**Accessible reporting:** Children and staff should be able to report racist incidents confidentially through multiple routes (SORT online forms, designated staff).

**Recording:** All racist incidents must be logged within Barnardo's recording and, if threshold is met, reported via the safeguarding online reporting tool [SORT](#). Records should capture the victim's account, actions taken, and outcomes.

**Risk assessments:** On receiving a report, DSLs must complete a risk and needs assessment considering victim protection, potential further victims, alleged perpetrators, environmental safety, and referral thresholds (internal management, early help, referral to children's social care, or the police).

## Early Help, Support and Multi-Agency Response

**Victim support:** Victims of racism must be believed, supported and reassured they are not at fault. Support may include counselling, restorative approaches (where appropriate), safety planning, and peer support groups.

**Interventions for HPB:** Children displaying prejudiced behaviour should receive education and support, which may involve one-to-one sessions, referral to specialist programmes, or family engagement.

**Multi-agency working:** Barnardo's will liaise with local authority children's social care and police where racial violence may constitute a crime, setting clear thresholds for referrals.

**Community engagement:** Services should work with parents and local communities to build inclusive, anti-racist environments.

## Online Racism and Digital Safety

**Explicit coverage:** Online racist abuse is to be treated as seriously as face-to-face abuse.

**Staff guidance:** Include steps for identifying, reporting, and preserving evidence of racist online abuse (messages, memes, racist content).

**External signposting:** Staff should be supported to use resources such as Report Harmful Content, UK Safer Internet Centre, and Stop Hate UK.

## 16. Suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness, or Perplexing Presentation

### Action: Staff/Volunteers/Managers

If any health professional dealing with a perplexing presentation has concerns that a child may be at risk of fabricated or induced illness, they must record their concerns and speak to a named or designated professional. Further information regarding this issue can be found in Safeguarding Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008).

## 17. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- a. **Duty to report:** From 31 October 2015, there is a mandatory duty for regulated professionals to report cases of FGM in England and Wales. This applies where the victim is under 18 years old (or as an adult protection referral for those over 18 years) and has disclosed FGM directly or the professional has seen something that possibly indicates the girl has been cut and should be reported to the Police and social care department. While there is no equivalent duty in Scotland and Northern Ireland, cases would be reported as a child protection matter.
- b. This is a personal duty, which requires the employee who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred to anyone else. The only exception is if you know that another employee has already made a report. Therefore, there is no requirement to make a second referral.
- c. **Regulated Professions:** The duty only applies to staff that works in a regulated profession e.g. teachers, healthcare profession and social workers. It therefore covers:
  - General Chiropractic Council
  - General Dental Council

- General Medical Council
- General Optic Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Pharmaceutical Council
- Social Work England (whose role include the regulation of social workers in England)
- Social Care Wales
- Nursery and Midwifery Council

If your professional role is not designated under the duty, you must still report the incident as a safeguarding issue.

- d. **When the duty does not apply:** Women over the age of 18 years old.
- e. The duty to report does not apply to cases of disclosure from women over the age of 18. In these instances, you must follow local adult safeguarding procedures or contact your local Safeguarding Lead.
- f. **Disclosure is from someone other than the child:** If other people disclose a possible case of FGM e.g. parent of friend, or you suspect that a child/adult at risk may be at risk of FGM, the duty to report will not apply. However, this remains a safeguarding concern and must include a referral to the local Social Care Department and informing a local Safeguarding Lead.

**i. Receiving A Disclosure or Becoming Aware of a Case of FGM Action:**

**Staff Member**

- a) An employee and/or volunteer may become aware of a case of FGM if they are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or.
- b) Observe physical signs, which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.
- c) They must always speak to their manager about their concerns at the earliest opportunity and certainly the same day they become concerned.
- d) Staff members can also seek advice from the National FGM Centre.

**ii. Making A Report**

- a) A report can be made in writing or orally to the Police and Social Care department. If calling the Police, use the non-emergency no.101. This report must be completed no later than by the close of the following working day. Any reports should be discussed with your line manager in the first instance but should not delay the referral to the Police.

**Staff in non-regulated posts but belong to one of the “professions” in accordance with the “2003 Act”, should familiarise themselves with the mandatory duty to report and they should contact their Region/Nation Safeguarding Lead to make a safeguarding referral.**

- b) You should be prepared to provide the call handler with the following information and explain that you are making a report under the FGM mandatory reporting duty:

<b>Your Details</b>	<b>The Girl's Details</b>
Name	Name
Contact Details (work telephone number and email address)	Age/Date of Birth
Place of work	Address
Details of your organisations designated safeguarding lead	

- c) You should update your Region/Nation Safeguarding Lead of the actions taken and identify whether other safeguarding actions are required, and how these will be taken forward.
- d) Any reporting of an FGM concern should be reported internally, as a Serious Safeguarding Incident using [Safeguarding/Safety Online Reporting Tool \(SORT\) - Inside Barnardo's](#).

**iii. Consequences of A Failure to Report**

- a) If the employee/volunteer does not carry out their duty to report the case of FGM to the Police, this will be treated as a possible breach of their professional duty and may result in a disciplinary action and, where relevant, referral to the governing body for their profession.

**iv. Recording** – Cases involving FGM should be recorded in the relevant case file of the individual concerned in accordance with [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) Advice and Support

Further advice and support can be obtained from: Region/Nation Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Director of Children's Services, the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance and the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Compliance.

