







Policy for Safeguarding - **Incorporating Child Protection at Your Emotional Support Service (YESS)**

Your Emotional Support Service
www.yess.uk

This policy is available on our website and is available on request from the YESS office. We inform parents, and carers about this policy when their child is seen at YESS. We also inform older clients about this policy.

The policy is provided to all staff and Trustees (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction and re-issued at each policy review thereafter.

This policy has been adopted September 2026 after review by members of the Charity Lead and the Clinical & Safeguarding Lead. It is due for review September 2027.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Your Emotional Support Service (YESS), including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)
Name: Samantha Miles
Email Address: samantha.miles@yes-s.org.uk
Telephone Number: 01889 567756/07763 225412
Name: Tammy Lowe
Email Address: tammy.lowe@yes-s.org.uk
Telephone Number: 01889 5677556/07794 473442

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)
Name: Megan Morris
Email Address: megan.morris@yess.uk
Telephone Number: 01889 567756/07907 360238

External Safeguarding Consultant
Email Address: julie.bird@yes-s.org.uk
Telephone Number: 07791 892163

Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST): Katie Stanley
Email Address:katie.stanley@yess.uk
Telephone Number: 01889 567756

Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door Service
0300 111 8033
(Monday-Thursday 8:30am-5pm and Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm)

Emergency Duty Service (outside of office hours)
Tel No. 0345 604 2886

Police
Emergency – 999
Non-emergency – 101

NSPCC Helpline
0808 800 5000

REPORTING A CONCERN

If you are not sure whether you should raise a safeguarding concern, you should seek advice.

If you have become aware of concerns through the course of your work, seek advice from the Safeguarding Team, who are Designated Safeguarding Leads Samantha Miles (Charity Lead) and Tammy Lowe (Clinical & Safeguarding Lead) and Deputy Safeguarding Lead Megan Morris.

From 21st July there will be changes to the routes you use to contact the Integrated Front Door:

Contacting the Integrated Front Door to Report a concern for a child

If you believe a child to be at risk of immediate harm:

This must be reported to the Police on 999.

Once you have reported to the Police, please contact Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (IFD) urgently :

- **Call 0300 111 8033 during office hours (Monday-Thursday 8:30am-5pm and Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm)**
- **Call 0345 604 2886 out of hours to speak to the Emergency Duty Service**

To report a non-urgent concern or request support for children & families:

Parents, carers, and members of the public can contact Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door

- **Call 0300 111 8033 during office hours (Monday-Thursday 8:30am-5pm and Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm)**

OR

- **Fill in the online referral form (copy the below link into your browser)**

https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk/web/formdisplay/?FormID=1343&Ref=ZWBNGQ

All non-urgent reports from professionals are submitted via our online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).
(Copy the below link into your browser for the referral form)

https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk/web/formdisplay/?FormID=1343&Ref=ZWBNGQ

This form allows you to share detailed information around your worries and upload any supporting documentation.

BEFORE CONTACTING THE INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR, PROFESSIONALS MUST CONSIDER STAFFORDSHIRE'S RIGHT HELP, RIGHT TIME RESOURCES.

HTTPS://WWW.STAFFSSCP.ORG.UK/RIGHT-HELP-RIGHT-TIME/ (COPY THE LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER)

THIS PROVIDES INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES IN STAFFORDSHIRE, AND AN INTERACTIVE TOOL TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE RIGHT SUPPORT FOR THE NEEDS OF THE FAMILY.

IF YOU HAVE CONSULTED THESE RESOURCES, AND WISH TO ACCESS ADDITIONAL ADVICE ON REFERRAL ROUTES OR OPTIONS

CALL 0300 111 8033 DURING OFFICE HOURS (MONDAY-THURSDAY 8:30AM-5PM AND FRIDAY 8:30AM – 4:30PM)
THERE IS NO OUT OF HOURS SERVICE FOR NON-URGENT ADVICE AND GUIDANCE.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT REFERRALS WILL NOT BE TAKEN FROM PROFESSIONALS VIA THIS ADVICE LINE.
UNLESS THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM, PROFESSIONALS WILL BE ASKED TO SUBMIT A FULL REPORT VIA THE ONLINE MARF:
HTTPS://APPS2.STAFFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK/WEB/FORMDISPLAY/?FORMID=1343&REF=ZWBNGQ
(COPY THE LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER)

Introduction

Your Emotional Support Service (YESS) abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all type of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare.

