

**Safeguarding Children Policy**

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**1. Why does SWAN Women’s Centre have a Safeguarding Children Policy?**

Our Organisation aims to protect the children and young people with whom we work. SWAN is committed to practices that protects children and young people from harm and abuse.

This policy informs all staff, trustees, volunteers and students within SWAN what their responsibilities are in terms of training, recognising and reporting abuse.

**Definition:** A child is someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Once they turn 18, they are legally an adult.

Staff and volunteers at SWAN are trained to ensure that all of the services we provide are managed with safeguarding in mind in order to stop and reduce the risk of abuse of children. Unfortunately, sometimes people who work or volunteer with organisations such as SWAN do so because they intend to target children and may wish to abuse them. To minimise the risk of this happening within SWAN, we have this safeguarding policy.

This safeguarding policy should be read in combination with our wider policy framework to guide the way we recruit and select workers and volunteers. To help us do this, all staff and volunteers who carry out regular work with children and young people, must go through an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check prior to working with us.

All staff and volunteers are expected at all times to conform to good practice in their work and undertake safeguarding & child protection training courses and Early Help training as identified by Sefton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) <https://seftonscp.org.uk/scp> on a yearly basis.

You may read more about our safer recruitment practices in our Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy.

**2. What laws and guidance cover this policy?**

* The Care Act 2014
* Criminal Justice & Court Services Act 2000
* Protection of Children Act 1999
* Police Act 1997
* The Children Act 1989 and 2004
* Working Together to Safeguard Children – updated 2023
* Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
* HM Government. Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2019
* Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
* HM Government. Information Sharing 2018
* The Mental Capacity Act 2005

**3. What is abuse?**

So that we can fully understand safeguarding, it’s important to fully understand what abuse is. Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human rights. It can be a single act or repeated acts.

Forms of abuse can include:

* Physical abuse such as: hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, misuse of medication, scalding, inappropriate restraint, hair-pulling.
* Sexual abuse such as: rape or sexual assault; sexual acts to which the child has not or could not have consented, or to which they were pressurised into consenting.
* Psychological or emotional abuse such as: threats of harm or abandonment; deprivation of social or any other form of contact; humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, or harassment; verbal abuse; prevention from receiving services or support.
* Financial or material abuse such as: theft; fraud or exploitation; pressure in connection with wills, property, or inheritance; misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
* Neglect or acts of omission such as: ignoring medical or physical care needs; preventing access to health, social care, or educational services; withholding the necessities of life, such as food, drink, or heating. Poor home conditions can also constitute neglect such as hoarding, poor level of cleanliness home environments, hoarded homes and a lack or erratic home routine.
* Domestic abuse – all forms of abuse can be experienced in a family setting by a partner, family member, or with someone with whom there is a relationship.
* Institutional abuse and poor practice – disrespect and unethical practice, ill treatment and professional misconduct.

Any of these forms of abuse can be deliberate, or be the result of ignorance or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often, if a person is being abused in one way they may also be being abused in other ways.

Children may be more susceptible to being “groomed” prior to abuse taking place. This means that someone wishing to abuse them could deliberately befriend them, making an emotional connection with them in order to inflict abuse on them more easily, usually in preparation for sexual activity with the child or other exploitation such as forced labour, prostitution or other trafficking.

**4. Child Exploitation- (CE)**

What is Child Exploitation?

Child exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit; often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment.

SWAN believes that any child or young person involved in any aspect of Child Exploitation are victims first.

Two main types of CE include:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Consent

Children aged under 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. Young people aged between 13 – 15 years cannot legally consent to sexual activity although it is behaviour that teenagers of a similar age may mutually agree to sexual activity. The key question is whether consent was gained through coercion within an exploitative context. Where this is the case, any consent given by the child will be disregarded.

Young people aged between 16 – 17 years old can consent to sexual activity but an offence will be committed where there is an imbalance of power due to a disparity in ages, where there is an element of duress, abuse or exploitation or where there is an abuse of a position of trust.

Young people over the age of 16 – who do not have the capacity to consent such as those identified in the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE often involves gangs and organised criminal networks in exporting illegal drugs into rural or coastal areas within the UK described as ‘County Lines’. Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

CSE and CCE are closely linked and are therefore assessed and screened for at the same time using the same tools. Young people may experience one or both of these forms of exploitation. It does happen in our communities.

In the areas in which SWAN provides services, it is not known exactly how many children are being sexually or criminally exploited, however, we know it is happening. There are clear indications that sexual or criminal exploitation is affecting children under 16 years of age across all cultures and including children who are cared for by their Local Authority. A further feature of exploitation for this age group is a significant link to substance misuse and children missing from home. The most common factors are low self-esteem and vulnerability. In some cases, children and young people are drawn into exploitation by peers who are already involved.

Practice and research have shown that children, particularly girls, who are being sexually exploited, have frequently been coerced into this by an older man, who poses as, and whom they view as, their boyfriend. They are physically and emotionally dependent upon him and the relationship may be reinforced by the use of alcohol and drugs. Over time, access to friends and family may become restricted and the child become alienated from their family and statutory services.

Practitioners need to be aware that children and young people are at risk of exploitation through various methods, such as

* Production of abusive images, including use of the internet
* Internet chatrooms and message boards
* Trafficking
* Radicalisation
* Involvement with Gangs and organised crime

Risk factors to CSE and CCE

Research shows that young people are more vulnerable to sexual and/or criminal exploitation where any of the following factors are present:

* going missing regularly/frequently
* family breakdown
* not in full time education
* associating with older people
* domestic violence within the family
* family involvement in sexual exploitation
* children of parents with a high level of vulnerabilities (drug/alcohol, mental health etc.)
* children with substance misuse or mental health issues
* experience of physical abuse and emotional deprivation
* experience of child sexual abuse
* experience of being bullied in school
* cared for children in residential care
* care experienced young people
* Children within the criminal justice service
* Promising children they will receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of complying.
* Through use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

What to do if you suspect a child or young person is being sexually and/or criminally exploited.

Professionals working with children and young people need to be aware of the indicators of exploitation and note any changes in behaviour that suggests that the child or young person may be involved in or at risk of involvement in sexual exploitation.

Professionals need to take note of children who may show indicators of being groomed and should also be aware of children in sexual relationships that present as consensual but which may be exploitative. Importantly, professionals must share information with others in the child’s network (see also Information Sharing). It is often only when **all** information is available that a true picture of the child’s situation comes to light. In some cases, the sharing of information about one child may highlight other children who may also be at risk of sexual exploitation.

If you feel a child is at risk of CSE please refer to Children’s services in the Local Authority of where the child resides as per the **flow chart in point 20** of this policy.

If the child is in immediate danger please call the police on 999.

**5. Forced Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

What is FGM?

FGM is the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting. FGM is often performed by someone with no medical training who uses instruments such as a knife, scalpel, scissors, glass or razor blade.

FGM can be carried out at various ages such as a female new born baby, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy. It is extremely dangerous and can cause severe pain, shock, bleeding, infections and in some cases death.

There are certain countries who are identified of having an increased risk. These are Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Guinea and Somalia, Yemen, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Niger, Liberia, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana and Uganda (Unicef.org 2019).

Children are also considered to be at higher risk if FGM has already been carried out on their mother.

What are the signs and indicators of FGM

* A relative or ‘cutter’ visiting from abroad
* A special occasion or ceremony to ‘become a woman’ or prepare for marriage
* A female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, older female relative such as a mother or aunt
* Unexpected, repeated or prolonged absence from school

What are the signs that FGM may have happened

* Difficulty walking, standing or sitting
* Spend longer in the bathroom
* Appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
* Display unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
* Be reluctant to have routine medical examinations

FGM is child abuse and is illegal in the United Kingdom and should be reported as a safeguarding concern if you identify a child has had or is at risk of having this procedure carried out. If you feel the child is immediate danger, to contact the police on 999.

**6. Honour Based Violence (HBV)**

HBV is violence committed when the family or community feel the victim has not followed what they believe is acceptable behaviour and has brought shame or dishonour to the family. Women and girls are predominantly the victims; however, it can also affect men. In extreme cases, victims can be killed.

Common triggers for HBV are refusing an arranged marriage, defying their parents, talking to a male who is not related to the family, becoming ‘western’ (wearing make-up or clothes deemed inappropriate, having a relationship outside the approved group, loss of virginity, pregnancy outside of marriage, spending time without the supervision of a family member, reporting domestic violence, attempting to divorce and pushing for custody of children after divorce and being homosexual.

Indicators of potential honour based violence may include

* + an extended absence from school or college
  + truancy
  + a drop in their academic performance
  + low motivation
  + extensive parental restrictions and strong control of their movements
  + self-harm
  + depression
  + anxiety
  + attempted suicide
  + eating disorders
  + substance abuse
  + domestic abuse
  + children running away from home

If you are concerned a child is a victim of Honour Based Violence this must be reported as a safeguarding concern, please see point 19 of this policy. If you feel the child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 999.

**7. Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. This is different to an arranged marriage, whereby both parties provide consent and have a choice whether they marry or not. It has been recognised that children have also been victims of forced marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in the United Kingdom and is reportable to the Local Authority as a safeguarding concern or the Police.

Some families force children to marry because they may

See it as an important aspect of their religion

* They are worried about the family’s ‘honour’
* They offer their children to marry in exchange for money
* They don’t approve of their child being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender
* Feel pressured by the community or other family members to follow traditions

Indications a child may be at risk of forced marriage or have been forced to marry

* Extended absences from school/college
* A child talking about an upcoming holiday they are worried about
* A fear they will be taken out of education and kept abroad
* Unreasonable restrictions by parents such as not being able to leave the home
* A child going missing/running away
* A child who discloses they are worried they will be forced to marry
* The child coming from a community where forced marriage is part of the culture
* Self-harm
* Suicide attempt
* Domestic abuse

**Please see the flow chart in point 20 of this policy**

**8. Hoarding**

Hoarding is now recognised as a mental health condition and can be classed under self-neglect as stated in The Care Act (2014). Dependant on the level of hoarding this may be reportable as a safeguarding concern due to the associated consequences of children living in this environment, whilst also being mindful of respecting a person’s right to privacy and making unwise decision. The needs of the child at risk must come first and any actions we take must reflect this.

Please review local authority guidance on their website for RAG rating of hoarding and safeguarding referral form.

**9. Prevent**

Prevent is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy which is called CONTEST. It aims to stop people, both children and adults, becoming terrorists and supporting terrorism. It is thought those who may be deemed vulnerable are at a greater risk of becoming radicalised. Signs that a child is being radicalised include isolating themselves from family and friends, talking as if from a scripted speech, a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others, increased levels of anger and increased secretiveness especially around internet use.

If you suspect a child is supporting terrorism this is a safeguarding concern which is reportable to the local Authority of where the child resides and it is to be put through as a Prevent referral. As per the flow chart concerns must be documented. You would not inform the parents as part of a Prevent referral due to the nature of the concern.

If you feel the child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 999 or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

A referral under Prevent is in the pre-criminal space if no crime has been committed.

**10. How could a risk of abuse be present in the work SWAN undertakes?**

Whilst we make every possible effort to ensure that the workers and volunteers who work for SWAN are thoroughly screened and trained, we recognise that organisations such as SWAN can be targeted by individuals wishing to gain access to children, young people and vulnerable adults in order to abuse them.

SWAN provides a befriending service. This means that staff and volunteers are sometimes visiting vulnerable people in their homes and there will be many times that the staff member or volunteer and the individual in receipt of support are alone.

It is envisaged that through training, education and a robust recruitment process the risk of a staff member or volunteer being a perpetrator of abuse is low, yet it is one we must acknowledge.

**11. What could stop children reporting that they have been abused?**

There are frequently very powerful ‘disincentives’ to someone reporting abuse, for example,

* Emotional or psychological threats about retribution that the abuser makes to the person who is being abused.
* Fear that if they report being abused they may lose support services.
* Fear that if they report being abused they will be stigmatised by family, friends and/or the community they live in.
* Not knowing how to report being abused.
* Fear that they will not be believed if they report abuse.
* Feeling that they are powerless to report abuse.

**12. What should you do if you suspect someone is being abused?**

If you suspect that a child or young persons is being subjected to abuse, **it is important that you do not ignore your suspicions.** If the child or young person concerned has told you about abusive situation in which they are the victim, you must assure them that you are taking their concerns very seriously.

You should make it clear to that child or young person that you are unable to keep what they have told you as a ‘secret’, as you will have to pass this information on to the relevant professionals to investigate the situation. This may seem frightening, as the child or young person might just want someone to talk to about what is happening to them. They may get angry or upset once you tell them that you have to tell someone. However, if you were to keep the ‘secret’ then you have become a part of the abusive situation, as you are forced into knowing about a situation and not acting on it. In effect, you are then colluding with it.

It is important that abusive situations are acted on. It can be really difficult for a child or young person to tell of abuse if it involves family members, as the consequences of an investigation can be very serious for the family. This highlights even further, though, the importance of your being clear with the child or young person alleging abuse that it is a very serious matter, and that you will have to inform the appropriate people of your conversation.

Whether you are told of abuse or suspect it due to seeing marks or bruising, hearing comments, witnessing an incident or thinking that someone is trying to communicate through their behaviour, you must not investigate the matter yourself. You will want to give the child or young person a chance to say what they want to say to you, but do not ask lots of detailed questions, as this could jeopardise any possible court proceedings later and could lead to a non-conviction if it is thought (rightly or wrongly) that you gave the child or young person ideas which weren’t there in the first place.

It is important that you listen carefully to what is being said to you. You must write down what has been said as soon as you can afterwards, as it is difficult to recall accurately what has been said at a later date.

**13. Information Sharing Advice**

Staff and volunteers maybe concerned about sharing information with other professionals but:

* Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
* Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
* Seek advice from other staff members, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
* Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
* Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
* Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
* Keep a record of your decision on the database and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

**Please refer to the flow chart at the end of this policy, point 20 for further information regarding the process of making a referral.**

**14. Useful telephone numbers and online information:**

Sefton MBC Customer Access Team 0151 934 3555

Sefton Children’s Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0151 934 4013

Sefton's Designated Officer for the Local Authority (LADO) 0151 934 3783

Sefton Children’s Help and Advice Team (CHAT) 0151 934 4013

Sefton Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) 0151 934 5142

Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership https://seftonscp.org.uk/scp

Liverpool City Council Careline 0151 233 3700

Wirral Borough Council Social Services 0151 606 2008

Merseyside Police (non-emergency) 101

Hate Crime (See Point 19)

**15. What safeguards are in place at SWAN to protect children and young people?**

As noted earlier, SWAN requires potential staff and volunteers to undergo Enhanced DBS checks (if the role involves regular work with [children](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/legal-glossary/#children) or [vulnerable adults](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/legal-glossary/#VulnerableAdult)) prior to starting to work for us. We also take up at least 2 professional references.

As part of a new trustee’s, staff, volunteers and students induction process, they must familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding policies and procedures. They must also sign a declaration stating that they agree to work within the rules and guidance we have set out, including our Code of Conduct and that they have read and understood this policy.

**16. How does SWAN manage allegations against staff or volunteers?**

SWAN is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We recognise that despite every effort, there may be occasions when concerns or allegations of misconduct are made against a SWAN member of staff of volunteer.

Concerns or allegations maybe that the staff or volunteer has:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or young person.
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child or young person.
* Behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicated that they are unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk.

Any allegations against staff or volunteer should be reported immediately to a Senior Manager, who will report the case into Sefton’s Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance. The Designated Officer for the Local Authority (LADO) should be informed within one working day of all allegations.

If we remove an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work that involves children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.**

**17. Documentation**

* All relevant information should be documented on our database.
* Information should be objective and factually accurate.
* Do not include personal opinions or assumptions. Observations should be explained. For example, it is not appropriate to say X was very upset, best practice would be ‘X appeared to be upset as she was crying and visibly shaking’.
* Dates and times should always be correctly documented.

**18. How do we make sure that this policy is put into practice at SWAN?**

Aside from our regular policy reviews, we ensure that staff and volunteers are reminded about their duties and responsibilities for safeguarding through one to one supervisions sessions, group supervisions and regular policy/training away days throughout the year.

At our weekly individual team meetings and monthly whole team meetings, there is an opportunities to discuss, review, challenge and revise the procedures that we have here at SWAN, safeguarding issues are included in this. Safeguarding is also a regular agenda item on all Trustee Meetings. We have recently designated one of our Trustees as the Safeguarding Lead on the board. She has safeguarding training and will have regular update training to carry out this role.

SWAN facilitates trainee counsellor and student placements from higher and further induction establishments such as Edge Hill University, John Moores University and Hugh Baird. We ensure that everyone who is on placement with us are DBS checked and have undergone Safeguarding awareness training as part of their induction with us.

**19. Hate Crime**

As a women and girls centre, our values state that everyone is welcomed, valued and included in our centre and our services; an awareness of hate crime and guidelines for reporting incidents should help us make sure this happens.

What is a hate crime?

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Crown Prosecution Service have a nationally agreed definition of Hate Crime. Hate crimes are taken to mean any crime where the perpetrators hostility or prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in the determining who is victimised. This is a broad and inclusive definition. A victim does not have to be a member of the group. In fact, anyone could be the victim of a hate crime.

Definition of Hate Crime

Any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on the victim’s:

* Disability
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sexual orientation
* Transgender identity
* Crimes against sex workers

Hate crime can take many forms including:

* Physical attacks such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti and arson
* Threat of attack including offensive letters, abusive or obscene telephone calls. Malicious emails or posts on social networking sites such as Facebook, groups handing around to intimidate and unfounded malicious complaints.
* Verbal abuse, insults or harassment – taunting, offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures, dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes and bullying at school or in the workplace.

How do we deal with Hate Crime?

Our aim is always to give individuals as many options as possible. There are many different ways to deal with hate crime and different ways to report it so we would deal with each case individually.

When a member of staff at SWAN or a volunteer and a woman or teenage girl l in receipt of support from us, make a support plan, they are both asked to consider any issues around Hate Crime and plan actions to take to address it.

If a client who we are working with discloses that they have been a victim of a Hate Crime, staff and volunteers are trained to advise the individual to report the incident/s to Sefton Council or the Sigma Team of Merseyside Police via 101 or via Police Facebook and Twitter accounts.

We would also provide information about various Hate Crime Reporting Centres around Sefton and provide contact details and sign posting information to specialist agencies and organisations – this information can be accessed www.sefton.gov.uk/advice-beneifits/crim-and-emergencies /hate-crime

Merseyside Police have appropriate victim care providers they can refer to.

If they don’t wish to report it to the Police they can make a report to Stop Hate UK using the following:

* Telephone 0800 138 1625
* Text: 07717 989 02
* Text Relay: 18001 0113 293 5100
* BSL via [stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org/)
* Email: [talk@stophateuk.org](javascript:void(0);)
* Chat: [stophateuk.org/talk](http://www.stophateuk.org/talk)
* Online: [stophateuk.org/tell](http://www.stophateuk.org/tell)
* Post: Stop Hate UK, PO Box 484, Leeds, LS7 9BZ

Stop Hate UK are a registered charity and provide the helpline across Merseyside supported by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The service is confidential.

Sefton Council offers an anonymous hate crime reporting form online, go to:

http://forms.sefton.gov.uk/hatecrimereport/

Hate crimes can also be reported through a 24 hour helpline: We display information about Hate Crime within the centre too.



**20. Flowchart of actions if abuse is suspected**

Staff or volunteer has a safeguarding concern regarding a child via observation or disclosure. This should be discussed with a line manager or service manager.

1. The line manager/service manager is advised to consult with one other person before raising a safeguarding referral (for peer support where possible) If no other member of staff is available to discuss, **DO NOT LET THIS DELAY YOUR REFERRAL**.
2. Look at the levels of need document (on council website of incident) to identify the need which would constitute safeguarding.

**Choose one of the below options.**

**If the person raising concerns disagrees with the action taken by the senior staff**

1. Contact the Local Authority of where the alleged abuse took place, (for example Sefton or Liverpool).

2. To complete a written referral. The most up to date copy of a referral form can be found on the Local Authority’s website. A clear justification must be recorded when taking this option.

**The child is in immediate danger**

1. Do not put yourself in danger – assure your own safety first.

2. Contact the relevant emergency services – Police, Ambulance or Fire.

3. Once the emergency has been actioned to follow the process of raising a child safeguarding referral.

**Not a safeguarding referral**

1. May not constitute a safeguarding referral but make Local Authority aware of the incident that happened. LA may be contacted to raise a ‘notification of concern.’

2. Details to be inputted on Database if Local Authority not to be contacted and a reason as to why not.

3. Consider if an Early Help Referral may be required. From May 24 CHAT

**To raise a child safeguarding referral**

1. Concern must be raised by a SWAN employee, Designated Safeguarding Lead, as oppose to a volunteer.

2. Contact the Local Authority of where the alleged took place, (for example Sefton or Liverpool)

3. To complete a written referral online. The most up to date copy of a referral form can be found on the Local Authority’s website of where the incident happened.

1. Document your actions immediately on Database and contact you line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. If any actions are advised via Local Authority to document these and any further action taken.

**DO NOT START THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS YOURSELF.**

**YOUR ROLE IS TO BE THE ALERTER NOT THE INVESTIGATOR.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Designated Safeguarding Leads - Staff** | Galina Jordanova Bhebe – Counselling Manager ([cwm@swanwomenscentre.org](mailto:cwm@swanwomenscentre.org))  07727 084163  Jen Williams – Young Persons Counselling Co-ordinator [YPCounsellor@swanwomenscentre.org](mailto:YPCounsellor@swanwomenscentre.org)  07562 777867  Jane Payton – Adult Counselling Co-ordinator [Janep@swanwomenscentre.org](mailto:Janep@swanwomenscentre.org)  07773 894888  Karen Christie – Chief Executive  [ceo@swanwomenscentre.org](mailto:ceo@swanwomenscentre.org)  07804 894241 |
| **Safeguarding Lead - Trustee** | Christine Wallis  Christine56wallis@yahoo.com |
| **Last Review Date** | April 2025 |
| **Review Period** | Every year (or earlier if changes in legislation). |
| **Next Review Date** | April 2026 |

**21.**