**v. Scotland**

- a) Scottish Government considers FGM to be an unacceptable and illegal practice, a form of child abuse, violence against women and a violation of the human rights of women and girls. FGM has been unlawful in Scotland since 1985; there is no mandatory duty to report but if you are worried that a child or young person is at risk of FGM or has had FGM, you must treat as a Child Protection concern and ensure that a Child Protection referral is made in line with the Child Protection procedures and timescales report your concerns to the relevant statutory authority such as Police and/or Social Work.

- b) Links to relevant legislation and the Scotland National Action Plan to prevent and eradicate FGM are given below.

- FGM Scotland's National Action Plan to Prevent and Eradicate Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) 2016-2020
- Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Act 2020

**vi. Northern Ireland**

There is currently no provision for mandatory reporting of FGM, it is viewed as a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls and should, therefore, be dealt with as part of existing child and adult safeguarding structures, policies and procedure in Northern Ireland as governed by Cooperating to Safeguard Children (2024). Relevant information relating to Northern Ireland can be found [here](#).

## **18. Forced marriage or honour-based violence.**

Forced marriage is a crime. It is a form of abuse directed towards a child or vulnerable adult, including adults who are forced into marriage against their free will.

Ignoring the needs of victims should never be an option. Forced marriage affects people from many communities and cultures, so cases should always be addressed using all existing structures, policies and procedures designed to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs, including victims who may be trafficked, enslaved or are victims of domestic abuse, for example, and who are forced to marry someone against their will.

[Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice](#)

[guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK](#) sets out the duties and responsibilities of agencies with the aim of protecting children and adults facing forced marriage. It does not attempt to replicate existing safeguarding guidance but should form part of all the existing child and adult protection structures, policies and procedures. The document highlights specific arrangements that may inadvertently place a victim at risk of harm. These include failure to share information appropriately between agencies, the involvement of families, breaches of confidentiality and all forms of family counselling, mediation, arbitration and reconciliation.

## 19. Preventing Suicide and Managing Self Harm

Barnardo's Preventing Suicide and Managing Self-harm Policy provides an overarching framework and a process for achieving safe interventions at Locality, Service, Business Lines and individual service user level. [Preventing Suicide and Managing Self Harm Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#)

The Policy recognises that:

- Barnardo's is taking a harm reduction approach and that this carries risks.
- Successful work with CYP relies on a robust risk assessment, formulation and management plan and direct work, skilled and confident staff who know when to refer on.
- Suicide and self-harm are two different things.
- Self-harm is not a precursor to suicide. Many people who self-harm may not have suicidal intentions. Most episodes of self-harm do not lead to suicide completion, but the possibility or risk can be present.
- Self-harming behaviour may take place at the service or be brought to the attention of staff having happened elsewhere.
- When working with a disabled child, young person, staff or volunteer, further consideration should be given as suicidal ideation or self-harm may be more complex to identify and support.
- The parents and carers, family members or siblings of children and young people using the service might self-harm and so support for them should be planned and awareness of the impact vicarious trauma.

## 20. Prevent Policy

The **Prevent duty** is the **duty** in the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 on specified authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to **prevent** people from being drawn into terrorism.

- a. Radicalisation is comparable to other forms of exploitation and is therefore considered a safeguarding issue that all staff must be aware of. The process for escalating concerns and procedures regarding how to make a referral to the relevant authorities on this specific matter follow below.
- b. The emphasis is upon supporting vulnerable children, young people, and adults. There is no expectation that Barnardo's will take on a surveillance or enforcement role because of fulfilling our Prevent duty. The Prevent Concern promotes a multi-agency approach, and Barnardo's will continue to work within multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.
- c. A **Prevent Concern** does not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt; it should be based on something that raises concerns, which is assessed by using professional judgement.
- d. **Extremism** - defined as from 14th March 2024 the UK Government announced an updated definition of extremism as "the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance" that aims to "negate or destroy the

fundamental rights and freedoms of others" or "undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights. It also includes those who "intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve" either of those aims.

- e. **The Terrorism and Security Act 2015 defines terrorism** as an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system.
- f. **Radicalisation** is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. Radicalisation should be considered as an 'additional vulnerability' under Working Together 2018. There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.
- g. **Indicators for vulnerability** to radicalisation can be like those for other forms of abuse and may particularly include:
  - Distance from cultural heritage
  - Experience of migration
  - Experience of racism and discrimination
  - Family members or friends associated with extremist groups.
  - Family tensions
  - Sense of isolation and feelings of failure

It is important to note that not all individuals at risk of radicalisation and acts of terrorism are susceptible or vulnerable and they may be acting out of choice.

- h. **Risk Assessments:** The level of risk will vary across different parts of the UK. Multi-agency Safeguarding Children's Boards, Children's Services, Early Years Centres, and Employment Training and Skills practitioners should ensure they are informed of the risks in their areas and work with other agencies in assessing risks where appropriate.

#### i. Making A Report

**Action: An employee/volunteer may have concerns because of:**

- A direct disclosure
  - An observation
  - An expression of concern or complaint made by another person.
- a) If you suspect that a **child/adult at risk is at immediate risk or engaged in the planning or implementing of an act of terrorism**, take the following course of action immediately:
    - Contact your line manager and consider referral to Police on 999 or Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.
    - Contact the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance or if unavailable the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Compliance, informing them of the actions taken.
    - All actions must be recorded. For further details contact your region/nation Safeguarding Lead.
  - b) If you suspect that a **child/adult at risk may be under the influence of radicalisation or extremism but not in immediate danger**, the following actions must be taken:
    - Raise your concern directly with your line manager in the first instance; informing them of the nature of your concerns.
    - Contact the Police on number 101 to discuss the next steps, requesting to speak to officers with the responsibility in relation to Prevent duties.
    - Contact the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance informing them of

the actions taken.

