



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE WIGTON YOUTH STATION

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Wigton Youth Station
16 High Street, Wigton, Cumbria. CA7 9NJ
Tel: 016973 44200
Email: wigtonyouthstation@hotmail.com



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SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is:

To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Wigton Youth Station services, from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.

- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.
- This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Wigton Youth Station, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be contacted immediately with any concern.

Designated Safeguarding Lead-

Kate Jensen

07899 901195

LEGAL & PROCEDURAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is below and available from nspcc.org.uk/learning

- *The Children Act 1989*
- *United convention of the rights of the child 1991*
- *Data Protection Act 1998*
- *Human Rights Act 1998*
- *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
- *Children Act 2004*
- *Safeguarding vulnerable groups Act 2006*
- *Protection of Freedoms Act 2012*
- *Safeguarding Children & Young People: a guide for charities HM Government 2014*
- *Children & Families Act 2014*
- *Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers: HM Government 2015*
- *Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2018*

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the young person/vulnerable adult is paramount.
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This responsibility extends to a 'duty of care' for those adults employed or contracted to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.



- Adults who work with young people are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Adults should work in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of race, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs.
- Staff should continually monitor and review their practice.
- It is the policy of Wigton Youth Station to work in partnership and collaboration to uphold the rights of vulnerable people to protection from harm and exploitation.

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

At all times you should work with children, young people and vulnerable adults in a non-discriminatory way.

All adults, children and young people within Wigton Youth Station have the right to:

- Respect.
- Tolerance.
- Understanding.
- Be listened to.

By following the safeguarding procedures below and ensuring staff work according to our organisation's policies and procedures, Wigton Youth Station is taking reasonable steps to prevent children, young people and vulnerable adults from coming to harm.

SUPPORT

OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Wigton Youth Station will offer all children, young people and vulnerable adults appropriate levels of support and be mindful that they are unique individuals who have different experiences and different needs.

OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Wigton Youth Station will offer support to its employees and volunteers by providing line management support, clear instruction and information in relation to expectations of adult behaviour, training and guidance. We will ensure staff are trained to have an awareness of safeguarding issues and have a clear understanding of these procedures.

RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

The term 'staff' relates to both paid and unpaid adults who work in the name of Wigton Youth Station.

The term 'young person', means a child/young person or young person up the age of 18 years.

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' (Department of Health, 2000).



The term Vulnerable Adult may apply to people at increased risk of abuse or mistreatment due to some of the following factors:

- They may be unaware of their rights
- They may be socially isolated
- They may not know how to complain or who to complain to
- They may have communication difficulties
- They may have difficulties in making some decisions
- They may have low self-esteem
- They may be discriminated against because of age or disability
- They may not have ready access to health care
- They may be dependent on others for their basic care needs
- They may need help with personal care

In Wigton Youth Station this may apply to a colleague, a volunteer or a young person we work with.

ABUSE

The Department of Health is definition of abuse states that:

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

Below are the main categories of abuse -

Physical, emotional, sexual including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), neglect, financial, discriminatory, spiritual abuse. There are other types of abuse which come under the main categories above.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. When a parent or caregiver feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child/young person whom they are looking after, Factitious Illness by proxy also known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse would be involved in all types of ill treatment of a child/young person or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Forcing or enticing a child, young person, or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative



acts. Non-contact activities, such as involving the viewing or the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activity or encouraging children, young people, and vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender, or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.

Types of child sexual exploitation

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time.

When a child is sexually exploited online, they might be persuaded or forced to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- film or stream sexual activities
- have sexual conversations.

Once an abuser has images, video, or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Gangs use sexual exploitation:

- to exert power and control
- for initiation
- to use sexual violence as a weapon.

Children or young people might be invited to parties or gatherings with others their own age or adults and given drugs and alcohol. They may be assaulted and sexually abused by one person or multiple perpetrators. The sexual assaults and abuse can be violent, humiliating and degrading.