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 available from https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/.

Purpose

YESS will:

- Protect children and young people who receive YESS's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.
- Commit to developing a robust culture of vigilance.
- Establish a safe environment - in which all clients feel safe and are listened to.
- Prevent unsuitable people - from working at YESS by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability for all staff, volunteers and trustees, and to maintain an active vigilance thereafter.
- Understand that no single professional can have the full picture of a client's needs and circumstances. Everyone who comes into contact with children and adults and their family has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Ensure as an organisation we have a clear understanding of our staff's knowledge and understanding and embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of our organisation.
- Ensure that everyone at YESS has a responsibility to act without delay to protect clients by reporting anything that might suggest an individual is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment.
- Ensure all involved at YESS have a responsibility to report concerns relating to radicalisation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST).

YESS seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for its clients who are vulnerable or in need. All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture and access support for the client at the earliest opportunity. All working and volunteering at YESS maintain a professional attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

Thresholds
YESS refer to and seek guidance from the Threshold Framework held by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

The Threshold Framework 'Accessing the Right Help at the Right Time' is the overarching document for the whole of the children's workforce. This multi-agency threshold framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. The Threshold Framework is available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board website http://staffsscb.org.uk.

The Prevent Duty
Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

- Schools
- Registered childcare providers
- Local authorities
- Police
- Prisons and probation services
- NHS trusts and foundations
- Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. More information available on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board website http://staffsscb.org.uk.

Roles & Responsibilities

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are Samantha Miles (Tel: 07763 225412 email: samantha.miles@yes-s.org.uk) and Tammy Lowe (Tel: 07794 473442 email: tammy.lowe@yes-s.org.uk).
Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Megan Morris (Tel: 07907 360238 email:megan.morris@yess.uk)
Our External Safeguarding Consultant is Julie Bird (Tel: 01889 567756 email: julie.bird@yes-s.org.uk).
Our Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST) is Katie Stanley (Tel: 01889 567756 email: katie.stanley@yess.uk).

• The DSL, DST will undergo appropriate Safeguarding Training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out their role. This training should be updated at least every 2 years, in line with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board requirements. The training should provide the DSL and DPSL with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures, and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care.
• The DSL will advise those who represent YESS at child protection conferences and core group meetings. The DSL will be the expert within YESS to support staff and volunteers in liaising with other agencies and making assessments and referrals. Any staff member may be required to be part of strategy discussions with other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of the child/ren.
• The DSL will support staff that make referrals to the appropriate agency.
• The DSL will refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
• The DSL will refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.
•The DSL will maintain robust systems to monitor and record the training of all staff, and volunteers.
•The DSL will ensure all staff and volunteers have training on how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult, and how to record and report this information accurately.

During the working week Samantha Miles, Tammy Lowe, and Megan Morris are available for staff, volunteers, and trustees to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

- The Trustee Board ensures Safer Recruitment Procedures, which include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance, are followed.
- The Trustee Board has an overview of the training schedule and future training requirements and this is to be updated annually.
- Regular supervision will be offered to the DSL and DST, usually quarterly and may be extended to other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the DSL/DST.

Working with Parents/Carers at YESS

YESS is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

- A copy of our safeguarding policy will be provided to parents on request and is available on our website.
- When necessary, parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to other agencies.
- YESS is committed to working with parents positively, openly, and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity, and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or if it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm. We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless doing so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns YESS has about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral to the appropriate agency in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.
- YESS will only share information about clients with adults who have parental responsibility for a child or where a parent has given permission and YESS has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.
- YESS will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to First Response or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with the parent.