- c) Clarify with the Police or Anti-Terrorism hotline the next steps and whether/how feedback will be provided.

**Action: Line Manager**

Ensure any reported Prevent Concerns are managed in accordance with these procedures and where necessary escalated to the relevant authorities. [Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland](#) [FP Radicalisation and Extremism Policy](#).

## 21. Multi-Agency Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Equivalent Processes

### a. Notification where Barnardo's Has Been Involved in A Case Under Review England

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are commissioned when:

- Abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and.
- The child has died or been seriously harmed.

In advance of the decision to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, a Rapid Review will be undertaken while it is not necessary to report Rapid Reviews internally, local managers must comply with requests for information regarding Rapid Reviews. These Reviews are used to inform decisions about Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews at a local level and in conjunction with the National Panel (see Working Together 2018) for decisions about national or thematic reviews.

#### Scotland

A Child Protection Committee will undertake a Learning Review in the following circumstances:

When a child has died or has sustained significant harm or risk of significant harm as defined in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#) 2023 and there is additional learning to be gained from a Review being held that may inform improvements in the protection of children and young people and one or more of the following apply:

- abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death or the sustaining of or risk of significant harm
- the child is on, or has been on, the Child Protection Register (CPR), or a sibling is or was on the CPR or was a care experienced child (i.e. looked after or receiving aftercare or continuing care from the local authority). This is regardless of whether abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death or sustaining of significant harm, unless it is clear to the Child Protection Committee that the child having been on the CPR or being care experienced has no bearing on the case
- the child's death is by suicide, alleged murder, culpable homicide, reckless conduct, or act of violence

Learning Reviews may also be undertaken where effective working has taken place, and outstanding positive learning can be gained to improve practice in promoting the protection of children and young people.

This criterion does not preclude a CPC reviewing the death of a child pre-birth.

#### Equal Protection

The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 provides children and young people with the same legal protection from assault as adults, particularly by a parent or person in charge of them. The Act does not introduce a new offence; it

simply removes the previous defence of 'reasonable chastisement' or 'justifiable assault' available to parents or carers in the management of the child's behaviour. The boundaries of how to define this has always been problematic because physical chastisement or discipline of a child was deemed 'reasonable chastisement' and acceptable, so long as it did not involve excessive force, hitting or smacking the child on the head or the use of an implement.

The Act means that all forms of physical chastisement, physical punishment and/or physical discipline of children and young people are now against the law in Scotland. [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#) and [Care Inspectorate](#)

## **Wales**

The criteria for child practice reviews are laid down in the Safeguarding Boards (Functions and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2015.

A Board must undertake a concise child practice review in any of the following cases where, within the Board, abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and the child has:

- died; or
- sustained potentially life-threatening injury; or
- sustained serious and permanent impairment of health or development; and
- the child was neither on the child protection register nor a looked after child on any date during the 6 months preceding –
- the date of the event referred to above; or
- the date on which a local authority or relevant partner identifies that a child has sustained serious and permanent impairment of health and development.

A Board must undertake an extended child practice review in any of the following cases where, within the Board, abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and the child has:

- died; or sustained potentially life-threatening injury.
- or sustained serious and permanent impairment of health or development.
- and the child was on the child protection register and/or was a looked after child (including a person who has turned 18 but was a looked after child) on any date during the 6 months preceding – the date of the event referred to above.
- or the date on which a local authority or relevant partner identifies that a child has sustained serious and permanent impairment of health and development. ([link to guidance](#))

The Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) is a single review process incorporating all reviews in Wales. This ensures affected families can expect a swift and rigorous review process. The SUSR eliminates the need for families to take part in several reviews. This will reduce the trauma and allow learning to be identified and acted upon sooner. [Single Unified Safeguarding Review | GOV.WALES](#) The criteria for conducting an SUSR needs to meet one of the following:

- Adult Practice Review
- Child Practice Review
- Domestic Homicide Review
- Mental Health Homicide Review
- Offensive Weapons Homicide Review

### **Northern Ireland**

A Case Management Review is carried out when a child has died or has been significantly harmed, and one of the following applies:

- Abuse or neglect of the child is known or suspected.
- The child or a sibling is or was on the child protection register.
- The child or a sibling is or was a looked after child; and
- The Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland has concerns about involvement of a member organisation in the child's case.

#### **Action: Responsible Manager**

- i. As soon as a formal notification is received that a child has died or has been seriously injured (or before if directed by senior management), the child's file and that of any immediate family with whom the service is, or may have been, working with must be secured – it is not necessary to “seal” the file but steps must be taken to ensure no unauthorised access to the file and/or retrospective amendments are made
- ii. Manual/paper files, if held, must also be secured
- iii. On receiving notification any of the above Reviews, the responsible manager must notify the Assistant Director, Safeguarding Lead and Region/Nation/Business Line Director within 24 hrs.
- iv. Staff involved with the child/family must be supported and reminded of the support available from Barnardo's Employee Assistance Programme.

#### **Action: Assistant Director Children's Services**

- i. Alert the local Media Manager as the case may generate local publicity.
- ii. Notify Barnardo's Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance to ensure they are aware of the involvement request.

