



Contents

- Page 1: Overview
- Page 2: Safeguarding Policy
- Page 3: Our Ethos
- Page 4: Our safeguarding principles
- Page 5: Definitions and signs of child abuse, What is abuse?
- Page 6: Definitions and signs and symptoms of child abuse
- Page 7: Neglect
- Page 8: Sexual Abuse
- Page 9: Spotting the signs of sexual abuse
- Page 10: Child sexual exploitation, Grooming
- Page 11: Harmful sexual behavior, Emotional Abuse
- Page 12: Spotting the signs of emotional abuse
- Page 13: Cyber bullying, Spotting the signs of bullying and cyber-bullying
- Page 14: Domestic abuse, Online Abuse
- Page 15: Spotting the signs of domestic abuse, Child trafficking and modern slavery
- Page 16: Spotting the signs of child trafficking and modern slavery
- Page 17: Female genital mutilation
- Page 18: Forced marriage, Preventing Radicalisation
- Page 19: Organised abuse, Abuse of trust, Financial or material abuse, Roles and Responsibilities
- Page 20: Designated persons, What to do if you have a safeguarding concern
- Page 21: Advice to Foster Carers and Staff Members on what to do when dealing with a disclosure
- Page 22: Allegations against professionals
- Page 23: Process of responding to an allegation against a foster carer, member of foster carer's family, or support network

Safeguarding policy

This Policy sets out NorthPoint's approach and commitment to the **safeguarding** of the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we work.

This policy demonstrates that NorthPoint Care understands our responsibility for safeguarding and sets out how we will pro-actively work together to safeguard children and promote their wellbeing. This policy also outlines the measures we have in place to ensure we keep children safe from harm and maximise the effectiveness of our practice to promote children and young people's wellbeing.

Our aim is to ensure that there is the highest standards of care and protection for all of the children and young people we work with and these standards are in line with Statutory guidance of Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People 2018. These procedures provide a clear framework to all staff to work together to safeguard children and young people. This includes working with foster carers, Local Authorities and our partner agencies.

The Local Authorities that we work with will still remain the lead agency and will fulfil the statutory responsibility for the safeguarding and protection of children through the wider guise of children's services. However, working to protect children is everybody's responsibility and should not be seen as the sole responsibility of one agency. Safeguarding children depends on effective information sharing at every level, and it requires collaboration and understanding between agencies to robustly assess how to effectively safeguard children and young people. It is fundamental that we all use our own expertise and work together to deliver robust, effective services that safeguard those we care for. Working Together is clear that allegations and referrals relating to concerns about a child should be dealt with in a coordinated manner.

"Safeguarding is the process of;

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances."¹

Our Ethos

The Welfare of the child is paramount

All children regardless of age, religion, sex, racial heritage, sexual orientation or identity have the right to be protected robustly from all forms of harm and abuse.

We will continually work with children and young people, their parents and our partner agencies as we know this is essential to safeguard and protect young people as well as promote their welfare.

NorthPoint is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children. This policy is informed by the relevant legislation and statutory guidance which underpins best practice. This policy is informed by HM Government Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

This guidance states that effective safeguarding arrangements should be underpinned by 2 main principles:

- **Safeguarding must have a child centered approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and also the views of children**
- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; each service, professionals and organisations must play their full part.**

This policy and procedure is relevant to ALL staff across NorthPoint including sessional workers, consultants, panel members, directors, support workers and psychologists. All staff must familiarise themselves with this policy, understand their role and responsibility and commit to adherence to the procedures outlined.

All involved at North Point should know the principles contained in the Working Together (2018) and their role and responsibility in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. They need to know NorthPoint's bespoke internal safeguarding procedures (for example who to share information with when there is a safeguarding concern). They must also understand the legislative framework of their work and the Local Authorities protocols - information sharing across the professional boundaries.

