

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. REFERENCES

The Children Act 1989
Diversity and Equality Policy
Disciplinary Procedure
Protection of Vulnerable Adults Procedure
Service Risk assessments
Whistle Blowing Policy
Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd Rules for Probity
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Confidentiality Policy

2. DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd recognise that true diversity can only be achieved when there is a commitment to combating the effects of existing barriers to fair and equal treatment. Within society certain groups are unfairly discriminated against e.g. on the grounds of race, gender or gender identity, disability, sexual orientation and most importantly in this case, age – and as a result disadvantaged in terms of their access to services.

3. PURPOSE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd acknowledges it has a responsibility for the safety of children who come into contact with the organisation. It also recognises that good child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved in Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's work, including staff, as they can help protect them from erroneous or malicious allegation.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd does not look after children under 16 and has no powers to intervene in parental issues unless the child is in immediate danger. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd also does not have the power to investigate child protection issues, which is the role of social services and/or the police. However, it has a duty to inform the authorities if a child is considered to be in a harmful situation.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is committed to practices which protect children from harm. For the purpose of this policy, Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's staff include not only its full-time employees but trainees, volunteers and contractors. All staff who have unsupervised access to or contact with children are required to:

- recognise and accept their responsibilities;
- develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm; and
- report concerns following the procedure below.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is concerned that, in all its activities, it safeguards the well-being of every person in our community, of whatever age. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd takes extremely seriously the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of every member of our community, and particularly the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children and young people.

4. SCOPE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd endeavors to safeguard children by:

- a) Adopting child protection procedures and a code of practice for all who work on behalf of the organisation;
- b) Reporting concerns to the authorities irrespective of practice for all who work on behalf of the organisation
- c) Following carefully procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and Trustees; and
- d) Providing effective management for all staff and volunteers through support and training.
- e) Reviewing its Child Protection Policy and Code of Practice at regular intervals.

Furthermore, Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd plans the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Are responsible for ensuring this procedure is implemented▪ Are responsible for ensuring that reporting structures are used and followed
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Must follow this procedure

6. DEFINITIONS

Child

For the purpose of this procedure, a child is considered any person age 18 or under.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may be the result of a deliberate act, but could also be caused through the omission or failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. It may involve physical contact, including rape or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, and by other young people. It also includes non-contact activities such as involving children in watching or taking part in the making of pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or failing to ensure that a child gets appropriate medical care or treatment.

7. POLICY STATEMENT

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is committed to reviewing its Child and Protection Policy and Code of Practice at regular intervals.

- 7.1 All staff working on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will accept responsibility for the welfare of children who come into contact with the charity in connection with its tasks and functions; and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
- 7.2 There is a designated child protection person within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who will take action following any expression of concern and the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
- 7.3 The designated child protection person knows how to make appropriate referrals to child protection agencies.
- 7.4 All those who come into contact with children on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd should adhere to the Code of Practice in relation to children.
- 7.5 Information relating to any allegation or disclosure will be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should for record information and the time-scales for passing it on.
- 7.6 The Children Act 1987 states that the "welfare of the child is paramount". This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- 7.7 Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's Child Protection policy, and its duty of care to children, will be referred to or included in recruitment, training and policy materials where appropriate, and the policies are openly and widely available to staff and actively promoted within the organisation.
- 7.8 A culture of mutual respect between children and Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd staff and volunteers will be encouraged in all its activities, with adults modeling good practice in this context.
- 7.9 All staff and volunteers and anyone in paid or unpaid work on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who could at any time have unsupervised access to children will be checked appropriately.
- 7.10 It is part of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children that anybody who encounters child protection concerns in the context of their work on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.

8. CODE OF PRACTICE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd expects that all its staff, which for these purposes includes anybody in paid or unpaid work on its behalf, will be aware of this Code of Practice and adhere to its principles in their approach to all children.