#### **Action: Region/Nation Director**

##### **Notify the Executive Director Children's Services Operations who will advise the CEO.**

- i. Identify an Assistant Director (ideally this should not be the line manager Assistant Director) to undertake a 'rapid review risk assessment' of all related case files, which must include:
  - a) A chronology of Barnardo's involvement with the child/ family.
  - b) Any potential internal disciplinary issues (you must liaise with People Team if this applies).
  - c) Any concerns about internal or multi-agency procedures, which may need immediate consideration.
- ii. If the notification indicates the likelihood that a case might have generated significant public interest or if there are implications for national policy objectives or corporate risk, consideration will be given to informing the Company Secretary and by discussion with the Executive Director Children's Services or relevant others if the case is potentially high profile.
- iii. Barnardo's media response **must** be coordinated in conjunction with the relevant Local Authority media team.
- iv. Via the Company Secretary, Barnardo's Insurers must be notified about cases if there is a risk of a claim against Barnardo's for liability.

#### **b. Implementing Recommendations**

##### **Action: Region/Nation Director**

The Region/Nation Director must ensure the implementation of all the actions agreed with the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance on a quarterly basis.

### **c. Post Report**

#### **Action: Responsible Senior Manager**

- i. The Assistant Director and Region/Nation Director must decide how feedback is given to those staff members/teams implicated in any reports.
- ii. Consideration should be given to the author/s of the report conducting the briefing.
- iii. The Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance will undertake an annual analysis of any learning

### **d. Multi-Agency Case Reviews or Other Reviews**

#### **Action: Assistant Director / Director**

- i. Any requests to be involved in a review must be considered by the Director in consultation with the Safeguarding Lead and the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance as required.
- ii. Where Barnardo's has had active involvement with the child/family subject of the review then a suitably experienced/trained/accredited member of the organisation should be a member of the 'review team' informed by the rapid review and chronology (see above).
- iii. Ensure that all staff invited to take part are clear about confidentiality, scope of the review and their role in it. Staff and managers directly involved in the case will/ may be required to form part of the 'Case or Review Group'.
- iv. As these reviews are non-statutory, appropriate advice regarding Data Protection can be gained from the Assistant Director (Information Governance and Data Protection).
- v. All staff must be supported to take part in case/review meetings and conversations.
- vi. The final report and any learning or action arising from it must be shared with the Region/Nation Director, Safeguarding Lead and Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Compliance.
- vii. Suitable experienced/trained/accredited Barnardo's staff may be required to conduct internal systems reviews where Directors consider it appropriate/ beneficial to the organisation.
- viii. In Wales, a Child Practice Review panel will be established to manage the review process, and an internal reviewer should be part of the panel where a Barnardo's service has supported the child within the CPR timeframe. Where a Barnardo's service is involved, an Assistant Director from another locality would be the most appropriate panel member. Local services may be asked to provide an agency timeline/chronology of significant events. A learning event may be held, which the worker and manager may be required to attend. A CPR report will be prepared by the Review Panel, and the safeguarding lead should ensure that this is communicated to the safeguarding adviser for internal use.
- ix. Family Placement - FP safeguarding file reviews detail in FP Internal Safeguarding Case File Review. Where there are grounds for concern about the capacity of carers to safely and consistently meet the needs of children and young people. The circumstances where it is necessary to undertake an internal review of all the information that Barnardo's hold on a foster caring household to inform decision making about continuing registration include the following –
  - Where a serious allegation has been made against the carers.
  - Where there have been unplanned endings to placements which have been instigated by the carers against the recommendation of Barnardo's and/or where Barnardo's and/or the Local Authority/Trust have ended the placement due to concerns.
  - Where there have been several low-level concerns over a period and there is evidence that this has adversely impacted on the care of children and young people.

- Where there is a difference of opinion between Barnardo's and the LA / Trust about the quality of care provided by the carers and the concerns raised if upheld would evidence lack of care of the child or young person in placement.
- [Fostering; Standards of Care Policy](#)
- [Fostering; Standards of Care Policy \(Scotland\)](#)

**e. Media Strategy**

**Action: Region/Nation Head Office Media Team**

- i. Barnardo's media response must be coordinated in conjunction with Local Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements Group in England/Child Protection Committee (CPC) media strategy to avoid contradiction and misunderstanding. It is usual for the Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements Group in England/CPC to co-ordinate any media strategy.
- ii. Barnardo's Region/Nation Media Teams must liaise with the relevant R/N Director and the Barnardo's Head Office (HO) Media Team before releasing any public statements about the review.
- iii. Barnardo's Head Office Media Team will liaise with the Executive Director Children's Services – Operations, as appropriate.

## 22. Events and Celebrity Supporters VIP Visits

**Protocol to follow for the attendance of children and young people at Barnardo's events and celebrity VIP visits to services / school / shops / offices / fundraising events.**

At Barnardo's, we'll sometimes work with celebrities and social media influencers, who can help to reach and inspire Barnardo's target audiences to support the charity through their media attention and following on social media platforms.

However, it is important that we carry out thorough due diligence to ensure that the celebrity supporters and influencers we work with align with our values and do not pose a risk to children's safety or to the reputation of the charity, which would ultimately affect our funding and support.

Read our [Working with Celebrities and Social Media Influencers Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) to understand our approach.

### Safeguarding Arrangements

The following safeguarding arrangements for sites with children and vulnerable adults must be in place in line with recommendations from the Lampard Report (2015):

- i. Visits are to be agreed on and arranged in advance, with the purpose for the visit clearly understood by all involved parties.
- ii. Contact with service users will be agreed with the service users and their representatives in advance.
- iii. The VIP or celebrity will be always accompanied by a suitably senior colleague during their visit.
- iv. Confidential information will not be disclosed to the VIP or celebrity.
- v. Informal follow-up arrangements will not be made with the VIP or celebrity.