Our Safeguarding Principles

.In order to effectively safeguard and promote welfare of children and young people we will abide by the following safeguarding principles:

- A clear commitment and line of accountability by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare through both the commissioning and the provision of services;
- A culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children and young people – seeking their views in ways appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those both in individual decisions and the establishment or development and improvement of services;
- When following procedures and processes, positive outcomes for children and young people are always the priority.
- Safe Recruitment and personnel management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; including arrangements for appropriate checks, including checked references and enhanced DBS checks on new staff, carers and volunteers and adoption of best practice in the recruitment of new staff, carers and volunteers;
- A clear understanding of how to work together to help keep children safe on-line by being adequately equipped to understand, identify and mitigate the risks of new technology;
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- Arrangements to ensure that all staff and carers undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and keep this up to date by refresher training at regular intervals (not exceeding 3 years) and that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children, are made aware of NorthPoint's internal safeguarding procedures;
- Procedures that are in accordance with National Minimum standards and Regulations as well as the Local Authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures (indeed we adhere to regulation 11 – duty to secure welfare and regulation 12 – arrangements for the protection of children on a daily basis).
- Arrangements are in place for effective information sharing and inter-agency collaboration to safeguard children and promote their welfare;

- Appropriate Whistle- Blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed. (This procedure reflects the principles of Sir Roberts Francis Freedom to Speak Up report (Working Together 2018))

Definitions and signs of child abuse

The Children Act 1989 says this

Child in need (Section 17 Children Act 1989)

Children who are defined as being 'in need' under the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerabilities are such that they are unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (s17(10) of the Children Act 1989) plus those who are disabled. The critical factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a child is in need under the Children Act 1989 are what will happen to a child's health or development without services and the likely effect the services will have on the child's standard of health and development.

Significant Harm? (Section 47 Children Act 1989)

Some of the children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention into family life in the best interests of the children. The Local Authority is under a duty to make enquires, or cause enquires to be made, when it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (s47 of the Children Act 1989). To make enquires involves assessing what is happening to a child. Where s47 enquires are being made, the assessment should concentrate on the harm that has occurred or is likely to occur to the child as a result of child maltreatment in order to inform future plans and the nature of the services required.

What is Abuse?

Abuse and neglect refer to the maltreatment of a child, this maltreatment can take the form of emotional, physical, sexual or through neglect. All of these have devastating long term effects on a child's health, physical development, emotional development and well-being. Children can be abused by many different people from family members, in the community or in an institutional setting, most common children are abused by people they know but sometimes it can be by a stranger, the abuse can be perpetrated by an adult/adults or another child.

It is important to be aware that some groups of children may be more vulnerable to abuse for a variety of reasons. Vulnerable children include disabled children; children living with parental adversity such as domestic violence, parental substance misuse or mental illness; unaccompanied asylum seeking children; trafficked children, children affected by gang activity; looked after children etc. Many of these children will have additional needs that require support and some may also be in need of protection.

Definitions and Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Physical abuse

What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Spotting the signs of physical abuse

All children have trips, falls and accidents which may cause cuts, bumps and bruises. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of their body such as elbows, knees and shins and are not usually a cause for concern. There's isn't one sign or symptom to look out for that will say a child is definitely being physically abused. But if a child often has injuries, there seems to be a pattern, or the explanation doesn't match the injury then this should be investigated.

Injuries that are more likely to indicate physical abuse include:

Bruising

- bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking
- bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand or an object, like a belt or shoe
- large oval-shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds

- any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns
- burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are

unexplained or the explanation doesn't match the injury, this should be investigated. It's also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.

Neglect

What is neglect?

Neglect is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse. Neglect can have serious and long-lasting effects. Neglect can be difficult to identify and may involve a parent's or carer's failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter leaving a child hungry or dirty,
- supervise a child (including leaving them with unsuitable carers) or keep them safe from harm or danger
- make sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- make sure the child receives a suitable education
- meet the child's basic emotional needs – parents may ignore their children when they are distressed or even when they are happy or excited. This is known as emotional neglect.

Spotting the signs of neglect

Neglect can be difficult to identify. Having one of the signs or symptoms below doesn't necessarily mean that a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple and persistent signs over time that could indicate there is a serious problem.

