

Policy Name:	Safeguarding Policy
Author:	Naomi Hollinshead & Michelle Dixon
Current Date:	November 2024
Next Review Date:	November 2025
Other Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Recruitment and Selection • Self-Harm Protocol • Whistleblowing • Sexual Health & Relationships (C&A) • Domestic Abuse and Conflict Management • ICT Policy (C&A) • Lone Working • Code of Conduct • Health & Safety • Positive Behaviour Policy

APPROVAL

This procedure has been approved by the undersigned, and it will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Signed off by CEO	Signature:	Date:
Approved by Board	Signature:	Date:

INTRODUCTION

Child Action Northwest (CANW) is a registered charity. It has been supporting children and young people for 130 years since the founding of Blackburn Orphanage in 1886. Our mission is to support children, vulnerable adults and families across our regions ensuring that when life presents difficult circumstances, we are 'there every step of the way to make sure they get the support they need'. The organisation has developed its services to provide a wide range of support and intervention for children and families.

The Department for Education (DFE) outlined in November 2024 the government's commitment to 'Keeping Children Safe Helping Families Thrive'. It states that whilst our legislation aims to support families to stay together, for some children the safest place is for them to be in care.

CANW's wide range of services includes early help, supporting our families to stay together through our young carers team, our emotional health and wellbeing team, a service for families with children with autism, intervention for those young people involved in the criminal justice system, and a team commissioned by Children and Family Court Advisory Service (CAFCASS) to promote and monitor contact within the private law arena. This policy covers

our statutory services including our **Fostering Service and Residential Care** for our children and young people who cannot safely live at home. However this will be relevant alongside our statutory requirements and processes for regulated services.

This policy applies to all our services, at every level to enable CANW to provide high quality support and intervention to children, young people and vulnerable adults and to ensure all are protected and supported when needed.

TRANSPARENT LEARNING CULTURE

To achieve our vision and to be held accountable we want to create a safe working culture and environment where all are committed to ensuring children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe. We aim to make sure our staff, trustees and volunteers are supported, and know how to respond to concerns, regarding safeguarding including the behaviour or practice of others.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our policies and procedures with named safeguarding roles and staff accountable for ensuring they are read and understood by all.

Acceptable standards of behaviour are expected of our staff, trustees partner agencies and the children, families and vulnerable adults we work with.

An open and transparent culture is at the heart of our organisation where safeguarding forms an integral part of not only individual supervision but throughout our quality assurance framework and general function of the charity. We are committed to:

- Open discussions to talk about safeguarding measures and establish if they are effective.
- Encourage professional challenge and curiosity.
- Provide opportunities for all staff & others to share any worries and concerns in relation to safeguarding.
- Transparent, clear procedures that are actively promoted by the Senior Leadership Team and Trustee Board to encourage all staff & others to raise and escalate their concerns within their organisations through whistle blowing procedures.
- Support for staff & others when they raise concerns.
- Robust recording systems that are timely and accurate.
- Detect and identify inappropriate behaviour or abuse within the workplace at the earliest opportunity and respond appropriately.
- Effective inductions and a robust probationary periods. Having a consistent induction process will make sure all CANW staff fully understand and know how to follow the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ongoing safeguarding training. Ensure everyone is kept up to date with any changes that are made to the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Child: “A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout.” (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and 2023)

Adult at Risk: “An adult at risk is a person who is 18 years or older and is... unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.” (Care Act 2014) also referred to as vulnerable adult within this policy.

Safeguarding: “Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them from harm” (NSPCC).

LEADERSHIP

CANW Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Naomi Hollinshead; Chief Operating Officer - NHollinshead@CANW.org.uk

CANW Trustee Lead responsible for Safeguarding is:

Steve Peddie; Chair of the Board of Trustees - SPeddie@CANW.org.uk

CANW Deputy Safeguarding Lead is:

Michelle Dixon; Operations Director - MMDixon@CANW.org.uk

However, any employee, trustee or volunteer who is concerned about a young person or vulnerable adult has a duty to act and should inform their line manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The Designated Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead has a responsibility to:

- Act as the contact person within CANW providing advice and support and ensuring that all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) are aware of their role.
- Co-ordinate actions within CANW on safeguarding issues;
- Discuss individual cases with staff when appropriate to protect the child/ young person or vulnerable adult at risk.
- Represent CANW at multi-agency meetings including child in need/ child protection, strategy meetings alongside being part of local safeguarding partnership arrangements or child safeguarding practice reviews.
- Ensure staff are familiar with this policy and any related procedures.
- Chair the Safeguarding Steering Group and the Safeguarding subgroup which reports into the Board of Trustees.

COMMITMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Trustee Board, all employees permanent, temporary or volunteers, and partner agencies working on behalf of CANW are aware of their legal and personal responsibilities to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and that everyone knows what to do should they have a concern.

CANW is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, families and vulnerable adults at risk by implementing:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Safer Recruitment and Vetting of Staff, Volunteers and Trustees policies
- A Code of Conduct
- Training
- Support for staff, volunteers and trustees

CANW recognises a legal responsibility to take all reasonable actions to ensure that the risk of harm to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is minimised, and a duty of care is always exercised towards them. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

This is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

In relation to vulnerable adults safeguarding adults at risk involves reducing or preventing the risk of significant harm from neglect or abuse, while also supporting people to maintain control of their own lives. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk; this is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Ensuring they can live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Empowering them by encouraging them to make their own decisions and provide informed consent.
- Minimising the risk of abuse or neglect and preventing it from occurring.
- Promoting their wellbeing and take their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.

This policy outlines how to recognise the signs and indicators of possible abuse to ensure that staff, volunteers and trustees recognise the significance of what they are observing, and the procedures that they need to follow if they have a concern.

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 make it clear that people who work with children have the responsibility to keep them safe. This is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (to which the UK is a signatory) which sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse. The document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018 and 2023) sets out the arrangements for how all organisations must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

“Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, child protection should take priority over all other work” (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 and 2023). [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Adult protection is part of safeguarding and was first placed in a legal framework within the Care Act 2014. This does not only refer to adults who lack capacity. Adults with full capacity can still be considered at risk if they are unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm.

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Children: Abuse is “a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children” (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 and 2023). In relation to child protection there are four types of abuse defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

Adults at Risk: Protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and

experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. (Care Act 2014). In relation to adult protection there are 10 types of abuse defined in the Care and Support statutory guidance as follows:

- Physical Abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial or material
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational and/or institutional abuse
- Neglect or act of omission
- Self-neglect

TRAINING

All CANW staff, volunteers and trustees working directly or managing services for children and vulnerable adults will be required to complete relevant safeguarding training in accordance with their role requirements. All CANW staff must read this policy and ensure it is understood and implemented.

Staff should understand both their role and responsibilities, and those of other professionals and organisations.

All CANW staff receive regular supervision whereby safeguarding is an agenda item and specific cases discussed and reflected on in order to capture good practice and areas for improvement. Safeguarding concerns should not wait for supervision.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE OR A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE

A child or adult at risk may choose to disclose concerning information to any employee, trustee or volunteer, or may be observed carrying out concerning behaviour that raises concerns around possible abuse. It is not the duty of employees, trustees or volunteers to investigate the issue themselves; however, it is their responsibility to gather as much information as possible. Where you suspect a child or adult at risk is being abused or there is potential for harm you should immediately discuss your concerns with your line manager or other manager to agree an urgent course of action and inform your DSL.

(Please see Page 3 contact details)

If there is significant concern, you will be advised to contact Children's Social Care/Adult Services and/ or the Police immediately. The designated safeguarding leads or line manager will assist you making the referral.

(Please see flow chart attached)

If you are unsure or have some concerns, that you feel are of a safeguarding nature speak to your line manager or the designated safeguarding leads who are there to deal with any concerns and offer advice and support.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is the person who should be notified when it has been alleged that a professional or volunteer 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 she or he may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children

The role involves having oversight of allegations about practitioners which meet the above criteria, ensuring that these allegations or concerns about adults working or volunteering with children are recorded appropriately, monitored and progressed in a timely and confidential way. It is also important to ensure that the voice of the child or young person is heard and taken into account at every stage.

(Please see attached flowchart re LADO referral)

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION & ADVISING PARENTS OF REFERRAL

Our children, adults at risk and their parents/carers have the right to expect all staff, volunteers and trustees to deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information is only available to those who need to know it. Parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child/adult at risk should be told that their right to confidentiality may be breached if information comes to light suggesting possible harm to other people.