Training and Awareness

At YESS we have a robust Safeguarding training schedule for all staff, which is monitored by the DSL (Samantha Miles: Charity Lead) and Tammy Lowe (Clinical & Safeguarding Lead).

- All clinical staff including volunteers receive a minimum of Level 2 Safeguarding training and receive regular updates through staff meetings, emails etc. to develop and support robust safeguarding practices amongst staff.
- YESS has a clear induction process for all staff, volunteers and trustees, and all required documents and policies are provided both at induction of new staff, volunteers and trustees. These documents include (WT 2023) and this Safeguarding Policy including appendices.
- All staff, volunteers and trustees will be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- YESS is committed to training staff to work with other agencies to provide early help for children and vulnerable adults before they become at risk of harm or require a 'child in need' statutory assessment. 'Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. '(WT 2023)
- All staff are trained to have equal responsibility to report their concerns about a child or the behaviour of any adult without delay to the DSL. Whilst the DSL will normally make referrals to Children's Services, any staff member or volunteer can refer their concerns to The Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door Service if they feel they need to do so.

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board provide safeguarding children training for private and voluntary sectors: Learning Zone - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (sstaffsscb.org.uk).

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

YESS expects all employees, volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding please see privacy policy.

- At all times YESS will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).
- Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for all staff/volunteers and Trustees to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. All should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.
- YESS is aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on us to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information we hold safe and secure.
- YESS ensures that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Consent

Whilst professionals should in general discuss any concerns with the child, their parents/carers and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door Service, this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child or others at increased risk of suffering significant harm.

Consent/agreement is not required for child protection referrals, however, referring professionals would need to where possible discuss with and inform parents or carers that you are making a referral as stated above, unless alerting them could put the child or others at risk.

All staff understand that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff understand that fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. When the DSL is considering whether, or not, to share safeguarding information (especially with other agencies).

Recording & Record Keeping

A written record must be kept about any safeguarding concerns. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with GDPR.

It is considered best practice (and included within professional standards and ethical frameworks) for us to record who we are sharing that information with and for what reason. If we have taken a decision not to seek consent from the client and/or parent/carer that should also be recorded within the safeguarding file.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

There is a duty under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 for YESS to be committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Safer Recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks. Evidence of these checks must be recorded.

YESS has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all trustees, employees and volunteers (please also see recruitment and selection and code of conduct policies).

Use of Social Media, Mobile Phones and Digital Technology

All employees and volunteers should be aware of YESS's use of social media, mobile phones and any digital technology policies and procedures (please see ICT Acceptable use and ICT Procedure Policies) and the code of conduct for safeguarding children on digital platforms. It is unlawful to share images and content on an digital platform without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities.

Escalation

Professionals providing services to children and their families should work co-operatively across all agencies, using their confidence, skills and experiences to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.

On occasions situations may arise where there is professional disagreement in relation to safeguarding a child. Resolution is an integral part of professional collaborative working to safeguard children and this policy seeks to identify how such resolution can be achieved where there are professional differences of opinion.

All professionals have a responsibility to work together and to help to prevent disagreements from escalating where possible. This policy identifies a non-exhaustive list of potential areas of disagreement, guidance on resolving disputes and procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between professionals at front line level.

Whistleblowing

It is important that individuals within YESS have the confidence and support to come forward to speak or act if they have concerns that have not been addressed by the escalation process. Additional knowledge, advice and guidance must be sought from designated safeguarding leads at all times.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong-doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by YESS to protect whistleblowers. (Please also refer to the whistleblowing policy).

Further information on ‘Allegations of abuse made against a person working with children can be found on the SSCB website.

Managing Allegation Against Staff and Volunteers

The Trustee Board at YESS ensures there are procedures in place to manage allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers.

