

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Immediate risk of harm

If staff or volunteers believe a child or young person to be at immediate risk of harm, and/or a criminal offence is taking place, they should call 999.

In this policy and procedure, you can find the following:

1. Organisational contacts

- 1.1. Roles
- 1.2. Responsibilities

2. Managing a Safeguarding Concern

- 2.1 Responding to concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child or young person
- 2.2 Responding to concerns when abuse or neglect is observed or suspected.
- 2.3 Disclosure from a child or young person
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3. Exploitation including grooming, radicalisation and on-line abuse

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6. Early Help

7. Resolving professional differences

8. Safer Recruitment

9. Staff, volunteer or contractor behaviour

10. Equality and Diversity

11. Monitoring and Review

1. Organisational Contacts

Overall Safeguarding Lead	Kaniz Malekin Tel: 01225 354650 Mobile: 07803 874829	Client Services Director
Deputy Safeguarding Leads	Holly Flewitt 07398 558175 Jenny Milsom: 07931 967922	Senior Regional Managers

1.1. Roles:

The Overall Safeguarding Lead for Julian House is responsible for:

- Providing strategic leadership in all Safeguarding practice across the organisation.
- Reporting to the Senior Management and Trustees regarding Safeguarding practice across the organisation.
- Advising on the next steps in relation to staff conduct.

1.2. Responsibilities:

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead(s) are responsible for:

- Providing professional advice on child protection matters.
- Collaborating with the Local Safeguarding Children Board/s in reviewing Julian House's involvement in serious incidents which meet the criteria for Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Ensuring the training needs of staff are addressed by promoting, influencing and developing relevant training in conjunction with Human Resources;
- Prioritising the promotion of children's welfare and safeguarding in Julian House's internal and inter-agency strategic planning and ensuring the needs of children and their families are kept to the fore whenever services are being reviewed, planned, developed and / or commissioned.
- Being a source of advice and expertise on Safeguarding Children issues and promoting good practice and effective communication on all matters relating to Safeguarding Children within Julian House;
- Supervising and monitoring reports made to Children's Social Care by named staff member(s);
- Conducting internal learning reviews, where agreed/appropriate.

Both roles can advise on Children's safeguarding concerns. When a safeguarding concern needs escalation, the Leads should be contacted in the following order:

1. Deputy Safeguarding Lead
2. Overall safeguarding Lead

If the concerns relate to an adult refer to the Adult Safeguarding Policy.

1.3. Definition- Safeguarding children and young people

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE, 2018)

1.4 A child is anyone who is aged under 18 years.

1.5 All children and young people have the right to be safe from harm and need safe environments to grow with confidence. Everyone is responsible for helping to keep children

safe. Safeguarding children and young people means protecting them from any potential source of harm.

2. Managing a safeguarding concern: Safeguarding Procedures

2.1 Safeguarding Procedures – responding to concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child or young person

‘Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. In order that organisations, agencies and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that everyone working with children and families, including those who work with parents/carers, understands the role they should play and the role of other practitioners’. (Working Together 2018)

It is vital that all staff at Julian House are aware of the procedures to follow when dealing with child safeguarding issues and must raise any concerns that they have if they have reason to believe that a child is being abused, neglected or exploited, or has been abused. **If you are worried that a child is experiencing abuse or neglect, you must discuss any concerns with your manager immediately.**

2.2 Responding to concerns when abuse or neglect is observed or suspected.

If a member of staff or volunteer suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they should discuss this immediately with their Line Manager who will adhere to the procedures within this document. The Line Manager or member of staff should also involve the Service Development Manager, where this is possible, and where this does not create a delay in actioning a safeguarding referral. The Line Manager should also consult with the appropriate Safeguarding Lead for Julian House.

To assist in decision making it can be helpful to refer to the South West Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP) <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp> - note that these cover Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, Devon, Somerset, Plymouth and Cornwall and Wiltshire. There are procedures in Dorset – Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://pdscp.co.uk> and in Hampshire, the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. <http://hipsprocedures.org.uk>

As a worker your role is:

- To share your observations and concerns with your manager – your role is not to investigate or judge.
- To record all concerns, discussions and observations on In-Form
- To liaise with other agencies, for example, it can be helpful to talk with a social worker in Children’s Social Care, the NSPCC (giving no names) or to a health professional before making a referral.
- With the support of your manager, make a referral to Children’s Social Care.