Safeguarding issues relating to individual cases must not be subject to open discussion in the office or elsewhere. Should any information or correspondence related to specific safeguarding issues need to be sent via email or any other electronic means it must be password protected for confidentiality of sensitive information.

Parents and carers should always be informed of a referral unless this would put the child at risk.

When advising parents of a referral to children's social care you should be clear and professional, whilst gathering as much information as you can considering their point of view as part of the presenting information.

INFORMATION SHARING

Effective information sharing by professionals is central to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, families and vulnerable adults.

The lack of an information sharing agreements between agencies should never be a reason for not sharing information. It is important to remember that a continuing theme of serious case reviews is a lack of information sharing across agencies and potentially resulted in a child being seriously harmed or death.

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

Safeguarding is a key governance priority for the CANW Board of Trustees. The Trustee responsible for safeguarding must be notified by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other member of staff who is acting in this capacity) of any significant safeguarding issues involving CANW staff or volunteers.

Serious Safeguarding Incident Reports (SIR's) will be summarised and presented to the quarterly Safeguarding Subgroup and shared with the Board if appropriate

The Board will also be informed of any;

- changes in the safeguarding policy or procedures;
- update on safeguarding training delivered;

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

For further information on policies closely aligned to the Safeguarding Policy, please see the following:

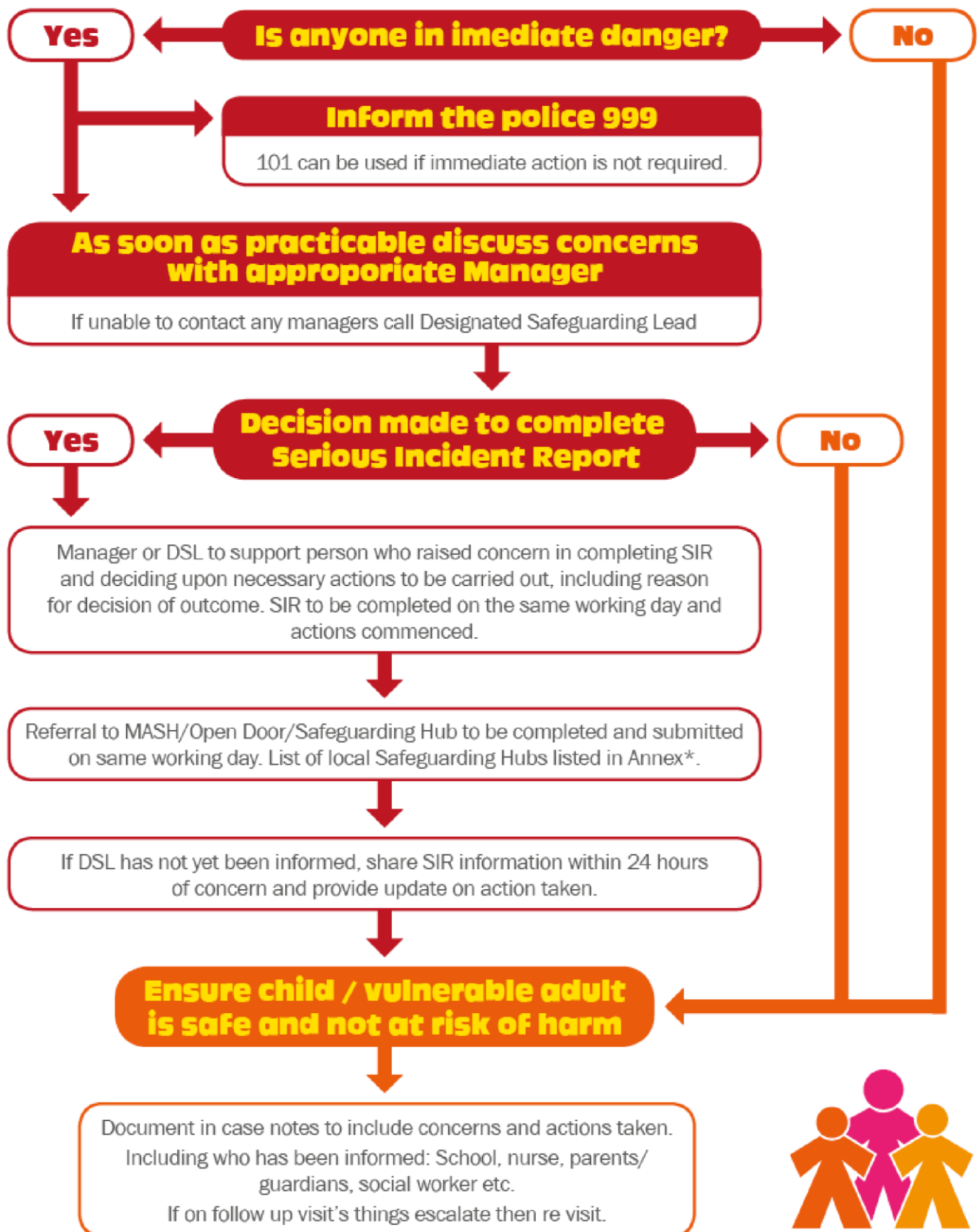
- Dignity at Work Policy (including Code of Conduct)
- Lone Working with Young People
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

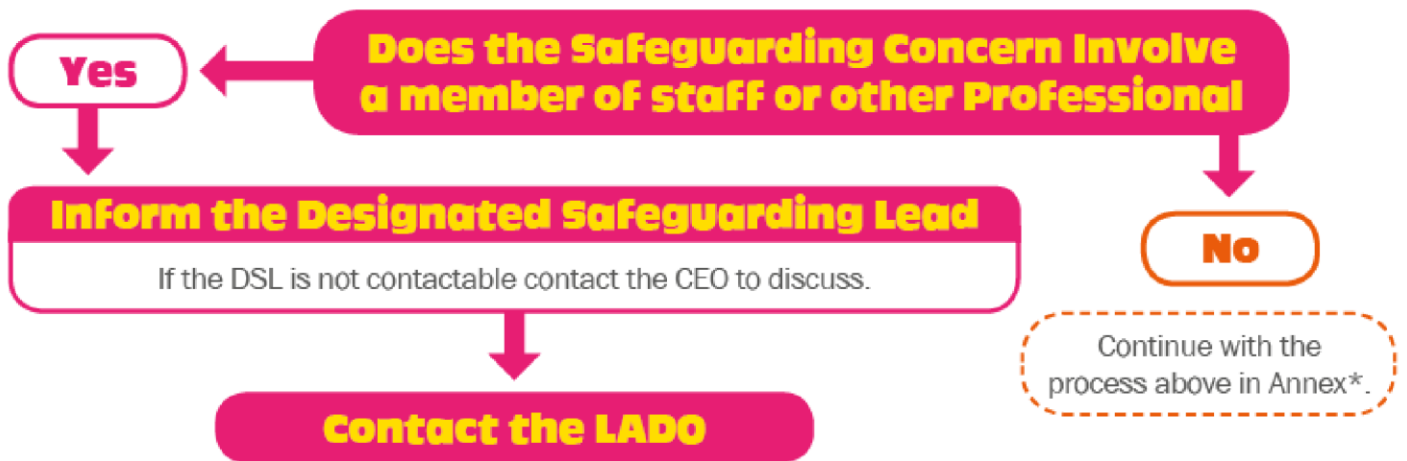
MONITORING & REVIEWING

The safeguarding policy will be regularly monitored, and reviewed on an annual basis, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Deputy and Trustee responsible for safeguarding. The policy will also be reviewed in response to any changes in legislation or to CANW working practices.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY PROCEDURES & FLOWCHARTS

Child Action Northwest INTERNAL





Do

- ✓ Make a record of events in service users own words.
- ✓ For allegations against staff consult LADO.
- ✓ Preserve evidence if any.
- ✓ Date, time, incident, names of persons present, description of injuries observed.
- ✓ Keep your line manager or DSL informed at all times.

Do Not

- ✗ Promise confidentiality.
- ✗ Discuss with the person whom the allegation is made.
- ✗ Start investigating the matter yourself or ask leading questions.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Name: _____ Contact details: _____

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership

Name: _____ Contact details: _____

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name: _____ Contact details: _____

**INSPIRING LIVES,
CHANGING FUTURES**

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