

# Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy

## Safeguarding Policy

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Signed



Date

24.04.24

### Designated trustee responsible for safeguarding

Signed



Date

25/04/24

### Designated staff member responsible for safeguarding

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually

This policy will be reviewed April 2025

This Policy applies to all staff including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Go Kids Go.

## Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy

### A Safeguarding Policy Statement

**Go Kids Go** acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and LSCB guidelines.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of **Go Kids Go** in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in or outside of the activity provided by **Go Kids Go**.

**Go Kids Go** acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy **Go Kids Go** will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in **Go Kids Go**. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

#### Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and The Charities Commission.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

## **Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy**

### **B Purpose of Safeguarding Policy**

- to protect children and young people who receive **Go Kids Go's** services. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

**Go Kids Go** believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

### **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special education needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children December 2023

## **Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy**

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures

- Recording and information sharing
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Safer recruitment
- E-safety
- Anti- bullying
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health and safety
- Training, supervision and support
- Lone working policy and procedure
- Quality assurance
- Equality Statement

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types 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 young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, a deputy and a Trustee for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures

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- providing effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

## **Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy**

### **C Designated Safeguarding Officers**

#### **Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility**

The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection issues is Roy Wild, Training Manager. He has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the staff team of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people who attend the wheelchair training courses.

#### **Designated Trustee**

The designated Trustee is responsible for liaising with the Principal Staff Member with Lead Responsibility over matters regarding child protection.

The designated Trustee is responsible for overseeing the liaison between agencies such as the police, social services in connection with allegations against the Principal Staff Member with Lead Responsibility. This will not involve undertaking any form of investigation, but will ensure good communication between the parties and provide information to assist enquiries.

#### **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

Roy Wild

Phone/ email 07961 257987 [roy@gokidsgo.org.uk](mailto:roy@gokidsgo.org.uk)

#### **Deputy DSO**

Name Emily Ellington

Phone/ email 01482 887163 [emily@gokidsgo.org.uk](mailto:emily@gokidsgo.org.uk)

#### **Safeguarding Trustee**

Name Jackie Hardman

Phone/ email 07813211015 [jackiebrew@hotmail.com](mailto:jackiebrew@hotmail.com)

#### **CEOP**

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

#### **NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

### **D Procedure for responding to allegations or suspicions**

A set procedure for responding to a wellbeing or protection concern about a child makes sure that everyone is clear on what action to take in the event of a concern being raised. The procedure is based on three steps: Respond, Record, Report.

The following principles underpin the procedure:

- The wellbeing of the child is the paramount consideration.
- Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children and where possible GO KIDS GO will work in partnership with parents/carers when there are concerns about a child.
- Children have the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously (Article 12, UNCRC). It is important therefore to seek the views of the child, where relevant and appropriate, and to seek their consent for further reporting of the concern.
- Where the concern about a child's wellbeing suggests that they are in need of protection, the information must be passed on to police/social work with or without the child's consent for the purposes of their protection. Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously.

### **WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD**

Members of staff may be informed in different ways with regards to details of a concern about a child. This may be:

- a direct disclosure by a child
- through observation of a child, demonstrated by a change in their behaviour, appearance or nature
- information that is shared from another individual or organisation

#### **Respond**

Any wellbeing concern about a child should be considered the best interests of the child will be considered as to what is the best support for each individual child. Children will be asked who they feel is suitable to be informed and when relevant, consent should be gained from the child.

#### **Record**

Make a written record of the wellbeing concern as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form, completing as much of the form as possible.

#### **Report**

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All wellbeing concerns should be reported to the DSO as soon as possible. The DSO may escalate the concern to police/social work if this is considered appropriate.

### **WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE**

#### **RESPOND**

Good practice:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Consider what requirements a child may need to communicate effectively
- Listen to the child and take what they say seriously. Do not show disbelief.
- Reassure the child they are not to blame and were right to tell someone.
- Avoid asking any questions. If necessary only ask enough questions to gain basic information e.g. Who? What? Where? When?
- It's important to explain to the child who you may need to share information with and why. Don't promise to keep information to yourself.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children.
- Pass on the information to the DSO, social work services or the police without delay

Avoid:

- Panicking / Showing shock or distaste
- Probing for more information than is offered
- Speculating or making assumptions
- Approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made
- Making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made

#### **RECORD**

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form, completing as much of the form as possible

#### **REPORT**

Advise the DSO as quickly as possible. This should not be delayed by gathering information to complete all sections of the form. The information in the form will help decide what action to take next.

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

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Where there are concerns that the parents/carers may be responsible for, or have knowledge of, the abuse sharing concerns with the parents/carers may place the child at further risk. In such cases advice must always firstly be sought from the police or social work services as to when and who should inform the parents/carers.

### TEMPLATE FLOWCHART FOR RESPONDING TO A CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERN



## Taking Appropriate Action: Children



If you feel that, despite the actions taken, the situation has not changed or nothing has been done, contact the NSPCC for further advice

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## What to Do if You are Worried about a Child

- Stay calm
- Ensure the child is safe
- **Listen** carefully (if someone is reporting their concerns)
- **Record** your concerns and anything that has been said/done
- **Report** concerns following your organisational reporting procedures
- Where appropriate, involve parents
- For further advice and information, call your organisation's lead safeguarding officer
- Use discretion

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It is not the responsibility of a representative of Go Kids Go to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

## **Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy**

### **E Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff**

#### **1 Introduction**

1.1 In rare instances, staff of training institutions have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. The Charity recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

1.2 The Charity recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the Charity will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation or even a combination of all.

- a child protection investigation
- a criminal investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information should be used to reach a decision.

#### **Action if there are concerns**

##### **1. Concerns about poor practice:**

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the DSO will deal with it as a conduct issue and report it to the person's line manager.
- If the allegation is about the poor practice of the designated DSO, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, any person may report directly to the LSCB who will decide how to deal with the allegation and advise regarding whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

##### **2. Concerns about suspected abuse:**

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer must be reported to the DSO who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The DSO person must follow the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board's guidance (see LSCB flow chart) referring the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police.

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- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department or the LADO and providing this will not put the child at risk of further harm.
- If a DSO is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made directly to the other designated DSO or in his/her absence the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) at East Riding Council

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a 'need to know' basis only. This includes the following people:

- DSO
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.

In English law, where there are concerns that a child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm, the prevailing consideration is to safeguard the child and confidentiality may be overridden in such situations.

Any information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws

(e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

### **Allegations of previous (historical) abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (for example by an adult who was abused as a child or an allegation about someone who is still currently working with children has abused).

## **F Receiving an allegation by a Child of Abuse Against Members of Staff**

- 1.1 A member of staff who receives an allegation about another member of staff from a child should follow the following guidelines for dealing with disclosure
- 1.2 The allegation should be reported immediately to the CEO, unless the Principal is the person against whom the allegation is made, in which case the report should be made to the Designated Trustee. The CEO (or designated person if the allegation is against the CEO) should:
  - 1.2.1 Obtain written details of the allegation from the person who received it, that are signed and dated. The written details should be countersigned and dated by the CEO.
  - 1.2.2 Record information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses.

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### 2 Initial Assessment by The Principal (or designated person)

- 2.1 The CEO should make an initial assessment of the allegation, consulting with the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility, the Designated Trustee and the Area Child Protection Committee as appropriate. **Where the allegation is considered to be either a potential criminal act or indicates that the child has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the LSCB.**
- 2.2 It is important that the CEO does not investigate the allegation. The initial assessment should be on the basis of the information received and is a decision whether or not the allegation warrants further investigation.
- 2.3 Other potential outcomes are:
  - 2.3.1 The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the child.
  - 2.3.2 The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true.

### 3 Enquiries and Investigations

- 3.1 Child protection enquiries by social services or the police are not to be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by the Charity. The Charity may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. The child protection agencies, including the police, have no power to direct the Charity to act in a particular way, however, the Charity should assist the agencies with their enquiries.
- 3.2 The Charity shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal police or social services investigations proceed; to do otherwise may prejudice the investigation. Any internal enquiries shall conform with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.
- 3.3 If there is an investigation by an external agency, for example the police, the CEO should normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the Charity gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. He will ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries, in the interests of the member of staff about whom the allegation is made. The CEO shall advise the member of staff that he/she should consult with a representative, for example, a trade union.
- 3.4 Subject to objections from the police or other investigating agency, the CEO shall:
  - 3.4.1 inform the child/children or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.
  - 3.4.2 ensure that the parents/carers of the child making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve.
  - 3.4.3 inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the likely process will involve.

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- 3.4.4 inform the Chair of Trustees and/or the designated trustee of the allegation and the investigation.
- 3.5 The CEO shall keep a written record of the action taken in connection with the allegation.
- 4 Suspension of Staff
  - 4.1 Suspension should not be automatic. In respect of staff other than the principal, suspension can only be carried out by the CEO. In respect of the CEO, suspension can only be carried out by the Chair of Trustees (or in his/her absence, the deputy chair).
  - 4.2 Suspension may be considered at any stage of the investigation. It is a neutral, not a disciplinary, act and shall be on full pay. Consideration should be given to alternatives: eg paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.
  - 4.3 Suspension should only occur for a good reason. For example:
    - 4.3.1 where a child is at risk.
    - 4.3.2 where the allegations are potentially sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.
    - 4.3.3 where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.
  - 4.4 If suspension is being considered, the member of staff should be encouraged to seek advice, for example from a trade union.
  - 4.5 Prior to making the decision to suspend, the CEO (or Chair of Vice Chair of Trustees) should interview the member of staff. This should occur with the approval of the appropriate agency from the LSCB. In particular, if the police are engaged in an investigation the officer in charge of the case should be consulted.
  - 4.6 The member of staff should be advised to seek the advice and/or assistance of his/her trade union and should be informed that they have the right to be accompanied by a friend. The member of staff should be informed that an allegation has been made and that consideration is being given to suspension. It should be made clear that the interview is not a formal disciplinary hearing, but solely for raising a serious matter which may lead to suspension and further investigation. How does this fit in with other disciplinary procedures?
  - 4.7 During the interview, the member of staff should be given as much information as possible, in particular the reasons for any proposed suspension, provided that doing so would not interfere with the investigation into the allegation. The interview is not intended to establish the member of staff's innocence or guilt, but give the opportunity for the member of staff to make representations about possible suspension. The member of staff should be given the opportunity to consider any information given to him/her at the meeting and prepare a response, although that adjournment may be brief.
  - 4.8 If the Principal (or Chair of Vice Chair of Trustees) considers that suspension is necessary, the member of staff shall be informed that he/she is suspended from duty. Written confirmation of the suspension, with reasons, shall be despatched as soon as possible, and ideally within one working day.

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- 4.9 Where a member of staff is suspended, the Principal (or Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees) should address the following issues:
- 4.9.1 the Chair of Trustees should be informed of the suspension in writing.
  - 4.9.2 the Board of Trustees should receive a report that a member of staff has been suspended pending investigation, the detail given to the governing body should be minimal
  - 4.9.3 where the CEO has been suspended, the Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees will need to take action to address the management of the Charity
  - 4.9.4 the parents/carers of the child making the allegation should be informed of the suspension. They should be asked to treat the information as confidential. Consideration should be given to informing the child making the allegation of the suspension
  - 4.9.5 senior staff who need to know of the reason for the suspension should be informed
  - 4.9.6 depending on the nature of the allegation, the CEO should consider with the nominated Trustee whether a statement to the students of the Charity and/or parents/carers should be made, taking due regard of the need to avoid unwelcome publicity
- 4.10 The CEO shall consider carefully and review the decisions as to who is informed of the suspension and investigation. The LSCB and external investigating authorities should be consulted.
- 4.11 The suspended member of staff should be given appropriate support during the period of suspension. He/she should also be provided with information on progress and developments in the case at regular intervals.
- 4.12 The suspension should remain under review in accordance with the Charity disciplinary procedures.
- 5 The Disciplinary Investigation
- 5.1 The disciplinary investigation should be conducted in accordance with the existing staff disciplinary procedures.
- 5.2 The member of staff should be informed of:
- 5.2.1 the disciplinary charge against him/her.
  - 5.2.2 his/her entitlement to be accompanied or represented by a trade union representative or friend.
- 5.3 Where the member of staff has been suspended and no disciplinary action is to be taken, the suspension should be lifted immediately and arrangements made for the member of staff to return to work. It may be appropriate to offer counselling.

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- 5.4 The child or children making the allegation and/or their parents should be informed of the outcome of the investigation and proceedings. This should occur prior to the return to Charity of the member of staff (if suspended).

### **6 Allegations without foundation**

- 6.1 Obviously false allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. A record should be kept and consideration given to a referral to the Area Child Protection Committee in order that other agencies may act upon the information.
- 6.2 In consultation with the designated senior member of staff and/or the designated Trustee, the CEO shall:
- 6.2.1 inform the member of staff against whom the allegation is made orally and in writing that no further disciplinary or child protection action will be taken. Consideration should be given to offering counselling/support.
  - 6.2.2 inform the parents/carers of the alleged victim that the allegation has been made and of the outcome.
  - 6.2.3 where the allegation was made by a child other than the alleged victim, consideration to be given to informing the parents/carers of that child.
  - 6.2.4 prepare a report outlining the allegation and giving reasons for the conclusion that it had no foundation and confirming that the above action had been taken.

### **7 Records**

- 7.1 It is important that documents relating to an investigation are retained in a secure place, together with a written record of the outcome and, if disciplinary action is taken, details retained on the member of staff's personal and confidential file..

### **8 Monitoring Effectiveness**

- 8.1 Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, the nominated Trustee, together with the senior staff member with lead responsibility should, at the conclusion of the investigation and any disciplinary procedures, consider whether there are any matters arising from it that could lead to the improvement of the Charity's procedures and/or policies and/or which should be drawn to the attention of the LSCB. Consideration should also be given to the training needs of staff.

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### **G Recruitment and Selection Procedures**

The Charity will ensure that their recruitment and selection procedures are reviewed regularly, in order to ensure that they take account of the following:

They should apply to staff and volunteers who may work with children.

The post or role should be clearly defined.

The key selection criteria for the post or role should be identified.

Vacancies should be advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants.

Require documentary evidence of academic/vocational qualifications.

Obtain professional and character references.

Verify previous employment history.

Conduct a DBS check (maintain sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure).

Use a variety of selection techniques (eg qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).

Safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures must include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, staff and volunteers who have direct or indirect (e.g. helpline, email) contact with children.

In the case of trustees, because of their position within the charity, we take the view that whenever there is a legal entitlement to obtain a DBS check in respect of such a trustee, a check should be carried out. This goes beyond circumstances where the trustee comes into contact with children.

Systems to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children are monitored and supervised and that they have opportunities to learn about child protection in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

Requirements for trustees, staff and volunteers to learn about safeguarding in accordance with and as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

## **Go Kids Go (Association of Wheelchair Children) Safeguarding Policy**

### **H Types of Abuse**

The trustees recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

#### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse causes harm to a child's person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

#### Neglect

Neglect occurs when adults fail to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

#### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.

#### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

#### Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can be verbal, written or physical – and increasingly includes online and social media activity. Forms of bullying can include:

Physical assaults, name-calling, sarcasm and racist taunts, threats and gestures, unwanted physical contact, graffiti, stealing or hiding personal items, being ostracised or ignored

#### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE:**

- Unexplained bruising or injuries
- Sexually explicit language/actions
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Something a child or adult at risk has said
- A change, observed over a long period of time

The presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily mean that abuse is occurring. In the first instance, you may wish to raise your concerns with the child, adult and/or parents to establish if there is cause for concern.