2.3 Disclosure from children or young people

Julian House is committed to supporting staff to work in a child-centred way and it is important that staff and volunteers' value what children and young people have to say. At the heart of all safeguarding practice is the welfare of the child, which must remain paramount in our decision making – we all have a duty to safeguard children.

When managing a disclosure from a child or young person, staff or volunteers will:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Do not investigate by asking any direct or leading questions – your role is to listen, reassure and then record what the child has told you. Accept what you hear without passing judgement, disbelief or shock – it is likely that it would have taken the child a great deal of courage to tell an adult.
- Assure the child that the issue will be taken seriously. Reassure the child that they are right to disclose what happened and that the abuse is not their fault.
- Let the child know what will happen next and don't make promises that you can't keep.
- Explain to the child that in these circumstances, confidentiality cannot be maintained and that you will need to share your worries with your manager and that you might need to also share with other agencies.
- Fill out an incident form immediately stating what was said by both the child and the member of staff, and recording facts rather than opinions, and recording in the child's own words as much as is possible. A record of the discussion and any actions will also need to be recorded on In-Form.
- Liaise with your manager, and/or with the Service Development Manager, if your manager is not available. This discussion is to assist decision making and to provide support for the practitioner in managing concerns.
- We recognise that managing and handling disclosures can be emotionally challenging and can impact on staff, so please seek support from your manager if needed.

In cases of an injury or bruising, staff will consider whether immediate medical help is necessary for the child or young person. If there is some uncertainty about the cause of an injury/bruise, it is essential to discuss how the injury or bruising happened with the parent/carer and their response or any information provided by the child or other agencies, should be recorded clearly. If the injury does not appear to be consistent with the explanation given or could indicate that the child has been harmed, this should be discussed with your Line Manager and if necessary, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care. If the concern relates to a bruise or injury on a non-mobile baby, Safeguarding Procedures must be followed.

2.4. Alleged abuse by a person, other than a family member

Julian House staff and volunteers will follow the following advice:

- If you believe the child or young person to be at immediate risk of harm, call 999.
- Discuss concerns with the Line Manager, who will consult with the Service Development Manager and Safeguarding Lead - Children
- The situation will then be discussed separately with the parent/carer of the child, if this does not place the child at risk of further harm.
- The parent/child will be supported to contact the Police/Children's Social Care.
- A record will be kept of any discussions and the decision-making process.

2.5 Alleged abuse of a child or young person who is a Julian House client

- These will be dealt with in the same way as allegations made against any other client within the organisation, whilst also being mindful that the young person is under 18 and so is legally defined as a child within the Children Act (1989). Consideration needs to be given to making a Safeguarding Concern for both the victim, and the alleged perpetrator/young person against whom there has been an allegation.
- Personal or sensitive information about children, young people and families must be recorded appropriately and stored securely. Clients can have access to any information stored on their file; therefore, files should not contain the names of other clients where possible.

3. Exploitation including grooming, radicalisation and on-line abuse

- If you suspect that a child or young person is being exploited, groomed or radicalised then a Safeguarding Referral needs to be discussed with your Line Manager and the Service Development Manager. Each local authority area has a clear protocol on their website for managing concerns about exploitation, grooming and radicalisation which can assist with decision making.
- Information relating to the exploitation of children and young people and links to County Lines can also be passed to the local Police force using an online alert form – this should be done following discussion with your manager. Sharing information with the Police does not negate our responsibility to make a referral to Children’s Social Care.

On-line abuse

If you are concerned about a child online, contact your line manager who will consider raising an alert with a safeguarding lead.

You can also contact a helpline for support and advice:

Professionals Online Safety Helpline – Advice and support for professionals working with children with any online safety issues children in their care may face – 0344 381 4772 or helpline@saferinternet.org.uk

NSPCC helpline – Advice and support for anyone who is worried about a child or needs information about child protection – 0808 800 5000

Please be aware that children may take or share photos of their private body parts; these photos would likely, in a legal context, be indecent images of children. If you are aware of indecent images of a child, do not print, forward, save or share these images (this is illegal); report concerns immediately to your line manager and a safeguarding lead.