Our aim at YESS is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and best outcomes for all clients at YESS. We do, however, recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

As indicated under ‘Safer Recruitment and Selection’ we will take all possible steps to safeguard our clients by ensuring that the adults at YESS are safe to work with children and vulnerable adults. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Protocol: Managing Allegations of abuse Against Persons who work with Children and role of The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) are adhered to.

Allegations against a former staff/volunteer at YESS will be referred to the police.

Any member of staff/volunteer/Trustee who receives information indicating possible abuse or someone’s possible unsuitability to work with children or vulnerable adults must report this immediately to the DSL/DST.

Should an allegation be made about the DSL then Katie Stanley (DST) is to be immediately informed.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the either the DSL/DST should contact the LADO directly on 0300 111 8007 or email staffordshire.lado@staffordshire.gov.uk.

No member of staff/volunteer/Trustee will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff/volunteers/Trustees who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

YESS has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff/volunteer/Trustee has committed one of several listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

Office/Centre Security

YESS provides a secure centre for staff/volunteers and clients but is only as secure as the people who use it.

All people on the site must adhere to the rules which govern it in terms of locking entrance doors and only opening to those who have identified themselves via the radio intercom.

Visitors to the YESS office must always be accompanied by a member of staff.

Young clients will only be allowed home with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission.

Empty therapy rooms should have closed windows and doors when not in use.

YESS will adhere to ICO legislation regarding GDPR restrictions as set in our Privacy Policy.

All client data is protected regarding GDPR when working off site where necessary.

Good Practice when Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

When a child or vulnerable adult tells me about abuse, they have suffered, what should I remember?

• Stay calm
• Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment
• Reassure the client. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
• Never agree or promise to keep it a secret. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the client know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
• Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
• Tell the client that it is not her/his fault
• Encourage the client to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information
• Use the acronym T.E.D: Tell me. Explain. Describe
• Listen and remember
• Check that you have understood correctly, what the client is trying to tell you
• Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected
• It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
• Be aware that the client may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record in writing, all you have heard, though not necessarily at the time of disclosure.
• At the end of the conversation, tell the client again whom you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know
• As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the client's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. (date, time, names mentioned and to whom the information was passed need to be clearly recorded)
• If the disclosure relates to a physical injury do not photograph the injury, but record in writing as much detail as possible
• The information should then be passed, in a timely way, to the DSL/DST. Immediately if the child discloses any abuse, they have suffered or may be at risk of suffering. If DSL/DST is not available, it is the staff member's responsibility to make a referral to Staffordshire Children's Advice & Support, and then inform the DSL/DST at the earliest opportunity. (SCAS, 0300 111 8007).

Code of Conduct for Workers/Volunteers at YESS

1. Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them, and the organisation must always be uppermost in your mind.
2. Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
3. Do not smoke or vape in front of any child or young person.
4. Do not undertake work with children and young people whilst under the influence of any substance which could impair your behaviour as a role model to them, whether legal, prescribed or illegal.
5. Never behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child or young person.
6. Do not use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
7. You should not give children/young people presents or personal items. Exceptions to this would be:

1. *An agreed custom such as buying children/young people a small birthday token*
2. *Providing additional help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity.*

Both types of gift should be declared to the DSL and the child or young person's parent/carer, and only given if agreed as acceptable by all parties

Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the DSL.

8. You should not invite a child or young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
9. You should not engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child/young person you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.
10. Exercise caution about being alone with a child or young person. In situations where this may be needed think about ways of making this seem less secret for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others; though be mindful of confidentiality
11. If necessary, always prompt children/young people to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage to do this always ask if they would like help.
12. Do talk explicitly to children and young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.

13. Do listen to children and young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.

14. If you must speak to a child/young person about their behaviour remember you are challenging ‘what they did’ not ‘who they are’.
Do make sure you have read the Safeguarding Policy and any related procedures and that you feel confident you know how to recognise when a child/young person may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.