There is a Children's Services protocol and checklist for the attendance of children and young people at Barnardo's events and celebrity VIP visits to services/schools. This process

**must** be followed on **every** occasion where children, young people and vulnerable adults attend events and when a Celebrity/VIP visits, even if they have visited before. This is to ensure that:

- there is no risk to the safety of children and adults arising from the visit.
- staff and visitors are aware of their responsibilities.
- systems are in place to effectively manage risks.
- the hosting organisation, if not Barnardo's, meets its safeguarding responsibilities.
- any issues arising from the event are recorded and learning shared.

### **Protocol and Checklist**

There is a Children's Services protocol and checklist for the attendance of children and young people at Barnardo's events and celebrity VIP visits to services/schools. This process must be followed on every occasion where children, young people and vulnerable adults attend events and when a Celebrity/VIP visits, even if they have visited before.

#### **Brief and risk assessment.**

A brief must be used in conjunction with the risk assessment. The brief would normally be conducted by the event team.

#### **Briefing for the VIP/Celebrity – Safeguarding:**

As a charity, we work with the most disadvantaged children and young people in the UK; many of whom have experiences of abuse and exploitation. The guidance is to assist and protect our ambassadors and supporters, to maintain our excellent standard of safeguarding for the children, young people, and families with whom you will engage during your work with Barnardo's.

**Should you have any concerns or feel a person is at risk/in a vulnerable situation during your visit please make this known to the VIP Team at the time and as quickly as possible.**

### **23. Information Sharing / Consent**

Everyone's right to confidentiality must be respected. All personal data must be treated with care and kept securely; this means not disclosing it to others unless there is a legal reason to do so, and we have informed the subject that we will do this in the privacy notice, or we have the informed consent of the subject, or their parent or person with legal responsibility for them. Disclosing personal data to unauthorised people could place the subject at risk of harm and may be a breach of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

HM Government advice outlines the importance of sharing information about children, young people and their families in order to safeguard children. This advice focuses on the legal framework and how it supports information sharing for the purposes of safeguarding children from abuse and neglect.

The advice aims to promote and enable improved information sharing, to:

- identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children and young people in a timely and effective way.
- join up "pieces of the jigsaw" for practitioners, so a true picture of what is happening in a child's life can be understood.

- assist children and families to receive support from across local agencies or organisations that meet their needs
- strengthen joined up working between practitioners and agencies or organisations, by removing perceived barriers to information sharing through a collective understanding about when and how information can be lawfully shared in the interests of a child.

More information can be found [here](#)

There are circumstances when we may share personal data without the consent of the subject. The GDPR (article 6.1.d) permits the sharing of personal data without the consent of the data subject to safeguard the data subject, or others from harm. Safeguarding concerns must always be shared with the local authority and may be shared with the police if this is necessary to protect the data subject or others. The data subject, or their parent, should be informed that the data has been shared unless this would place the individuals concerned at further risk.

Staff must share information with other agencies, in a safe and timely manner, where this is necessary for the purpose of safeguarding children and young people in accordance with the law and multi-agency procedures. This may include personal and sensitive information about:

- the child or young person(s) at risk of or experiencing abuse.
- family members
- staff
- members of the public.

Under Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data may also be shared with the police without the consent of the subject to prevent, detect or prosecute a crime. As a voluntary organisation we are not obliged to share data with the police but may choose to do so. The request must be in writing and specify the data required and why this is needed. The manager responsible must weigh up the impact of not sharing the data against the duty of confidentiality that we owe the subject. If we decide not to share the police must obtain a court order to access the data. All requests to share data must be recorded, including whether or not the data was shared and the reason/s for this.

For further information see the Information sharing policy or discuss with the Management Information Officer, Data Protection Manager or the Data Protection Officer.

## **24. Education (England Only)**

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education (England)**

- The Department for Education issued statutory guidance in 2025 - [KSCIE 2025](#) requiring schools and colleges to take due regard when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The guidance defines 'school' meaning all schools whether maintained, non- maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units. 'College' means further education colleges and sixth-form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and relates to their responsibilities towards children under the age of 18.
- The statutory guidance should be read and followed by:
  - Governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools) and

- colleges.
- Proprietors of independent schools (including academies and free schools), alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools.
  - Management committees of pupil referral units.
  - The above persons should ensure that all staff in their school or college read at least Part One of this guidance.
  - Any Barnardo's Service providing educational provision as determined by this guidance must ensure that [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)-Statutory Guidance is read and understood by staff in accordance with their role and responsibility.

### Key Requirements

- **Every member of staff** must read and understand their responsibilities as described in part 1. In addition.
- **All staff with direct contact with children** must also read annex A
- **Principals and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)** must read the full guidance, and DSL's must ensure that annex B is part of their job description.
- **School Governors** must read at least parts 2 and 3.
- **The nominated Governor for Safeguarding** must read the full guidance.
- **Anyone involved in recruitment and/or the Single Central Record** must read part 3 and annexes F and G
- **Human Resources Staff** must read the full document but concentrate on parts 3 and 4, and annexes F and G.
- **Work related coordinators** must read part 3 and annex F.
- **Staff involved in admissions or maintenance of the school roll** must read annex A
- **Classroom based roles and Information Technology staff (on site)** must read annex C.

Each Barnardo's service providing educational provision as part of this guidance must ensure it has appropriate local arrangements to evidence that the above requirements are complied with.