1. All Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd activities are to be organised so that staff generally spend no time alone with children and in any event no longer than is necessary for the function of the event in question.
2. Parents/carers are informed clearly that they remain responsible for the welfare of their children at all Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd events – but Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd staff are also responsible for working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard the welfare of their children.
3. It is important for staff not to have physical contact with children when their parents/carers are not present, and this should in any event in general be avoided.
4. It is not good practice for staff to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.
5. Staff must not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
6. It is important for staff not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If this gives rise to a child protection concern it is important for staff to follow Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern themselves.
7. Staff need to remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
8. Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

9. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSON (DCPP)

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd has appointed a designated child protection person who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. This person is Carmen Llorente, contactable by telephone on **0208 904 2242 or 07506 828 939** or by email at Carmen.llorente@yes-ltd.org.uk

The role of the designated person(s) is to:

1. Know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern coming to the notice of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd
2. Provide information and advice on child protection within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd
3. Liaise with the legal guardian prior to contacting Social Services, unless the health & safety of the child would be put at risk by doing so;
4. Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover.
5. Liaise with local social services and other agencies, as appropriate.
6. Keep relevant people within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd informed about any action taken and any further action required; for example, disciplinary action against a member of staff.
7. Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence.
8. Advise Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd of child protection training needs; and
9. Liaise with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to review the operation of the Child Protection Policy regularly to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice.

10. RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO A CHILD MAKING AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said.
3. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
4. Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
7. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
9. Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
10. It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection person in the organisation.

11. PROCEDURE

11.1 Procedure for reporting concerns

Staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

1. The conduct of a member of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's staff;
2. A child "disclosing" abuse;
3. Bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by
4. Unusual behaviour by a child.
5. A disclosure or unusual behaviour of an adult, including members of staff from other agencies.

If a member of staff has such concerns they should be reported to a DCPD using the form as set out as part of the process flowchart

Concerns about a specific child should be reported immediately by telephone to the DCPD and confirmed in writing within 24 hours using the form available from the DCPD. Delay could prejudice the welfare of a child. If the concerns relate to the conduct of a member of staff these should be reported by phone to the DCPD at the earliest opportunity.

The DCPD will consider the report and either refer this immediately to the authorities or, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with the NSPCC) decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns.

If the allegation of abuse is about the conduct of a member of staff, then the allegation should be considered as an allegation of gross misconduct under the disciplinary procedure and the member of staff should be suspended immediately, pending an investigation (Section 6.3 Disciplinary Procedure).

The member of staff should have access to all the support provided by Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd and should be made clear that suspension is not a sign of presumed guilt, just a precautionary act while the claim is investigated.

11.2 Recruitment and selection procedures

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd has a policy that Staff have a minimum of unsupervised access to or contact with children in the normal course of their work. They are required to develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm; and report concerns following the procedures set out in this document.

No-one shall work or volunteer within or on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who:

- has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933; or
- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people.