Some of these signs include:

- children who appear hungry - they may come to school without lunch money or even try to steal food
- children who appear dirty or smelly and whose clothes are unwashed or inadequate for the weather conditions
- children who are left alone or unsupervised
- children who fail to thrive or who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems
- children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of development
- children who live in an unsuitable home environment, for example the house is very dirty and unsafe, perhaps with evidence of substance misuse or violence
- children who have taken on the role of carer for other family members.

Sexual abuse

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse and may not even understand that it is wrong, or they may be afraid to speak out. Usually it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs may be present. In all cases children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Spotting the signs of sexual abuse

There may be physical signs that a child has suffered sexual abuse. These include;

- anal or vaginal soreness
- itching, bruising or bleeding near the genital area
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- an unusual discharge
- sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- pregnancy

Changes in the child's mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)

In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age. For example:

- they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to
- a child might become sexually active at a young age
- they might be promiscuous.

Child sexual exploitation

What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be

invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs (Berelowitz et al, 2013). Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

Spotting the signs of child sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour. Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- go missing from home, care or education
- be involved in abusive relationships, appearing intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- be involved in petty crime such as shoplifting
- have access to drugs and alcohol
- have new things such as clothes and mobile phones which they can't or won't explain
- have unexplained physical injuries.

Harmful sexual behaviour

What is harmful sexual behaviour?

Children and young people who develop harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) harm themselves and others. HSB can include:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- full penetrative sex with other children or adults.

Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if 1 of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than 2 years' difference in age or if 1 of the children is pre-pubescent and the other isn't (Davies, 2012). However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them – for example, if the older child is disabled (Rich, 2011).

Spotting the signs of harmful sexual behaviour

It's normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

If you're unsure whether a child's sexual behaviour is healthy, Brook provide a helpful, easy-to-use traffic light tool. The traffic light system is used to describe healthy (green) sexual behaviours, potentially unhealthy (amber) sexual behaviours and unhealthy (red) sexual behaviours.

Emotional abuse

What is emotional abuse? Emotional abuse is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional health and development. It involves:

- humiliating, putting down or constantly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- not allowing them to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse
- persistently ignoring them
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child and failing to praise their achievements and successes.

Spotting the signs of emotional abuse

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse, but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions. It's important to remember that some children are

naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, for example when being taken to or collected from nursery
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- be unable to play
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect for their age
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends - struggle to develop and maintain relationships, they may try to make people dislike them – self isolating behaviour
- fear making mistakes
- fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- experience self-confidence and anger problems
- Exhibit neurotic behaviours such as sulking, hair twisting, rocking, sudden speech disorders

Emotional abuse can increase the risk of a child developing mental health problems, eating disorders or can lead term to self-harming. The experiences that a child has when they are a baby or toddler can affect them for throughout their life. Some research suggests there's a link between emotional abuse in early years and a child developing problems with eating and language. As a child gets older, or the abuse continues, these effects become more serious.

Bullying and cyberbullying

What are bullying and cyberbullying?

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying includes:

- verbal abuse, such as name calling
- non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring
- emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- racial, sexual or homophobic bullying
- physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Spotting the signs of bullying and cyberbullying

It can be hard to know whether or not a child is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might also think that the bullying is their fault. No one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied, but you should look out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

Domestic abuse

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or were in an intimate relationship. There are many different types of abusive behaviours that can occur within intimate relationships, including emotional, sexual, financial, psychological and physical abuse. Domestic abuse can be underpinned by an on-going pattern of psychologically abusive behaviour (coercive control) that is used by 1 partner to control or intimidate the other partner.

In situations of domestic abuse, both males and females can be abused or be abusers. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity. Research by the NSPCC has indicated that many young people experience domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (Barter, 2009). The UK's cross-government definition of domestic abuse also covers relationships between young people aged 16 and 17 (Home Office, 2013).