4. Consent to share

Julian House is committed to working in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. In most situations, it is important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify initial concerns. However, if it is felt that discussing the disclosure/allegation with a parent/carer might place the child at risk of additional harm (for example, threats or further physical, sexual or emotional harm following a disclosure from the child), then it will be important to seek advice from Children’s Social Care or the Police immediately, without the parent’s consent. It is essential that the Line Manager, in consultation with the worker, the Service Development Manager and the Safeguarding Lead, is involved in making decisions

about Safeguarding referrals and undertakes any liaison with the parent and/or Children's Social Care.

It is better to have discussions with parents face-to-face, unless it is unsafe to do so. The manager and worker will share their concerns and discuss a safeguarding referral or alternative support (for example an Early Help referral) – all discussions must be recorded on In-Form (see guidance on recording). Discussions with parents and carers need to be managed with sensitivity and empathy - be open and honest from the outset about the concerns and what will be shared and with whom.

Please remember that in most instances, consent is needed from a parent or carer (and also the young person if age appropriate) for a referral to Children's Social Care or any other agency. However as detailed above, where it is considered that this would place a child at additional risk, information can be shared without consent, however, it is recommended that guidance is always sought from Children's Social Care in this regard. A decision to refer without consent needs to be clearly recorded on In-Form, including discussions with other agencies and stating clearly why the information was not shared with the parent.

5. Recording and storing records about safeguarding concerns

When recording concerns and sharing information, it is important that there is good record keeping on In-Form and information should be recorded and stored in accordance with our information sharing policy.

Concerns/incidents regarding the abuse or neglect of a child or young person: should be recorded under Actions as 'Risk and Safeguarding' - this should be completed as soon as possible after the incident and within 24 hours.

Discussions with your manager/Service Development Manager: there is a specified Action on In-Form for this (Safeguarding Discussion with Line Manager). During discussions with your manager, where consideration is given to a safeguarding referral, or a safeguarding referral is made, please ensure that you record in Actions on In-Form. These discussions should be recorded within 24 hours.

Making a referral: use the Action 'Safeguarding Referral Made'. Please tick the relevant box 'Safeguarding Referral Considered' or 'Safeguarding Referral Made' in the Actions box. Unless you are making a subsequent referral, this box only needs to be ticked once. The referral needs to be recorded and attached on In-Form using the Action 'Safeguarding Referral Made'.

Within one working day of a referral being received, a social worker from Children's Social Care should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and decide about next steps and the type of response required (Working Together 2018). Any actions taken by Children's Social Care or any other agency must be recorded on In-Form.

Any actions resulting from the referral, (for example, discussions with other agencies) should be recorded as 'Safeguarding Outcome'.

6. Early Help for children and their families/carers

Where the concerns do not reach the threshold for Children's Social Care involvement, a decision may be reached to work with the parent/carer over a stated period, or to explore alternative support. It may be decided that a referral for Early Help support (for example support with parenting) is appropriate. Your local authority area 'threshold' document may be helpful to offer guidance if you are unsure and some areas have a 'Neglect Toolkit' or risk

assessment guidance which can assist with decision making. Effective early help is intended to prevent the child's situation from deteriorating and this relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help for example be alert where a child is disabled, has specific additional needs, is a young carer, is showing signs of engaging anti-social or criminal behaviour, is in a family presenting challenges for the child such as substances misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic violence and abuse, is showing early signs of abuse or neglect of signs of radicalisation
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child

7. Resolving Professional Differences

If you are unhappy with the response provided by another agency, and you have been unable to resolve this with the other professional, please discuss your concerns with your Manager and consider whether you need to raise a professional concern/resolving professional differences discussion.

8. Safer Recruitment

Julian House uses safe practices, which are informed by our policy and procedures, to recruit staff and volunteers, introduce them to their role, and help them carry out their duties safely. Julian House has a Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and a DBS Policy, to ensure that everyone who works or volunteers within our services, or who is involved in a professional capacity with our Fundraising events, is safe to do so.

