

OPS001B SAFEGUARDING POLICY HANDBOOK

Updated	Updated by:
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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is to be used with OPS001 Safeguarding Policy Statement.

This document goes into further detail regarding the key arrangements for safeguarding at Challengers. It refers to and explores policy, procedure and guidance, for Challengers staff and volunteers; including instructions on what to do when a child, young person, adult with care and support needs or anyone associated with Challengers is at risk of harm or is experiencing harm.

Safeguarding, everybody's business

As *Working Together to Safeguard Children* highlights:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe.
- No single practitioner has a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

The same approach would be equally important to adopt in relation to safeguarding adults at risk of harm or experiencing harm.

1. Our Services

Short Breaks respite for disabled children, young people, and adults with care and support needs during weekends and school holidays:

- **Play (4-12)** – Guildford, Farnham, Kingston, Richmond, Winchester
- **Youth (11-18)** - Guildford, Farnham, Kingston, Richmond, Chichester
- **Young Adults (18-25)** - Guildford & Farnham

555 Farnham Youth (8-18yrs) 555 Guildford Play (4-12yrs) and 555 Farnham Play (4-12yrs)

A service supporting disabled children and young people (usually in crisis) who are currently out of education, either due to exclusion or because they are waiting for a suitable school place.

SAFEGUARDING AND DISABILITY

This section refers to and quotes from Safeguarding disabled children: practice guidance. (Section 1.16)

'Research and inspection indicate that disabled children face an increased risk of abuse or neglect yet they are underrepresented in safeguarding systems. Disabled children can be abused and neglected in ways that other children cannot and the early indicators suggestive of abuse or neglect can be more complicated than with non-disabled children.'

Professionals in all agencies who come into contact with children/young people with disabilities are in a position to identify indicators that the child may be suffering or may be at risk of significant harm. There may be differences, and a child/young person's disability should always be considered when questioning whether significant harm might be indicated.

- To keep disabled children/young people safe from harm, Challengers staff must be alert to and understand the additional and increased vulnerability of disabled children/young people to abuse and harm.
- Disabled children/young people are more at risk from harm and abuse than non-disabled children.
- Disabled children/young people rely and are dependent on Challengers staff to help and support them and to keep them safe from harm.
- Challengers staff should default to over report if in doubt.
- If the incident would be concerning for a non-disabled child/young person it is concerning for a disabled child/young person.
- Report every concern to a Challengers Leader immediately.

2. Why are they more at risk?

We will have a heightened alertness given that we are told that disabled children/young people are significantly more at risk of harm than non-disabled children/young people. The reasons why disabled children/young people are more vulnerable to abuse are summarised below:

- Many disabled children/young people have an increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children/young people
- Their dependency on parents/ carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose their abuse
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation
- Looked after disabled children/young people are not only vulnerable to the same factors that exist for all children/young people living away from home but are particularly susceptible to possible abuse because of their additional dependency on residential and hospital staff for day to day physical care needs.
- Professionals from all agencies/disciplines must be aware that the belief that disabled children/young people are not abused or beliefs that minimise the impact of abuse on disabled children/young people can lead to the denial of, or failure to report abuse or neglect.
- Reporting safeguarding concerns needs to be encouraged at all levels of professional involvement, and prompt and detailed information sharing is vital.
- The impairment with which a child/young person presents should not detract from early multi-agency assessments of need that consider possible underlying causes for concern.

3. Risk Factors

Because of the particular needs of disabled children/young people they may also be at risk of being abused in other ways including:

- Force feeding or inappropriate feeding
- Their personal care needs may not be met adequately
- Physical practices such as physical restraint carried out unnecessarily or not in accordance with available guidelines.
- Rough handling
- Extreme behaviour modification including deprivation of clothing, medication or food, limiting movement, restricting freedoms, locking doors etc.
- Misuse of medication, sedation, heavy tranquillisation
- Unnecessary invasive procedures carried out against the child/young person's will
- Being denied access to required medical treatment

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- Misapplication of programmes or regimes
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g. Callipers, Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFOs), sleep boards which may cause injury or pain
- Inappropriate splinting
- They may be more susceptible to bullying
- They may be more vulnerable to abuse using Information Communication Technology.

4. Why could it be missed?

Professionals may find it more difficult to attribute indicators of abuse or be reluctant to act on concerns in relation to disabled children because of a number of factors which may include:

- Professionals over identifying with the child/young person's parents/carers and being reluctant to accept that abuse could have taken place, or seeing abuse as being attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child/young person
- A lack of knowledge about the impairment and its impact on the child/young person
- A lack of knowledge about the child/young person, e.g. not knowing the child/young person's usual behaviour or demeanour
- Not being able to understand the child/young person's communication
- Confusing behaviours that may indicate the child/young person is being abused with those associated with the child/young person's impairment
- Denial of the child/young person's sexuality
- Denial of child/young person's mental health needs
- The child/young person having a number of carers.
- Carers may have unrealistic expectations of the child/young person
- Failure to follow treatment plans
- Thinking the signs seen are connected with the disability

5. What Challengers staff will do

WITH THIS GUIDANCE, CHALLENGERS STAFF WILL:

- Never use a child's/young person's disability to 'explain away' signs of abuse.
- Take time to understand children/young people and how they may communicate and behave in different ways so that staff can facilitate choice for children/young people, especially including children/young people in choices about the personal care they receive.
- Support disabled children/young people with relationships, especially their understanding of their own and other's bodies and sexuality, so that they may protect themselves and staff teams be alert to mistakes that children/young people may make while at Challengers.
- Collect all relevant child/young person's information and establish a relationship with the child/young person and their family so that staff continue to understand the child/young person, their disability and what Challengers must do to make their day safe and fun.
- Establish an open culture of management that acknowledges that the service Challengers delivers is complex and that children/young people and staff alike are vulnerable to making mistakes. When a mistake is made it will be reported and investigated appropriately so that the mistake is understood and the service improved.
- Never exclude a child from the service – Challengers will be a healthy and positive part of the child's/young person's life.
- Continually challenge and refresh our attitude and understanding of the experience of disability and be ready to change our behaviour in general but specifically how disabled children/young people are kept safe from harm.

LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6. Legislation

Legislation is a law or a set of laws that have been passed by Parliament. The word is also used to describe the act of making a new law.

Children Act 1989

Provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. Key principles established by the Act include:

- the paramount nature of the child's welfare
- the expectations and requirements around duties of care to children.
- Provision of service for children in need, their families and others (Section 17)
- Local authority's duty to investigate (Section 47)

Children Act 2004

Encourages partnerships between agencies and creates more accountability, by:

- placing a duty on local authorities to appoint children's services members who are ultimately accountable for the delivery of services
- placing a duty on local authorities and their partners to co-operate in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Amends both the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. Key provisions include:

- the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel was established to review and report on serious child protection cases that are complex or of national importance (Sections 12 to 15).
- the previous model of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs) has been replaced by local safeguarding partners who will publish reports on local safeguarding practice reviews (Section 17).
- child death review partners are required to review each death of a child normally resident in their area and identify matters that are relevant to public health and safety and children locally (Section 24).
- local authorities must appoint personal advisers for care leavers up to the age of 25 (Section 3).
- Social Work England is created as a regulatory body for the social work profession in England (Section 36).
- relationships education will be provided to primary school children and relationships and sex education will be provided (instead of sex education) in secondary schools (Section 34).

Care Act 2014

Sets out how care and support in England should be provided to adults with care needs, including older people, and how it is paid for. It supports the personalisation of care services, putting the person at the centre of the process.

Equality Act 2010

Legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It means discrimination or unfair treatment on the basis of certain personal characteristics, such as age, is not against the law in almost all cases. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

This Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 was passed to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from gaining access to them through their work.