Children's exposure to domestic abuse between parents and carers is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. The developmental and behavioral impact of witnessing domestic abuse is similar to experiencing direct abuse. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Spotting the signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive
- display anti-social behaviour
- suffer from depression or anxiety
- not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

Child trafficking and Modern Slavery

What is child trafficking?

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation. Children are trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect.

Child trafficking can require a network of organised criminals who recruit, transport and exploit children and young people. Some people in the network might not be directly involved in trafficking a child but play a part in other ways, such as falsifying documents, bribery, owning or renting premises or money laundering (Europol, 2011). Child trafficking can also be organised by individuals and the children's own families.

Traffickers trick, force or persuade children to leave their homes. They use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community. Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats don't need to be proven in cases of child trafficking - a child cannot legally consent to their exploitation so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation. Modern slavery is another term which may be used in relation to child trafficking. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking (HM Government, 2014). The Modern Slavery Act passed in 2015 in England and Wales categorises offences of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking (NCA, 2017).

Spotting the signs of child trafficking and Modern Slavery

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious, but you might notice unusual behaviour or events. These include a child who:

- spends a lot of time doing household chores

- rarely leaves their house, has no freedom of movement and no time for playing
- is orphaned or living apart from their family, often in unregulated private foster care
- lives in substandard accommodation
- isn't sure which country, city or town they're in
- is unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- might not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- has no documents or has falsified documents
- has no access to their parents or guardians
- is seen in inappropriate places such as brothels or factories
- possesses unaccounted for money or goods
- is permanently deprived of a large part of their earnings, required to earn a minimum amount of money every day or pay off an exorbitant debt
- has injuries from workplace accidents
- gives a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

There are also signs that an adult is involved in child trafficking, such as:

- making multiple visa applications for different children
- acting as a guarantor for multiple visa applications for children
- travelling with different children who they're not related to or responsible for
- insisting on remaining with and speaking for the child
- living with unrelated or newly arrived children
- abandoning a child or claiming not to know a child they were previously with.

Female genital mutilation

What is female genital mutilation?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a girl is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016).

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence.

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It's used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

Spotting the signs of female genital mutilation

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

A girl who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Anyone coming in to contact with children can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted if further advice or information is needed: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk.

Preventing radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our overall safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, everyone should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Safe Families' work in partnership with Local Authorities and as such have: "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". In order to support this duty Safe Families promote positive messages of tolerance and cohesion

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- identifying individuals at risk
- assessing the nature and extent of that risk
- developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned

Channel may be appropriate for anyone who is vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism. Channel is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist activity.

For further information see:

Sections 36 to 41 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 set out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism.

The Prevent Duty – ‘Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.’ Govt guidance, July 2015

Organised abuse

This may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related and non-related abused young people and children. The abusers concerned may be acting together to abuse children, or may be using an institutional framework or a position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Abuse of trust

A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their role, work or the nature of their activity. Abuse of trust is the inappropriate leveraging of this power in order to gain a personal benefit, be it romantic, sexual, financial or otherwise.

Financial or Material abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. Damage or threats of damage to property.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is not the role of anyone at NorthPoint to assess or decide whether a child has been or is being abused, however it is everybody’s collective responsibility in our organisation to ensure safeguarding procedures are followed and adhered to and be vigilant in spotting signs of abuse. We must act on any concerns relating to the welfare of children in a timely and professional manner in order that the appropriate agencies can make enquires to take any necessary action to protect children.

Designated persons

Whilst everybody across NorthPoint shares the responsibility for safeguarding, we do have designated managers and directors for safeguarding. NorthPoint has one region at the current time and this based in the NorthEast of England, the Team Leader and Register Manager alongside the Board Member for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding will ensure that NorthPoint deals with any allegations of a safeguarding nature in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.

Within the first 12 months Ruth Ayres Team Leader and Registered Manager will be the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns. In conjunction with the Board Member for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding, Ann Day, each concern will be assessed and

appropriate action taken in line with North Point's procedures and our responsibilities under Working Together Guidance.