8.1. Induction, supervision and support

All client facing staff receive training in Safeguarding Children as part of their Induction and probation. It is also a requirement that all new staff and volunteers will read the Safeguarding Children Policy, and Safeguarding Children Procedures. Staff should also ensure that they are familiar with the OP17a Incident Report form and Whistleblowing Policy.

9. Staff, volunteer or contractor behaviour

We want staff at Julian House to feel confident to raise concerns they may have about the behaviour of staff, volunteers and contractors within the organisation, and our Whistleblowing Policy encourages staff and volunteers to raise these concerns safely.

Julian House staff and volunteers will:

- Ensure that any concerns that they might have regarding the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteers are discussed immediately with their line manager, who will decide what action is necessary.
- Recording of information regarding to allegations against staff will need to be stored securely by HR and not recorded on the child's file on In-Form, until directed by the Client Services Director, who is the Safeguarding Lead.

As an organisation Julian House will:

- Fully investigate any allegation of inappropriate or abusive behaviour by a staff member or volunteer.
- Refer the matter to the Police or Children's Social Care if a criminal offence appears to have been committed and/or where other children or adults may be at risk.
- Determine whether it is necessary to suspend the member of staff, during the investigation, in line with the Julian House disciplinary procedure.

10. Equality and Diversity

These procedures apply to everyone involved with Julian House and cover all the children and young people with whom we come into contact, reflecting our commitment to ensure that they are protected from harm.

In accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy (GO9) and the Equality Act 2010, we will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity and will ensure that we promote the needs of children from Black and minority ethnic groups and disabled children, and support them with any barriers they may face, for example with communication or the impact of discrimination.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads will monitor and review this policy and procedure in line with Local Authority Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure or following a change in relevant legislation. Changes are informed by consultation with staff and clients. Results of consultation are provided to the Senior Management Team who agree amendments to the policy.

All staff and clients are encouraged to give feedback at any time on any difficulties they have in operating in line with this policy and procedure. Any issues can be raised with line management which will ensure they are considered, and appropriate action taken.

12. Legislation

Care Act 2014

Children Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (Dept of Education Guidance 2018)

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Mental Health Act 2007

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2007 as amended by the Protection of Freedom Act 2012

Data Protection Act 2018

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

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Policy date: March 2023

Policy Authoriser: Board of Trustees
Review date: March 2024

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Related Policies

Adult Safeguarding Policy

APPENDIX 2 FLOWCHART

Worker has concern about a child or young person

Is the child or young person at risk of immediate harm or has an offence been committed?

yes

Call the Police/emergency services immediately

no

Inform Team Leader/Manager or Service Development Manager if your manager is not available and record concerns carefully on Inform as soon as possible, including your discussion with your manager. If the concerns relate to a member of staff, please contact the Client Services Director who will take the lead.

In consultation with your manager, **identify whether the level of concern/need meets the threshold for referral to Children's Social Care**. Use threshold document for guidance. (See Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership website). Clearly record decision on Inform

yes

no

Manager and worker to inform parents/carers of concerns, if it is safe to do so and does not place the child at increased risk of harm.
Gain consent for a Children and Families Assessment. If parents/carers do not consent, consider whether the concerns are such that you need to refer without consent.
The decision making process should be clearly

Can Julian House offer the support that the family needs? If not, identify which other agencies can assist or consider an Early Help Assessment

no

yes

Manager and worker to complete Safeguarding Referral following local safeguarding procedures.
Record decision making process and a copy of referral on Inform

Identify most appropriate agency to support the family or make Early Help assessment referral in line with Children's Services protocols.

Monitor and review as part of the support planning process

Children's Social Care should acknowledge receipt of referral and follow up within 3 days.
If feedback is not received, then this needs to be followed up by the worker.
Record outcome on Inform

Julian House Safeguarding Leads:
Overall Safeguarding Lead: Kaniz Malekin – 07803 874829
Deputy Leads: Holly Flewitt 07398 558175
 Jenny Milsom: 07931 967922

Local Contacts
 Service Manager:
 Regional Manager:
 Local Safeguarding Team: