

## North Halifax Partnership Safeguarding Children Policy Child Protection Statement

- North Halifax Partnership (NHP) believes that children must be protected from harm at all times.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm. We strive to embed the voice of the child in all our work.
- We want children who use or have contact with NHP to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
- We want parents who use or attend any activities provided by NHP or its staff to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well-being and keeps them safe.
- NHP will achieve this by an effective child protection procedure and following National guidance (What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused) and local procedures of the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB).
- If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm we will notify Calderdale Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST) or Calderdale Emergency Duty Team (out of hours), or the Police in order that they can be protected if necessary.
- All staff and volunteers are responsible for Safeguarding children. This safeguarding policy and working practices related to safeguarding apply to all staff, volunteers and users of NHP and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises, who must follow this policy and all related working practices and processes. Wherever the word staff is used in this policy (or related working practices) it applies to paid staff, sessional and temporary staff and volunteers.
- We will review our child protection policy and working practices annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.
- NHP are committed to policies and action to ensure that those who are employed in paid or voluntary capacity and the people it serves are not discriminated on the basis of disability, race, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.
- We will work with the police and other agencies to identify and report cases of suspected extremism in line with the PREVENT agenda and ensure that families and young people are supported appropriately; existing safeguarding procedures will still apply.

## Policy

### 1 General

- 1.1 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Calderdale Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Policy and Procedures manual. *Last Updated July 2015*
- 1.2 This policy refers throughout to North Halifax Partnership staff. All staff should be aware of this policy and are bound by it. Safeguarding responsibilities are made clear on all job descriptions.
- 1.3 This policy is supplemented by the North Halifax Partnership Safeguarding working practice. The Area Safeguarding Lead is the Senior Family Support Manager, who is supported by a named Safeguarding Lead in each Children's Centre or Team. These staff are available to support other North Halifax Partnership staff and board members if the need arises. Full details of these staff and their contact details are displayed on the staff notice boards at all bases. Named people are appropriately trained and this training is updated regularly.
- 1.4 The NHP duty of care extends to contracted or voluntary services provided for or on behalf of the North Halifax Partnership. Managers are responsible for ensuring that any such services which they contact have provision to safeguard the welfare of children.

### 2 In the Event of Concerns about a child

- 2.1 Full details about how to deal with any concerns are held in the working practices which are attached to this policy. However, as a general principle:
- 2.2 Where any member of the staff is concerned about a child's welfare including peer on peer abuse, they should discuss this with their Line Manager and agree who will discuss the issues with the relevant named person with lead responsibility for Safeguarding as described in 1.3 above
- 2.3 Subsequent to the initial discussion, the Line Manager and the named person will be responsible for deciding how to proceed in accordance with the CSCB procedure.
- 2.4 Irrespective of any further action being taken, at the earliest possible opportunity all concerns must be clearly recorded with the name of the child, date, nature of concern, with whom the concern has been discussed and any discussion which has taken place with the parent/carer, where it is appropriate for such a discussion to take place.
- 2.5 All subsequent concerns and discussions must be clearly and accurately recorded until such time as the concern is deemed to be unfounded or a referral is made to the appropriate professional agency.
- 2.6 Where possible, parent/carers must also sign and date written information. All written records must be kept with regards to confidentiality. However parents/carers must be made aware written records are being kept and may be shared with other relevant professionals on a "need to know" basis.

- 2.7 Staff should understand that additional barriers may exist when recognising the signs of abuse and neglect of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 2.8 Where the nature of the concern is such that following the initial discussion, or following monitoring and observation of the concern, the named person concludes the child is deemed to be at risk of harm, the Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST) will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity in accordance with CSCB procedure.
- 2.9 For full details of how to refer to Calderdale MAST please see guidance in the Working Practices relating to Safeguarding or Staff Safeguarding notice boards for procedure and relevant telephone numbers.

### **3 Working with children subject to a Child Protection Plan**

- 3.1 Staff maybe involved in work with children subject to a Child Protection Plan. All such referrals to staff should have a named contact within Children's Social Care Services and must only be accepted through correct procedures which can be obtained from the Children's Services Delivery Manager.
- 3.2 Staff working with children subject to a Child Protection Plan need to be aware of this named contact and should feedback any concerns to this person or the duty Social Worker. In addition it is important to attend relevant meetings with Care Services. Staff must ensure all information is shared and recorded.
- 3.3 Staff are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the Child Protection Plan for children on their caseload and to work towards its objectives.
- 3.4 All staff working with children subject to a Child Protection Plan will have access to supervision by an appropriate person, usually their Line Manager. Decisions in such cases will be recorded on the clients file (by the member of staff) and in supervision by their Manager.

### **4 DBS**

- 4.1 All staff and volunteers will have had a full and enhanced disclosure check through the Disclosure and Barring Service which is regularly updated. Any staff convicted of a criminal offence must inform their Line Manager immediately.
- 4.2 People who are dismissed for serious misconduct will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service. See <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/dbs-barred-lists> for details)

### **5 Records**

- 5.1 Entries in files should be clear, concise and differentiate between fact and supposition. Where necessary, training in case recording will be provided. Files must

be kept up to date at all times. Files should be audited regularly and checked in supervision.

## **6 Training**

- 6.1 All staff will receive basic safeguarding training as and when necessary. Further training will be undertaken by staff allocated to safeguarding children work. Members of staff and their Line Managers are responsible for ensuring they periodically update their training as part of the appraisal process. This is more fully detailed in the working practice which supplements this policy. Staff with management responsibility should also be inducted into the recruitment process which includes safer working practices; relevant training will be offered as needed.

## **7 Use of mobile phones, cameras and laptops**

- 7.1 All staff should be aware of the potential for allegations around the misuse of images kept electronically. This is fully explained in Sure Start North and East Halifax Children's Centres working practice for the use of mobile phones, cameras and laptops. Failure to comply with this could result in disciplinary action.

## **8 In the event of Concerns about other members of staff**

- 8.1 If a staff member raises a concern about another staff member's work with children, this will be dealt with confidentially. Full and accurate written records will be made with the full knowledge of the individual member of staff concerned.
- 8.2 Where the concern is considered to be of such serious nature that children are being put at risk, where this is a member of staff the relevant senior manager will remove the member of staff from all contact with children.
- 8.3 This would usually consist of a suspension under the disciplinary procedure and would be treated as and investigated as such. Until the results of any investigation are known, this is a suspension without prejudice, as with any other suspension under the disciplinary procedure.
- 8.4 All staff should be aware of the potential of there being three strands to any such investigation;
- 8.4.1 The safeguarding enquiry (usually undertaken by Care Services)
- 8.4.2 The criminal investigation (by the police)
- 8.4.3 A disciplinary investigation (to undertaken by the management board) in accordance with NHP disciplinary procedures.
- 8.5 Decisions taken in investigating concerns regarding staff shall be clearly recorded as they may be used in all three strands of the investigation.

- 8.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant team working practices which outline key procedures to take in case of concerns being raised.
- 8.7 In the case of allegations against staff the Managing Allegations against North Halifax Partnership (NHP) staff Flow chart should be followed. This must be read in conjunction with Calderdale Safeguarding Board Procedures: *Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Allegations Against Staff and LADO)*. This outlines the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Role and what processes should be followed.
- 8.8 If staff are unsure at any time, they should seek the advice of their line manager, or if that manager is not available, another relevant manager.