### 23. Appropriate Touch

All Staff and volunteers must ensure that any physical contact with children and young people is in line with their service policy and training. If staff or volunteers are unsure, then they must not use physical touch in their interaction with the child or young person. Caring gestures can include physical touch such as a 'side hug' or touch on the arm of shoulder to reassure however can be non-physical i.e. communicating we care verbally. Staff and volunteers must be aware that some caring gestures can trigger children or young people and could escalate a child or young person into crisis.

If staff or volunteers are unsure about what is appropriate touch they should seek advice from their line manager, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff and volunteers must not engage in intimate touch with any children or young people unless providing personal care as appropriate.

Inappropriate touch can include:

- Hugging a child young people face to face (unless child initiated with a young child seeking comfort)
- Stroking a child or young person
- Touching any intimate areas of the body (unless providing personal care)
- Kissing
- Touching a child or young person underneath their clothing (unless providing

personal care)

The above list is not exhaustive and is intended to give examples of inappropriate touch. Further guidance for Residential Care and Short Break Services, in respect of Relationships and Physical Contact with Children can be found here:

 [Relationships and Physical Contact with Children Guidance.docx](#)

The [Positive Interventions Policy - Inside Barnardo's](#) - The purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidance for staff and volunteers to effectively support children, young people, and vulnerable adults, with strategies designed to help promote positive interventions.

## 24. Associated Legislation, Guidance, References and Documents

Due to differences in definitions and terminology used across the four nations, a clear and consistent understanding of the different concepts and terminology is essential. Staff and volunteers are required to refer to Appendix 1, which offers broad definitions of key terms, but they should also access the statutory guidance relevant to their nation, which is listed below:

England (updated July 2022): [Working together to safeguard children 2023:statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Northern Ireland:

[Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Procedures Manual](#), May 2023.

[Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland](#)2024

Wales:

[Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)

[Wales Safeguarding procedures \(application and Web based\)](#)

[Children \(Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment\) \(Wales\) Act 2020](#)

Scotland:

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland updated-2023/](#) for further clarification, as necessary and in accordance with their job role/departmental focus.

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024** contains a 'compatibility duty' which makes it unlawful for public authorities to act incompatibly with the UNCRC requirements. This duty also applies to organisations, like Barnardo's who carry out functions on behalf of a public authority.

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024](#)

The following are all sources of guidance that have informed the Policy and Procedures; please note this list is not exhaustive:

- The Children Acts ([1989](#)); ([2004](#))
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child \(1989\)](#)
- [Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order, 1995](#)
- [Education Act \(2002\)](#)
- [Wales Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [Children \(Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment\) \(Wales\) Act](#)
- [2020Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

- [Children’s Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
- [Prevent Strategy 2015](#)
- [Strategy for Dealing with Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Issues in Charities, Charity Commission \(2012\)](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage \(England\) \(2017\)](#)
- [The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2014\)](#)
- [Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- [The Serious Crimes Act 2015](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Sir Robert Francis' Freedom to Speak Up review](#)
- [Safeguarding Board Functions and Procedures \(Wales\) regulations 2015](#)
- [Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure - Inside Barnardo’s](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy - Inside Barnardo’s](#)
- [Information Sharing Policy - Inside Barnardo’s](#)
- [Children's Services Recording Policy - Inside Barnardo’s](#)
- [Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [Safeguarding Board Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2011](#)
- [Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017](#)
- [Children \(Equal Protection from Assault\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)

## 25. Compliance and Oversight

The Executive Director and relevant members of the senior management team will monitor compliance with this policy and procedure in line with Barnardo’s Corporate Risk Register, relevant KPIs and other performance measures.

General Compliance:

- Induction
- Supervision
- Performance and Growth Reviews
- Learning C Development Plans
- Case file sampling and file auditing
- Quality Conversation
- Barnardo’s Audit and Assurance Unit
- External Inspectorate

## 26. Version History

Document History	Date	Author	Comments	Approval
V1	02/2016	Kathryn Brown / Sam Monaghan	Final comments from CSMT	Approved

V2	June 2016	Kathryn Brown/Sam Monaghan	Amendments to Definition section	Approved
V3	September-December 2016	Linda Richardson David Beard Sam Monaghan		Approved
V4	February 2018	David Beard	Social Media Guidance Added	Approved
V5	April 2019	Richard Simpson/ David Beard	Revised considering Working Together 2018. Policy fully reflecting our Four Nations presence, etc	Approved
V6	April 2020	Richard Simpson/David Beard		Approved
V7	February 2021	Michelle Dougan	Reviewed to ensure policy is reflective of all four nations. Regional guidance/reporting channels and links updated/added as new legislation enacted.	Approved
V8	February 2022	Michelle Dougan	Reviewed to ensure policy is reflective of all four nations. Barnardo's University replaces BORIS Safecall Whistleblowing platform added. Family Placement Internal Safeguarding Case File Review detail added The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 added	Approved
V9	February 2023	Michelle Dougan	Reviewed to ensure policy is reflective of all four nations. Regional guidance/reporting channels And links updated/ added as new legislation enacted. Children's services policy and non-children's services policy have been merged into one policy and title. Policy reviewed to ensure it reflects equality and recognition of how people identify their gender rather than referring to him/her. Scope of policy now includes Barnardo's Corporate Departments, the Board of Trustees and Volunteers Safe Recruitment and Safe Practice procedures includes retail, Basic Disclosure checks. Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment (Wales) Act 2020 added. For regulated services and Family Placement services, ensure that you inform the relevant inspectorate within designated timeline added. Added appropriate touch advice. Glossary and Definitions Domestic Abuse and Violence have updated NI	Approved