Signs of child sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation can be difficult to spot and sometimes mistaken for "normal" teenage behaviour. Knowing the signs can help protect children and help them when they've no one else to turn to.

Signs of Sexual Abuse and Grooming

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- Being frightened of some people, places or situations.
- Bring secretive.
- Sharp changes in mood or character.



- Having money or things they can't or won't explain.
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

Other signs you may notice are:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Staying out late or overnight.
- Having a new group of friends.
- Missing from home or care or stopping going to school or college.
- Hanging out with older people, other vulnerable people or in antisocial groups.
- Involved in a gang.
- Involved in criminal activities like selling drugs or shoplifting.

NEGLECT

The persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs i.e., food, warmth, shelter, clothing, care and protection, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development.

Neglect and poor professional practice may take the form of isolated incidents or may be indicative of pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct. The abuse or mistreatment may be acts of omission (failure to act) or commission (institutional).

Neglect and acts of omission can include:

- Ignoring medical or physical care needs - by not noticing a medical or physical need
- Failing to provide access to health, social, or educational service
- Failing to respond to a valid concern or request
- Withholding the "necessities of life" such as food, fluids, heating, or medication

Institutional abuse (or acts of commission) can include:

- Excessively rigid routines
- Lack of personal possessions
- Changes in accommodation without agreement such as:
 - Suddenly having to share a room
 - Being moved to another room
- Lack of privacy, dignity, or respect

FINANCIAL

May include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure, or misappropriation in connection with wills, property or other financial transactions.

DISCRIMINATORY

Abuse that focuses on culture, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability and mental ill health.



SPRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual abuse is not covered by the statutory definitions but is of concern both within and outside faith communities including the church. Aspects of spiritual abuse can be recognised under the four categories of abuse such as emotional abuse or physical abuse (e.g., forced healing rituals). Within faith communities, harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual harm. If such inappropriate behaviour becomes harmful it should be referred for investigation in cooperation with appropriate statutory agencies. Careful teaching, supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of children should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of harm include the denial of the right of faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God. See also the government guidance Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession, Department for Education and Skills, 2007, and the Welsh Assembly Government, 2007

Causes and Symptoms

Spiritual abuse is likely to happen when:

- One person usually tells others what to do and always expects to be obeyed.
- Someone reacts strongly and personally to be questioned or contradicted.
- Leadership is based on hierarchical authority rather than greater ability.
- Leadership is never shared or handed on.
- Someone expects agreement without having to 'prove their point'.
- Someone frequently prefaces their remarks with things like "The Lord has told me".
- Someone relies on being the 'anointed leader', rather than being a *servant* leader.
- People are afraid to make their disagreements known.
- People would really like to do something else but are afraid of how the person in authority would react.
- People never share their different opinions for fear of being put down.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CUMBRIA SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (CSCP)

This is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how agencies will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within Cumbria.

The statutory agencies represented on the CSCP all have formal responsibilities to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under the Children Act 2004 in addition to their normal statutory duties. Involving the voluntary sector is not only good practice but crucial as it is recognised that a lot of statutory services are outsourced;

WIGTON YOUTH STATION SAFEGUARDING LEAD

DESIGNATED PERSON

Executive Officer – **Kate Jensen** is the designated person for safeguarding. In her absence this responsibility falls to the Nominated Safeguarding Wigton Youth Station Trustee which at present is **Angela Bicknell**.



They are responsible for:

- co-ordinating action within Wigton Youth Station and liaising with Social Care and other agencies over cases of abuse and suspected abuse
- acting as a source of advice within Wigton Youth Station
- ensuring that staff are familiar with the policy and procedures relating to Safeguarding
- coordinating referral of individual cases of suspected abuse
- liaising with agencies about individual cases
- ensuring training on safeguarding within Wigton Youth Station

Where verbal referrals are made to children's services, the referral should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

Where there is uncertainty about making a full referral, advice can still be sought from the 'Safeguarding Hub' without giving the young person's details.

ALL WIGTON YOUTH STATION STAFF

All Wigton Youth Station staff have a responsibility to be vigilant and sensitive and to prioritise the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All adults have a duty to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe and protect them from sexual, physical, emotional, financial, discriminatory or spiritual harm. **Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.**

STAFF SHOULD:

- Understand and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at all times.
- Maintain their awareness of safeguarding issues.
- Understand their responsibilities as part of their role.
- Identify their personal training needs.
- Ensure that appropriate concerns and challenges are made in accordance with Wigton Youth Station procedures.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Ensure they have contact numbers for the designated Safeguarding Lead.

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Safer Recruitment

Whilst most adults seeking to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults do so for positive reasons there are a small minority of people who are unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is necessary to recruit people who can be trusted and have the right skills, qualifications and expertise to prevent bad practice in a range of situations.

- Wigton Youth Station's recruitment processes are influenced by good practice in terms of safeguarding, equality and diversity and the participation of young people.



- In order to ensure the health, welfare and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults, staff must be competent to do the job and suitable.

Competence is a pre-requisite for the position and evidence of relevant experience, training and/or qualifications will be required. If not a pre-requisite, competence may be gained by relevant training.

Wigton Youth Station's paid roles are clearly defined using the JNC matrix regarding roles and responsibilities linked to the current National Occupational Standards for Youth Work. This is reflected in the job description and person specification documents of all posts.

Suitability checks will be made on applicants who apply to work with (and who will have regular access to) children, young people and vulnerable adults including volunteers.

The checks for suitability will entail:

- The completion of an application form.
- Matching the applicant to the job and person specification.
- Robust Interview
- A declaration from the applicant regarding any criminal record.
- Taking up two references.
- Completing an enhanced disclosure check from the Criminal Record Bureau.
- A probationary period.

Where candidates have stated they possess qualifications (including driving), original certificates will be produced and checked to validate the qualification. If original certificates are not available certified copies will be requested.

DBS Checks (Disclosure & Barring Service)

DBS Standard Disclosure

This check is designed for anyone working with children or vulnerable adults in occupations and professions that are excepted from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. These disclosures will show any current or 'spent' convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer. It may also search the Protection of Children Act (POCA) List, Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) List and Information on Section 142 of the Education Act, formerly called List 99.

DBS Enhanced Disclosure

This check is for anyone who is to be involved in regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults. In addition to the level of checks made for a Standard Disclosure, the Enhanced Disclosure will include a check on local police records. Where these records contain additional information that might be relevant to the post applied for, the Chief Police Officer may release this information. An Enhanced Disclosure may include 'approved information'.

All adults who may have unsupervised access to children, young people and vulnerable adults should have an **enhanced DBS** check.



Staff can commence their roles **ONLY IF:**

- All other robust suitability checks have been made and verified.
- They have gone through the local induction process regarding safeguarding (reading and understanding the policy) and have attended or are booked to attend the safeguarding training.
- They do not work unsupervised or alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults until their DBS clearance has been returned.

DBS checks should be completed every three years in accordance with Bichard and Warner recommendations. Any staff member found guilty of a criminal offence; or are under investigation for any offences against children, young people or vulnerable adults must declare this to their Line Manager immediately. In turn the Line Manager must consult with the Safeguarding Lead and a case review will commence immediately in line with the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

TRAINING AND ONGOING SUPPORT

The support process for staff will cover:

- Induction.
- Training and refreshment on Wigton Youth Station's policies and procedures.
- Substantial training covering duty of care, code of conduct legal obligations, signs and symptoms of abuse, handling disclosures and good safeguarding practice which should be revisited every 3 years.
- The opportunity to discuss and share concerns at confidential team meetings and quarterly trustee meetings.
- Training will be relevant to individual roles so that front line staff receive at the minimum level 2 training and the Safeguarding Lead is trained to a higher level at least Level 3.
- Additional training with respect to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults will also be necessary where it is not covered in other courses.