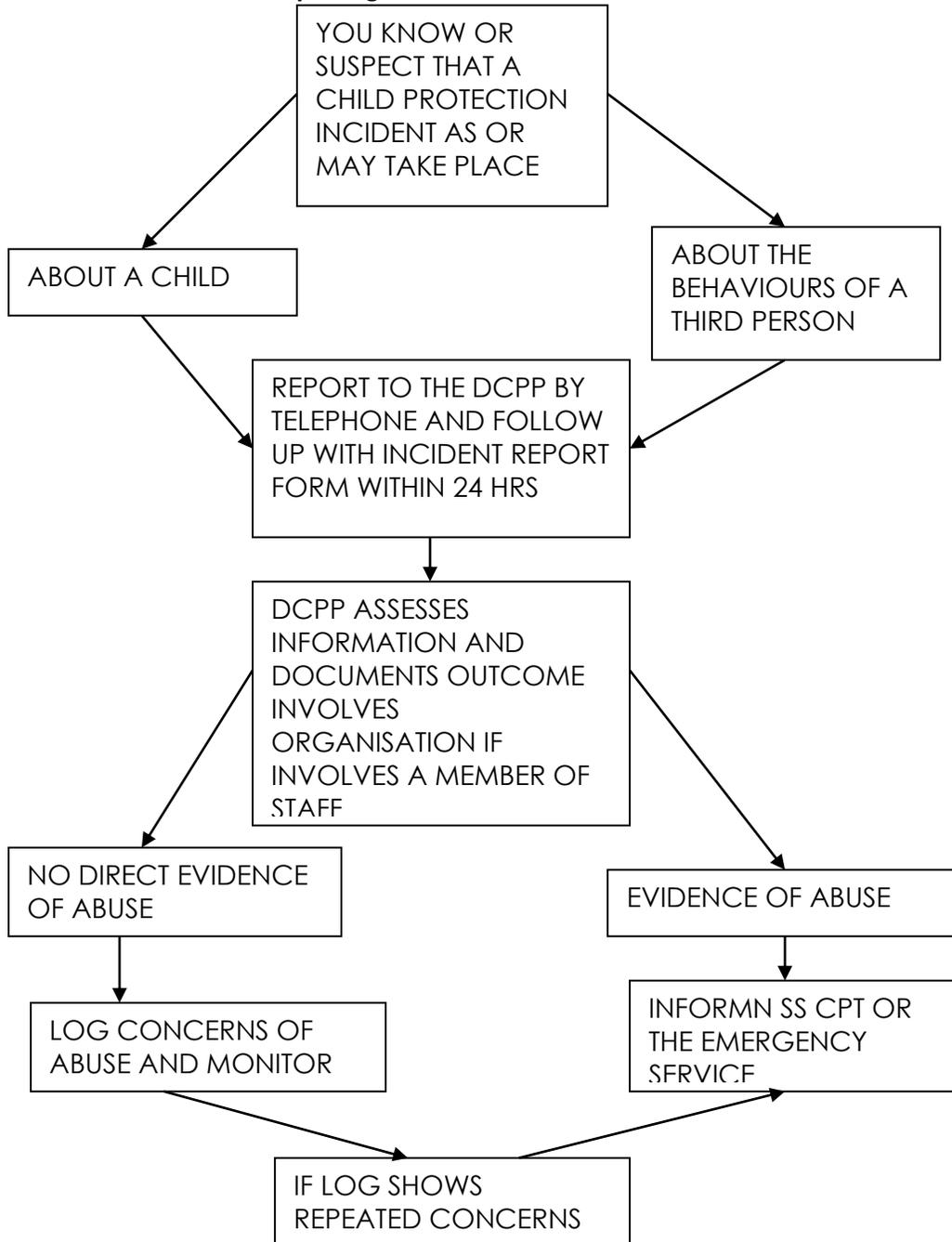
This means that:

- all who work or volunteer to work for Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will be required to be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau, and are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work; and (from 2009 individuals will need to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority).
- those responsible for the appointment of such workers and volunteers must take all reasonable steps, including obtaining Disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau, to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work with young people under the auspices of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd

Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures for staff and volunteers in the context of child protection have been adopted by Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd and include the following.

1. A clear definition of any role so that the most suitable appointee can be identified.
2. Identification of key selection criteria.
3. A wide circulation of vacancies to ensure equal opportunities.
4. Confirmation of the identity of the applicant including personal details obtained either through using an application form where appropriate, or through other means.
5. Requirement of a declaration of previous convictions and submission to formal check, together with the issue of the Child Protection Policy for those candidates whose work will bring them into contact with children or who will have a management responsibility in relation to those whose work does bring them into such contact.
6. A clear guarantee that disclosed information will be treated in confidence and not used against applicants unfairly, including adherence to the Criminal Records Bureau code of practice.
7. Documentary evidence of qualifications.
8. Use of several selection techniques to maximise the chance of safe recruitment, e.g. interview, references, checks.
9. At least one representative from Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd meeting personally with every applicant, and an exploration of their attitudes towards working with children.
10. Written references.

11.3 Process Flowchart for Reporting Concern



11.4 Monitoring

The Designated Manager will collate all abuse cases every 3 months to:

- Analyse how each reported case was dealt with
- Ensure this procedure was followed in all case
- Identify any themes emerging in abuse cases
- Identify any disincentives to reporting suspected or actual abuse
- Identify any potential service improvements which can be made

The designated Manager will produce a report for discussion at meetings of the Senior Management meeting and Management Committee Meeting.

12. FORMS

Appendix 1: Report Form

Appendix 2: Individual Log Form

APPENDIX 1

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT MONITORING FORM

Name of Staff Reporting	
Date of Incident	
People Involved, including Ages	
Date Reported to DCP	
Type of Alleged Abuse	
Details of Incident	
Signed	
Date	

Date Seen by DCP	
Action by DCP	
Follow Up Action Required	
Outcome	
Signed Off by DCP	
Date	

APPENDIX 2

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT LOG

Customer name and address	Date of incident	Date reported	Nature of abuse	Action Taken	Ref to social service?	Date sent to DCCP