			information and legislation	
V10	October 2024	Michelle Dougan	<p>Reviewed to ensure policy is reflective of all four nations and Family Placement.</p> <p>Regional guidance/reporting channels and links updated/ added as new legislation enacted.</p> <p>Annual review includes the inclusion of NHS compliance in line with The NHS Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF)</p> <p>Additional definition and guidance for Suspected Fabricated or Induced Illness; or Perplexing Presentation</p> <p>Additional clarification definitions for Child or Children/Child</p> <p>Protection/ Abuse/Significant harm/ Concerns/Parent/Multi-agency procedures</p> <p>Revised criteria for Reporting Serious Safeguarding Incidents</p> <p>Organisational accountability and culture of hearing voices of CYP</p> <p>Reference to the Positive Intervention Policy and link</p> <p>Reference to Preventing Suicide and Managing Self Harm Policy and link.</p> <p>Updated definition of extremism added.</p> <p>Link and further information regarding the new HM Government advice for information sharing 2024 added.</p>	Approved
V10	August 2025	Michelle Dougan	<p>Updated links to latest legislation.</p> <p>All links in document edited to reflect new internal intranet changes.</p> <p>The policy has been viewed and edited through an anti-racism lens and adapted to reflect changes throughout.</p> <p>Terminology changed workers/employees to colleagues.</p> <p>Head of Corporate Safeguarding &amp; Compliance replaces Head of Corporate Safeguarding &amp; Quality.</p> <p>As an organisation we are committed to participating in a multi-agency approach to all safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>Professional curiosity added from KSCIE 2025</p> <p>Definition of Mental Capacity 'Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines' added.</p> <p>Contextual Safeguarding definition and link added.</p> <p>Link to Barnardos website and polices added for external use.</p> <p>New disclosure check timeline added for Scotland.</p> <p>Governance and Accountability title added.</p> <p>Audit and Assurance Definition changed as advised by A&amp;A team.</p> <p>People relations team link and Resolution Policy links added to reflect changes to terminology and policy.</p>	Pending


			<p>The key principles for understanding and acting upon potential safeguarding concerns are Recognize, Respond, Report, and Record added to reflect components of BTC safeguarding training. Reference and Link to SORT (Safeguarding/Safety Online Reporting Tool) added.</p> <p>Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) information added for Wales.</p> <p>Events and Celebrity Supporters VIP Visits considerably condensed and link to policy and procedures added for ease of reference.</p> <p>Compliance and Oversight Performance and Growth Reviews and Quality Conversation added.</p> <p>Contextual safeguarding definition added.</p> <p>Definitions – Online Safety 4th risk added - commerce.</p> <p>Definition and links for Forced marriage or honour-based violence added.</p> <p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 added.</p>	
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## Appendix 1

### Glossary and Definitions

<p><b>Child</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Children Acts 1585 &amp; 2004 and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995 define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 define a child in relation to the powers &amp; duties of the local authority. Young people between the age of 16 &amp; 18 who are still subject to a compulsory supervision requirement by the Children’s Hearing can be viewed as a child.</i></li> <li>• <i>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) applies to “all human beings under the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Child or Children: Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.</i></p> <p><i>The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection. This is important because young people aged 16 and 17 years with safeguarding needs may be accessing adult services in provider organisations.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst unborn children are not included in the legal definition of children, intervention to ensure their future well-being is encompassed within safeguarding children practice, such as pre-birth planning meetings when there are existing concerns around the welfare of the unborn child.</i></p>
<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p>	<p>In England, safeguarding children and promoting their welfare means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protecting them from maltreatment,</li> <li>• preventing impairment of their health and development, and,</li> <li>• ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.</li> <li>• taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes</li> </ul> <p>In Wales, the Social Services and Well Being Act imposes duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers that require them to work to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support.</p> <p>In Scotland, the term Safeguarding refers to the collective principles and responsibilities of the GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) approach to</p>

	identify and address needs and risks within a framework of the child's entire world and well-being at the earliest opportunity.
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	<p>Contextual safeguarding is the exploitation and abuse of children, young people and adults where exploitation comes from outside the home.</p> <p>Extra-familial harm is defined as risks to the welfare of children and young people that arise within the community or peer group, including sexual and criminal exploitation.</p>
<b>Child Protection</b>	<p>Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This action refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. Alongside physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect this includes children affected by domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour-based violence, 'missing' children, young runaways, children exploited by gangs, child sexual exploitation and trafficking. This list is not exhaustive. More information about working with children affected by these issues, including definitions, tools, research and good practice information, is provided in the Barnardo's Online Research and Information Service.</p>
<b>Abuse</b>	<p>A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). An adult or adults, or another child or child may abuse them.</p>
<b>Physical Abuse</b>	<p>A form of abuse which 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.</p>
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	<p>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 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 also occur alone.</p>

<p><b>Sexual Abuse</b></p>	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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.</p>
<p><b>Neglect</b></p>	<p>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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home abandonment).</li> <li>• protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.</li> <li>• ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or</li> <li>• ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domestic Abuse and Violence</b></p>	<p>The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Abuse can encompass, but is not limited to emotional, financial, physical, psychological, or sexual behaviours. From December 2015, coercive or controlling domestic abuse is a crime punishable by up to 5 years in prison, under section 76 of the Serious Crimes Act 2015. This relates to a purposeful pattern of behaviour, which takes place over time, for one individual to exert power, control, or coercion over another.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland Domestic Abuse is defined as Threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.</p> <p>Link to legislation:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>domestic abuse offence guidance -</p> </div>

<p><b>Online Safety</b></p>	<p>The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views.</li> <li>• contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children/ young adults and.</li> <li>• conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm for example making, sending and receiving explicit images or online bullying.</li> <li>• commerce or contract involves situations where children are pressurised or coerced into things like gambling, advertising or phishing to support financial scams.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexting</b></p>	<p>This is the act of sending sexually explicit messages (including text/photos/videos), primarily between mobile phones. The widespread ownership of mobile phones and internet enabled devices amongst young people make this issue a growing concern.</p>
<p><b>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</b></p>	<p>Sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) because of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Faith abuse has been well documented over recent years and staff should be alert to any potential concerns regarding this.</p>
<p><b>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</b></p>	<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a safeguarding issue, illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. There is a mandatory duty for regulated professionals to report cases of FGM in England and Wales. This applies where the victim is under 18 years old and has disclosed FGM directly and should be reported to the Police and social care department.</p> <p>This is a personal duty, which requires the employee who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred to anyone else. The only exception is if you know that another employee has already made a report. Therefore, there is no requirement to make a second referral.</p>
<p><b>Regulated Profession</b></p>	<p>A regulated profession is one, which is governed by a professional organisation or regulatory body to ensure that professionals meet the required standards of practice and competence for that occupation.</p>
<p><b>Prevent Concern</b></p>	<p>Children and young adults can be vulnerable to exposure to or involvement with groups or individuals who advocate intimidation to a political or ideological end. These groups can include those promoting “violence from extreme right-wing or other ethnic or religious organisations” Prevent Strategy (2011). Prevent is part of the Government counter terrorism strategy CONTEST and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent focuses on all forms of terrorism and extreme ideologies and operates in a pre-criminal space, providing support and</p>

	redirection to vulnerable children and adults at risk of being groomed into terrorist activities before any crimes are committed.
<b>Extremism</b>	Defined as from 14th March 2024 - the England Government announced an updated definition of extremism as "the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance" that aims to "negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others" or "undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights. It also includes those who "intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve" either of those aims.
<b>Terrorism</b>	Defined by the Terrorism Act 2000 as: an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system.
<b>Radicalisation</b>	Defined as the process by which children and young people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. Radicalisation should be considered as an 'additional vulnerability' under Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2015). There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.
<b>Trafficking and Modern Slavery</b>	<p>The United Nations defines trafficking in children and adults as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, or abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purposes of exploitation.</p> <p>Modern slavery is a complex crime that takes several different forms. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.</p>
<b>Gang Exploitation</b>	There are several areas in which young people are put at risk by gang activity both through participation in and as victims of gang violence. Safeguarding procedures can provide a key tool for all agencies working with young people to assist them when working together to prevent young people from being drawn into gangs, to support those who have been drawn into the margins of gangs; and to protect those who are at immediate risk of harm either as members or victims of gangs. Gang activity can also be used as the means through which children and young people are sexually exploited and/or trafficked.
<b>County Lines</b>	County Lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or 'deal lines'. It involves child criminal exploitation as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'. County Lines is a

	major, cross cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and missing persons.
<b>Criminal Exploitation</b>	<p>Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs 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. 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 using technology.</p> <p>Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.</p>
<b>Young Carer</b>	A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).
<b>Private Fostering</b>	<p>Private fostering falls within safeguarding as it relates to the legal status, wellbeing and protection of children under 16 years, or under 18 years if disabled, who reside for more than 28 days in the care of someone who is not a parent, close relative or someone with parental responsibility. The duty here is to ensure reporting of these children to the relevant local authorities.</p> <p>In Scotland, private fostering is the term used when a parent/guardian places a child who is under school leaving age (16 years) in the care of someone else, who is not a close relative or officially approved Foster Carer, for a period of more than 28 days.</p>
<b>Allegation</b>	An allegation is information, which comes to light from any source which suggests that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, or had the potential to harm a child or adult at risk. Although there are some differences in how allegations are handled across the four nations, the process for responding to allegations remains the same.
<b>Well, Being under the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales)</b>	<p>Wellbeing under the SSCWB Act means well-being in relation to any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) physical and mental health and emotional well-being.</li> <li>(b) protection from abuse and neglect.</li> <li>(c) education, training and recreation.</li> <li>(d) domestic, family and personal relationships.</li> <li>(e) contribution made to society.</li> <li>(f) securing rights and entitlements.</li> <li>(g) social and economic well-being.</li> <li>(h) suitability of living accommodation.</li> </ul> <p><b>In relation to a child, “well-being” also includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development.</li> </ul>

	<p>(b) “welfare” as that word is interpreted for the purposes of the Children Act 1989.</p> <p><b>In relation to an adult, “well-being” also includes:</b></p> <p>(a) control over day-to-day life. (b) participation in work.</p>
<p><b>Serious Safeguarding Incidents</b></p>	<p>A Serious Safeguarding Incident occurs under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexpected or avoidable death of child/young person/adult at risk in receipt of services from Barnardo’s.</li> <li>• Serious harm to child/young person/adult at risk where a life-threatening outcome required intervention.</li> <li>• Actions of a Service user which caused death or serious injury to a child or adult.</li> <li>• An incident likely to result in adverse media attention and/or potential reputational damage for Barnardo’s.</li> <li>• An incident that is serious enough that it may lead to a Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Review, and/or any case which indicates organised crime or large-scale abuse.</li> <li>• An incident likely to raise concern about professional practice or implications for Barnardo’s policy.</li> <li>• An incident which raises concern about possible radicalisation of any member staff/volunteer/adult/ child/vulnerable adult.</li> <li>• Where a registered provider (residential or early years) is required to close by an external body.</li> </ul>