Supervision and Staff Review and Development

Annual staff reviews are important elements in ensuring safe practice. They should:

- Ensure staff are up to date with current safe practices;
- Identify areas for development;
- Openly address any concerns about behaviour and attitudes;
- Put in place action plan and arrangements for review.

DISCIPLINING POOR CONDUCT

Wigton Youth Station has clearly defined procedures for reporting and managing issues surrounding poor and inappropriate conduct – i.e. the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

Definitions of unacceptable behaviour

- Being alone with children and young people, unless this is a necessary part of the job or role description.
- Giving impromptu lifts in own vehicles outside normal working duties.
- Abuse of power and trust – any sexual relationships with young people (consenting or not) – inside and out of work. The 2003 Sexual Offences Act ensures it is a criminal offence for anyone in a position of trust aged 18 or over to engage in sexual activity with a young person under the age of 18. It is a criminal



offence for any adult to display any sexual behaviour toward a child. This includes non-penetrative acts such as causing a child to watch pornography and 'grooming'.

- Establishing social contact and friendship outside of the work setting. This includes communication via texts, social networking and emails.
- Any form of conduct which may be mistaken for being sexually suggestive or provocative.
- Horseplay, tickling or play fights.
- Changing or showering in the same place as young people.
- Sharing bedrooms/tents with young people.
- The use of sarcasm or inappropriate humour which demeans or makes fun of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Managing behaviour through physical punishment.
- Accessing, storing or making indecent images.
- Accessing adult pornography through the use of organisational equipment or bringing personal equipment containing such images into the workplace.
- Permitting abusive peer activities (for example racism, bullying or homophobia).

SUPERVISION RATIOS

Children, young people and vulnerable adults should be adequately supervised in line with Wigton Youth Station's Health and Safety Policy and procedural guidance.

Wigton Youth Station adopts the NSPCC guidelines for supervision of youth groups.

The needs of individual vulnerable adults should be considered during the risk assessment process for every session, venue and activity.

GUEST WORKERS

Guest workers (for example visiting artists) should be expected to read key Wigton Youth Station policies including Safeguarding and Health and Safety and sign a declaration form to say that they have read, understood and will work within such policies and procedures.

- Their details should be recorded on a specific form and retained in a confidential and secure personnel file.
- They should be asked to produce evidence of a recent DBS Disclosure, and if this is not obtainable before the event, they should not work alone at any time.
- If they are to become regular 'partners' then it should be a condition of the partnership agreement that they undertake an enhanced DBS check as a commitment to their own safeguarding code of conduct.

INTEGRATED AND MULTI AGENCY PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Multi-agency thresholds guidance

Cumbria's Safeguarding Children's Board (CSCP) guidance is aimed at people and organisations who work with children, either in professional or voluntary capacity. Hence clearly covers the work that we deliver. The aim of the guidance is to ensure that all people working with children use a common language, have a common approach to meeting children's needs and understand when they should be engaging with other agencies in order to ensure the child's needs are met.



Working Together to Safeguard Children - a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)

This guidance sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and how practitioners should conduct the assessment of children.

This guidance replaces Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010); The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000); and statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (2007).

EARLY HELP ASSESSMENT

Early Help Assessment (EHA) is an assessment process used across all services working with children, young people and families. Early Help is the support that can be provided for a child, young person or family who may have additional needs that cannot be met by universal provision and there is perceived to be no risk of significant harm. An Early Help Assessment can be carried out with any child or young person from pre-birth up to age 18 (up to the age of 25 if the young person has a learning difficulty or disability). It...

- uses a form for recording this assessment in a structured way;
- is a holistic assessment that summarises a child or young person's strengths, needs and key priorities after considering all aspects of his/her development, including health, social development and learning;
- is designed to be shared between services and used as a starting point for planning coordinated multi-agency action, thereby encouraging early help; and
- is a consent-based process – we need the agreement of a parent/carer or of a competent young person/older child before using the EHA.
- Is a cluster of indicators are identified for when a professional needs advice and support from at least one other agency to meet the child's needs;
- is part of the 'Step Up' or 'Step Down' process to Children's Social Care; or
- the child or young person's needs are unclear, or not being met by their current service provision.