The following procedures and guidance are to assist NorthPoint employees when dealing with safeguarding concerns. This will be divided into the following sections:

What to do if you have safeguarding concerns about a child

If a concern is identified NorthPoint will notify Local Authority children's social care immediately by telephone and complete our own internal forms (Incident Report Form) and send to Local Authority within 24 hours, if a child already has an allocated Local Authority Social Worker they will be contacted directly.

Feedback should be given from the Local Authority within 1 working day but if feedback has not been received within three working days, NorthPoint will contact Children services again.

Board Member for QA and Safeguarding to complete Ofsted notification within 24 hours.

- Any allegation or concern reported to a member of staff by the public should be immediately discussed with the registered manager who will consult as appropriate with the Board Member for QA and Safeguarding
1.
 - North point will act in accordance with the safeguarding procedures of the relevant Local Authorities and notify the Local Authorities children's social care team by telephone as a matter of priority.
 3.
 - NorthPoint will also notify Ofsted and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if an allegation has been made against a foster carer or staff member;
 - Make a written record of the information received, sign and date the written record on NorthPoint forms, this must also be uploaded to our internal IT system Charms. These also need to be sent to the operations / designated manager immediately. All initial conversations and decision making must be logged;
 - On-call referrals should be made to the children's emergency duty team and followed up the next morning by contacting the child's allocated social worker or children's social care team. Internally, this must also be discussed with the Board Member for QA and Safeguarding
 4. The Local Authority will determine how to proceed. Staff may have to assist the Local Authority with investigation if required.
 - 5.
 6. In line with Working Together (2018) North Point staff will follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the Local Authority children's social care response.

The fact abuse has been reported does not mean we have no further involvement or no further responsibility to support the protection of the child/children in question. NorthPoint will continue to work collaboratively with Children's Social Care, making sure that the roles within NorthPoint, strengths and limitations, are understood and that together the best arrangements are made for the continuing safety of the child.

Advice to Foster Carers and Staff members on what to do when dealing with a disclosure

Careful management of disclosures or suggestions of abuse is necessary, to ensure that any investigation is not compromised, but also so to ensure that any psychological and emotional consequences for the child are minimised.

Disclosures may relate to abuse perpetrated by a family member or someone outside the family, e.g. a teacher, youth leader, pastor, online 'friend' etc. No group of people is exempt from being abusers. All disclosures must be taken seriously. It is important to remember that the child or young person has chosen to trust you with this information. The following guidelines should be followed when dealing with a children who shares information with you that discloses abuse they may have suffered.

- Reassure them they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Listen carefully but do not press for information, 'cross-examine', or ask leading questions, as any leading questions may prejudice follow-up investigation by Police or local authority safeguarding team – it could also prevent them from saying more or you might put things in their mind that were not already there.
 - Try using the model TED (Tell me, Explain, Describe) when asking questions
 - You may ask 'Is there anything else you would like to tell me?' being mindful not to pressure them into doing so.
 - Show acceptance of what you are told – even if it seems unlikely or too awful to be true.
 - Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you and you are taking the information seriously.
 - Do not promise to keep the matter secret but explain that you may have to share what they say with others on a 'need to know' basis only.
 - Explain what you intend to do and don't delay in taking action.
 - Ensure the immediate safety of the child or young person.
 - Write up what has been disclosed as soon as possible and wherever it is possible use the child or young person's own words to describe the alleged abuse.

- If the concern is about what has been observed, for example bruises, marks, suspicions of neglect or sexually explicit/ abusive behaviour, then it is important to write a full account of what was seen.

All internal Safeguarding procedures as set out in this document **MUST BE FOLLOWED**. The child's immediate safety must always be considered a priority and records must be made as soon as possible after the situation has been made safe.

Where a child has suffered a possible injury medical attention may be needed and they may need to be seen by a pediatrician. Advice from the Registered Manager should be sought but decisions should only ever be taken in discussion with the Local Authority.