15. Do seek advice and support from your colleagues and DSL

16. Do seek opportunities for training such as that available through the SSCB at: www.staffsscb.org.uk / or the Stoke-on-Trent SCB at: www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

17. Do not give your personal contact details / personal website details to children or young people.

18. Do not use the internet or web-based communication channels to send exclusive personal messages to/ befriend children / young people.

19. Do not use mobile telephones or any other devices to take images of children and young people.

Definitions and Categories of Abuse & Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or is in hospital.

Child Abuse: Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse within their family or harm outside of the family. There are four summary of the main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specfic types of abuse that fall within these categories, they are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
-

Safeguarding children: Safeguarding children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT 2023) as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Categories of Abuse & Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

It is important in this section to provide definitions of abuse and staff/volunteers need to familiarise themselves with these definitions. YESS is committed to ensuring that all workers have a basic awareness of the categories, signs and symptoms of child abuse and know where to go for information:

Additional information regarding training can be sourced for Staffordshire at: www.staffscvys.org.uk

http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Training/inter-agency-training.aspx

For Stoke-on-Trent at: www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) defines the main categories of child abuse, which is also used for the purposes of drawing up child protection plans for children at risk of harm. The categories are as follows:

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse

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

Sexual Abuse

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

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

There is no clear dividing line between one type of abuse and another. The following section is divided into four areas to help categorise what may be seen or heard. Children/young people may show symptoms from one or all of the categories. This should not be used as a checklist. Workers and volunteers should be aware of anything unusual displayed by the child.

Physical signs of abuse

- Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps
- Undue fear of adults - Fear of going home to parents or carers
- Aggression toward others
- Unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent and especially in non-mobile babies
- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental/satisfactory explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- Hitting (with the hand or implement) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting/pulling ear, hair or fingers, holding/squeezing with a tight grip, biting, and burning
- Fabricated or induced illness –see SSCB / SCB website for the procedure inc signs and symptoms

Neglect

- Exposure to danger/lack of supervision
- Neglect - under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Inadequate/inappropriate clothing
- Constant hunger
- Poor standards of hygiene
- Untreated illnesses
- Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise

Emotional signs of abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/ aggression, extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying
- Humiliating, taunting or threatening a child whether in front of others or alone.
- Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise.
- Shouting/yelling at a child
- Radicalisation – use of inappropriate language, possession of violent extremist literature, behavioural changes, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent actions and means, association with known extremists, seeking to recruit others.

Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Language and drawing inappropriate for age.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age
- Wariness on being approached
- Soreness in the genital area or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pain
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Stained or bloody underclothes
- Bruises on inner thigh or buttock.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- Unaccounted sources of money
- Telling you about being asked to ‘keep a secret’ or dropping hints or clues about abuse.

Remember – Signs and symptoms often appear in a cluster,
but also, many of the indicators above may be caused by other factors –
If in doubt check it out.

The most important factor is to safeguard the child.

Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:
• The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which
• Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of beliefs
• Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
• Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts
• Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.
4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.
5. Individuals may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that all involved with YESS can recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
• Identity Crisis – the individual is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
• Personal Crisis – the individual may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
• Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the individual’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy

• Unmet Aspirations – the individual may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
• Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration
• Special Educational Need – individuals may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.
7. More critical risk factors could include:
• Being in contact with extremist recruiters
• Family members convicted of a terrorism act or subject to a Channel intervention
• Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
• Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
• Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
• Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
• Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
• Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour
• Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

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Good practice, poor practice and abuse

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental.
It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in YESS to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place. However, all YESS personnel have the responsibility to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns.

Further Information

Policies, procedures and supporting information are available from the following:
- Your Emotional Support Service website: www.yess.uk
- At the Uttoxeter office
- Via email: hello@yess.uk
- Safeguarding Leads: Samantha Miles and Tammy Lowe

Policy and procedure adopted annually by the Board of Trustees
This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in the event of legislative changes or revised policies and best practice.

Adopted – September 2026
Reviewed - September 2026
Review Due - September 2027