REMEMBER: Early Help can be put in place without contact with the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub.

SINGLE CONTACT FORM

All professionals will be expected to complete a single contact form for any contact to the Safeguarding Hub. The online form requires mandatory fields to be completed before you can submit your contact.

Please ensure you have all relevant details to hand before you start to complete the form as the form will time out after one hour of inactivity and any information will be lost.

The single contact form can be found online using the following link:

<https://scformcmb.cumbria.gov.uk/>

REFERRAL AND REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR FRONT LINE STAFF

As soon as possible after a disclosure the staff member should write/type down what was said and any comments that were made as close to the person's own words as possible.



- Any handmade notes should be signed and dated.
- Any concerns staff may have or any direct disclosures that have been made to them, should be immediately passed onto their line manager. It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure the Designated Person or deputy is fully briefed as soon as practically possible, The designated safeguarding lead will take responsibility from that point forward.

The following should be remembered:

- Listen to what the person is saying. Try to understand what is being said without putting your own interpretation on the conversation.
- Do not ask closed questions or interrogate the speaker as this could be interpreted as leading them and could damage any future investigation.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult asks you to promise total confidentiality, you should explain you might not be able to do this, as you may have to pass concerns onto others in order to keep them or someone else safe.
- Ensure any personal feelings of shock or distaste at the situation are not conveyed through your body language.
- All notes should be factual and concise with times and dates recorded. These must include times/dates of when the staff member spoke to the line manager and what was said.

Out of Hours - If a staff member cannot contact senior support and feels the child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then they should contact children's services via the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) 24 hr line (0300 373 2724) and the police on 101 (or 999 if the situation calls for urgent response) immediately. The staff member should ensure they inform the relevant Wigton Youth Station staff first thing the next working day.

In addition, The NSPCC provides a free 24hour child protection help line which provides confidential counselling, information and advice. The telephone number is **0808 800 500**. If using the service, please state at the outset that you are an adult seeking advice and information so that your call can be directed to an appropriate person.

PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING, RECORDING AND REPORTING

At the time

Brief notes at the time or immediately after will help you to complete the incident report form when you are able. You should note:

- Date and time of disclosure/incident observed
- Place and context of disclosure or concern
- Facts you need to report

When you can

Complete an incident report/communication sheet. This should then be passed to your line manager and the designated person.

In the case of there being bruises or observed injuries these must be recorded on the Body Map form.



Remember to keep to factual information and not assumption or interpretation. Use the young person's own language to quote rather than translating into your own terms. Be aware that these sheets may be used at a later date to support a referral to an external agency.

Designated Person

The designated person will:

- Follow-up the referral using the incident report sheet as a basis for consideration before action
- Make additional records of discussions and any investigation that takes place
- Make a decision whether to continue to monitor the situation or take the referral further. This decision should be communicated to the individual making the initial referral
- Where a young person is referred to children's services a referral form should be completed and sent within 24 hours

Recorded information from Children's Services meetings and other reports are stored in separate document wallets next to the young person's records in secure cabinets in the office. Any documents for inclusion in this folder should be given directly to the designated person.

CONTACT NUMBERS

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be contacted immediately with any concern.

Designated Safeguarding Lead-	Kate Jensen	07899 901195
Cumbria Safeguarding Hub-		0333 240 1727
Cumberland LADO-		03003 033892
Cumbria Early Help-		03003 033896

In the unlikely event the Safeguarding Hub telephone number does not work due to fault, please use the following number; 01768895019 (This number should only be used in exceptional circumstances)

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

This is an extremely difficult and sensitive area to address. All allegations should be dealt with according to guidance in the disciplinary policy.

The majority of people who work with children and young people do so from a position of care and concern. However, it is a fact that an extremely small number of people do seek access to children and young people to cause them harm physically, socially or emotionally.

Wigton Youth Station's Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the organisations procedures for dealing with allegations are adhered to. Staff members must report any allegations made against other staff to the



Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours (unless that person is the subject of the allegations in which case it should be reported to the deputy). This will then be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

As outlined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' the LADO must be informed of all allegations against adults who work with children.

The LADO is located within Children and Families Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

The LADO will record all concerns, including allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. They will provide advice and guidance and help determine that the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO is involved in the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case and will provide advice and guidance to Senior Managers on the progress of cases to ensure they are resolved as quickly as possible. In addition, the LADO will help co-ordinate information sharing with the right people. They will also monitor and track any investigation with the expectation that it is resolved as quickly as possible.

Contact details for LADO

Telephone: 03003 033892

Email: lado@cumberland.gov.uk

To report a concern to the LADO please use the notification form: LADO - Allegation Notification Form See Appendix (A).

What will happen next?

The LADO will take information and provide advice as to what should be done next. He /she will advise if the police or children's social care need to be involved and make sure this happens. The LADO will record all concerns, including allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. They will provide advice and guidance and help determine that the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO is involved in the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case and will provide advice and guidance to Senior Managers on the progress of cases to ensure they are resolved as quickly as possible. In addition, the LADO will help co-ordinate information sharing with the right people. They will also monitor and track any investigation with the expectation that it is resolved as quickly as possible.

Informing Parents/Guardians

The LADO will give advice as to the process and timing regarding the sharing of information with the parent/guardian and the member of staff against whom the allegation is made through the Safeguarding Lead. The child's parents /guardian should normally be informed at the earliest possible stage by the Safeguarding Lead that an allegation has been made and informed of the action taken to date.



They should be advised not to discuss the allegation directly with the staff member concerned in order not to prejudice any subsequent and criminal or disciplinary investigation.

Informing the Staff Member of the Allegation The Safeguarding Lead (after consultation with the LADO) will inform the staff member against whom the allegation has been made at the earliest possible opportunity. Where a referral has been made to Children's Services and/or the Police these agencies will advise what information can be shared and when.

It is acknowledged that this process is likely to be stressful for the staff member who will be advised as to possible avenues of support via their union, professional association or other relevant independent agencies. The staff member will be kept advised as to the process of the investigation as far as possible.

Support to Children/Young People Who Have Made Allegations of Abuse

The allegation should not be discussed further with the child if it has been established following initial discussions by staff that the threshold for referral has been met as this will be then taken over by Social Services. However, Wigton Youth Station staff must consider the need for support for the child who may have suffered abuse by a member of staff at every stage of the subsequent process.

Potential Outcomes

A strategy meeting may be held with relevant attendees including the Safeguarding Lead, the LADO, Children's Social Care and the Police. If it is agreed that the threshold for further action by police and/ children's social care is met then the strategy meeting will also advise on whether there are grounds to consider suspension or restricted duties taking into account the seriousness of the allegation and the circumstances surrounding it.

It is acknowledged that this decision rests with Wigton Youth Station and will be made by the trustees on the advice of the Safeguarding Lead and the LADO. Suspension or placing a staff member on restricted duties will not be an automatic step but may be considered in any case where there is cause to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, the allegation warrants investigation by the police or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

If it is agreed that the thresholds for further action by the Police and Children's Social Care are not met, but the incident raises concerns about possible inappropriate action by the responsible staff member then the matter will be taken forward within Wigton Youth Station's procedures regarding conduct and discipline.

Support to Staff on Return to Work

If it is decided that the person who is suspended can return the Safeguarding Lead will work with the line manager to consider how best to facilitate this to reflect that the staff member will benefit from some kind of help and support to return to work after a very stressful experience. A phased return to work and/or provision of a mentor in the short term may be appropriate. It will also be considered how the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation will be managed.

Record Keeping

The Safeguarding Lead must keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how they were followed up and resolved and any action taken and decisions reached. They should be kept in a



confidential personnel file and a copy given to the individual. This information should be kept on file, including for people who leave the organisation at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for ten years if that will be longer.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information in relation to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in future cases where a future DBS Disclosure reveals information from the police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or conviction and will prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, allegations resurface after a period of time.

Review

At the conclusion of the case in which an allegation is substantiated Wigton Youth Station will review the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made in the organisational procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

WHISTLE BLOWING

In order to meet the terms of the 1998 Public Interest Disclosure Act Wigton Youth Station is committed to the following in terms of 'whistle blowing':

Staff should be able to voice concerns made in good faith, without repercussion. This will be ensured by professional handling of all cases of allegation in accordance to other Wigton Youth Station's policies and procedures ranging from disciplinary and grievance to confidentiality. Staff should be very clear of their responsibility to highlight issues that may put young people at risk. Staff have a duty to whistle blow on of any behaviour towards children or young people which is abusive, inappropriate or unprofessional. This includes:

- Conduct which is a breach of the law;
- Conduct which compromises health and safety;
- Conduct which falls below established standards of practice with children and young people.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT

Children and young people under the age of 16 years are entitled to the same duty of confidence as adults if it appears they have the ability to understand choices and their consequences.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework to empower and protect vulnerable adults who are not able to make their own decisions. The Act is underpinned by the following key principles which all have a bearing on decision making in adult protection cases:

1. A presumption of capacity - every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise.
2. The right for individuals to be supported to make their own decisions - people must be given all appropriate help before anyone concludes that they cannot make their own decisions.
3. That individuals must retain the right to make what might be seen as eccentric or unwise decisions.
4. Best interests – anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests.
5. Least restrictive intervention- anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.



However, there are certain situations where it is not in the best interest of a child, young person or vulnerable adult to maintain confidentiality.

The law permits the disclosure of confidential information to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults if the person to whom a duty of confidence is owed has the mental capacity to give consent and in fact consents to the disclosure.

Wigton Youth Station expects that any issue related to a member of staff by a child/young person under the age of 16 years which indicates there is a safeguarding issue must be shared with the Designated Person who will take the matter forward.

Wherever possible, Wigton Youth Station staff should aim to seek consent before disclosing confidential information.

CONFIDENTIALITY WHEN SHARING INFORMATION

If a staff member shares information with appropriate personnel (Safeguarding Lead, Designated Person, Children's Services/Police) in good faith they are exempt from civil action as long as they maintain high levels of confidentiality.

Where there are concerns about a child/young person, this information should be a proportionate response to the need to protect the individual and only be shared on a "need to know" basis and should not be widely shared with other colleagues or members of the management Committee for example.

If the person's identity does not need to be disclosed then the information should be used anonymously.

If in doubt check with a senior member of staff before sharing any information.

CONFIDENTIALITY WHEN RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION

- Wigton Youth Station's Data Protection and GDPR POLICY gives clear guidance on the recording and storing of sensitive information. General records kept by Wigton Youth Station staff and projects include:
- Name, address, doctor, phone number and details of parent/guardians/carers and/or emergency contact numbers. Medical details form with parental/guardian consent if under 18.
- Attendance records of youth work sessions. Young people and or parent/guardian can see these details if requested.
- It is important to store any safeguarding information in a separate secure place away from general records, in a place accessible only to nominated personnel.



CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS WHO DISPLAY SEXUALLY INAPPROPRIATE OR SEXUALLY AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOURS

On occasions there may be a child, young person or vulnerable adult who you become aware is dealing with their peers in a sexually inappropriate or sexually aggressive manner.

There are several reasons for such behaviour. It can be distressing to other young people and to staff.

An immediate response is to make it clear to them that such behaviour is not acceptable and should stop immediately. As this area of work may require specialist advice and guidance the Designated Safeguarding lead should be informed. The Designated Person should then discuss the situation with other professionals if appropriate to determine the best course of action.

HANDLING INFATUATIONS

It is not uncommon for young people to develop attachments with positive and supportive role models and youth workers are no exception. Young people may develop heterosexual or homosexual infatuations with staff and the situation needs to be handled effectively and sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned.

Wigton Youth Station staff should be aware that in these situations words or gestures may be misinterpreted and as such they are more open to allegations. In this situation staff should:

- Record and report any incidents or indications immediately (to the manager or colleague).
- Acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

USING TECHNOLOGY WITHIN WORK OR FOR COMMUNICATING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS

- Any communication between staff and children, young people and vulnerable adults should remain within professional boundaries.
- Staff should never use or give out their personal contact details.
- Personal subject matter should be avoided.
- Any photographs taken should always be on permitted work equipment.
- Workers should not take photographs or film without consent from young people or vulnerable adults and their parents/guardians or carers
- Young people and vulnerable adults should be aware they are being photographed or filmed and the reasons why.
- Text messaging is not an appropriate way to respond to a young person in crisis or risk of harm.
- Staff should be aware of developments in technology and the impact that may have on their sessions or the people they work with for both cultural and safety reasons.

Inappropriate texts, photos or emails should not be deleted and must be kept as evidence. It should be reported to a colleague or manager immediately; if this is not possible a professional note or record should be made and shown to a colleague at the earliest opportunity. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will log all such incidents and take action as necessary.



WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE

Fundamentally youth work is about empowering young people, encouraging them to participate, take responsibility and make informed decisions.

Wigton Youth Station staff work with young people in line with a curriculum framework based on the National Youth Agency (NYA) Youthwork curriculum.

WORKING WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS TO KEEP THEMSELVES SAFE

Wigton Youth Station will ensure that vulnerable adults receive accessible and available information about protecting themselves and will initiate an individual support plan that may include personal risk assessments and additional support in order to participate fully and safely in Wigton Youth Station activities.

Date Policy Reviewed- 31/10/2023

Next Review Date- 31/10/2024

Signed by Chair of Trustees Brian Warren: _____



Appendix 1

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Allegations Notification Form

Please Note: a separate form must be completed for each incident.

If an incident concerns more than one young person each young person must be named on the form.

A Information about the person against whom the allegation has been made

Name: Adult / Child:

Date of Birth: Sex M/F: Job Title:

Ethnicity:

Last Date of Criminal Records Bureau (DBS): Disclosure No:

Home address of person:

Are there any children resident at the person's home address?

If yes, please give name(s) and date(s) of birth:

Does the person have any other contact with vulnerable individuals (child / adult), please name:

Name of person's employer / Business Name (include school name if applicable):

Name of Senior Manager / Person dealing with the allegation:

Email Address:

Telephone No:

Have any allegations or concerns been made against this person previously?

Details of previous concerns:

B Information about any child identified

Name: Date of Birth:



Sex M/F: Address where the child is residing:

Ethnicity:

Is the child looked after: Is the child subject to a Child Protection Plan:

Category of Child Protection Plan:

Child's Social Worker: Contact number:

Child's Current Carer: Contact number:

Relationship to Child:

Other relevant information about the child:

Is more than one young person involved, or is a child at risk now: How many:

List Name(s) and Date of Birth(s):

C Information about the allegation or concern

Primary Category of Abuse:

Nature of Allegation or Concern: Occurred during or following authorised intervention or physical restraint

Involves use of mobile phone / internet / email / social networking site

Brief description of allegation or concern:

Date of alleged incident:

Where did the alleged incident take place:



Were there any witnesses? If so, please give details:

Who made the allegation:

Actions taken (refer to LSCB Chapter 7 Guidance):

Reason for Action:

Date concern raised with agency making referral:

Name and job title of person who raised allegation or concern with agency:

D Details of person completing this form

Name:

Email:

Address:

Job Title:

Telephone No:

Date:



Wigton Youth Station

Scan of signed copy



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Signed by Chair of Trustees Brian Warren;