Allegations against Professionals

These procedures apply to all cases where suspicion or allegations arises in connection with:

- The individual's own work
- His or her own children
- Other children living outside of the family; and
- Whether the concerns is current or historical

Working Together (2018) provides a framework for managing allegations against members of the workforce. It applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against 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.

Within the 'Working Together' framework, there may be up to 3 strands in the consideration of an allegation against a person who works with children:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- Enquires and assessments by children social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services; and
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual. With regards to foster carers a review of foster carers suitability to foster, and the recommendation of the fostering panel and decision maker, in accordance with Fostering Services Regulations.

In accordance with Working Together (2018) Local Authorities should ensure that allegations against people who work with children are not dealt with in isolation. Thus, allegations and referrals relating to concerns about a child/children should be taken without delay and dealt with in a 'coordinated manner'. Local authorities will have a LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will need to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children.

Process of responding to an allegation against a foster carer, member of foster carer's family, or support network

Any allegation about a foster carer, member of the foster carer's family or support network must be reported to the Registered Manager without delay. If in doubt as to whether something warrants a concern you should always discuss it. Priority over all other work should be given to any action needed to protect the child.

- Staff member receives/becomes aware of concerns/allegations from any source report to Registered Manager immediately who completes the incident form and sends to Board Member for QA and Safeguarding this must be signed and dated;
- Board Member for QA and Safeguarding and Registered Manager and will review the information which may include seeking advice and guidance from the LADO to determine whether a referral needs to be made to the Local Authority/LADO. It needs to be noted that the threshold for discussing with the LADO are lower than for general child protection. Thus, the level of harm does not have to be regarded as significant;
- If it is felt that there are concerns about a foster carer, their family member or support network, the Board Member for QA and Safeguarding will consult with the LADO where the foster carers live within 24 hours and the Local Authority for any child in placement within 24 hours. Significant paperwork will be sent to LA within 24 hours/next working day.
- The Board Member for QA and Safeguarding will complete Ofsted notification form within 24 hours.
- Following discussions with the Local Authority and LADO decisions will be made about the safety of any children in placement and a decision will be made by the Local authority if the children will remain in placement or moved to an alternative placement;
- Unless there is good practice reasons not to, supervising social workers will advocate with the Local Authority that carers are kept as fully informed as possible.

Regarding payments for foster carers of allowances and fees during investigations will be decided on an individual basis;

- The Supervising Social Worker will inform the foster carers of the outline of the situation, in person, or by telephone, as soon as possible and this will then be followed up in writing to the carers. It will be ensured that the foster carer/s receive information, including;
 - i. Outline of the situation (limited information will only be provided and the content of this will be in agreement with the investigating Local Authority)
 - ii. Discuss who is best to support them and offer Independent support
 - iii. Discuss NorthPoint's internal safeguarding procedures (what procedures are being followed and who will visit)

Details of Local Authority safeguarding procedures. At this stage the LA may decide either:

- No further action from the Local Authority
- Or a S47 enquiry/investigation

If no further action from the Local Authority:

- Registered Manager and Board Member for QA and Safeguarding decides whether a review of Foster Carers suitability is required. If not no further action;
- If yes due to practice issues a review will be completed by the supervising social worker or independent social worker and then taken back to Fostering Panel with a recommendation of either termination of approval or continued approval with support and action plan;
- If termination of approval and the operations Manager/Registered manager will complete a referral to Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) ;

If S47 enquiry/investigation:

- Strategy meeting and any further strategy meetings need to be attended by Registered Manager. The agency will provide a report for the strategy meeting.
- Registered Manager will inform carers after strategy meeting and confirm any actions as per strategy recommendations;
- Registered Manager to decide if a foster carer annual review is required (if there are two concerns within 12 month period a review must be undertaken (see policy on Foster Carer reviews)

If termination of approval and recommendation to DBS, SSW or Operations Manager to complete referral;

- Notify Ofsted and LA safeguarding designated officer of outcome of carer review and recommendations;
- Complete and conclude all agency paperwork.