Mental Capacity Act 2005

A law that protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision making. It says that: Every adult, whatever their disability, has the right to make their own decisions wherever possible.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Sets out a duty on local authorities and partners to establish and cooperate with a local programme to provide tailored support for people, children and adults who are identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Data Protection Act 2018

Is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Everyone responsible for using personal data has to follow strict rules called 'Data Protection Principles'. They must make sure the information is: used fairly, lawfully and transparently.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2024

Is mandatory for all early years settings. It sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

7. Policy and Guidance

Requirements and recommendations that help formalise and direct best practices. Usually working alongside other legislation.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (DfE)

The Department for Education (DfE) published a new edition of its statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children in December 2023.

This 2023 edition replaces Working together to safeguard children 2018, which underwent a limited factual update in 2020.

The guidance outlines what organisations and agencies must and should do to help, protect and promote the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18 in England.

This briefing outlines the main changes in the 2023 edition, including updates around:

- multi-agency expectations for all practitioners
- working with parents and families
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of safeguarding partners
- the role of education and childcare providers
- multi-agency practice standards
- support for disabled children
- tackling harm that occurs outside the home.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (DfE)

Published by the Department for Education (DfE) This advice is non-statutory and has been produced to help practitioners identify child abuse and neglect and take appropriate action in response.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance

This guidance sets out how local authorities should go about fulfilling their responsibilities, it is to be used alongside the Care Act 2014. It places a duty on councils to support and promote the wellbeing and independence of working age disabled adults and older people and gives them more control of their care and support.

Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance 2009

This practice guidance should be read alongside Working Together, which sets out how all agencies and professionals should work together to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This practice guidance makes clear that disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater and created vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairments.

Regulated activity in relation to children: scope. Factual note by HM Government

Regulated activity is work that a barred person must not do. This note provides information on the scope of Regulated Activity in relation to children, defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

A Guide to Child Workforce Roles (v.9)

This will help you identify whether the position you are recruiting for falls into the child workforce and where you can legally request access to a check of the children's barred list. These are roles which relate specifically to working with children.

A Guide to Adult Workforce Roles (v.9)

This will help you identify whether the position you are recruiting for falls into the adult workforce when completing the "Position Applied For" field on a DBS application form and where access to an adults' barred list check is available. These are roles which relate specifically to working with adults.

Revised Prevent Duty Guidelines: England and Wales 2023

The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The objectives of Prevent are to:

tackle the ideological causes of terrorism

intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation

enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

Violence Against Women and Girls Framework 2025-2030 (VAWG)

It is the umbrella term used across the UK criminal justice system and local authorities to describe a wide range of abusive, violent, and controlling crimes that are disproportionately perpetrated by men against women and girls. This framework prioritised three pillars of activity: building trust and confidence, relentless perpetrator pursuit and safer spaces.

The term covers a variety of specific offenses, including but not limited to:

Domestic abuse including - controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour

Sexual offences including - rape, sexual assault, and online sexual abuse like deepfakes and cyberflashing

Stalking and harassment

'Honour'-based abuse and forced marriage

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Human trafficking and sexual exploitation

8. Local Authorities

Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership Procedures (LSCP)

All local authorities have a safeguarding children partnership (LSCP). They are responsible for:

- coordinating local work to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- ensuring the effectiveness of member organisations

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By law all local authorities must have procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults.

All organisations working with children and adults must follow their LSCP online safeguarding policies and procedures.

Further information about the functions of the LSCP can be found in Chapter 3 of Working Together.

Our Local Safeguarding Partnerships Procedures can be found by going to their websites or using the following links on the online version of this handbook.

Surrey - <https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

Hampshire - <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/procedures/>

West Sussex – <https://westsussexcs.trixonline.co.uk/>

Kingston and Richmond – <https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/>

Adult Safeguarding Board Procedures

Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board - <https://www.surreysab.org.uk/>

Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board - <https://hampshiresab.org.uk/>

West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board– <https://westsussexcs.trixonline.co.uk/>

Kingston Safeguarding Adults Board – <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/care-support-for-adults/professionals/kingston-safeguarding-adults-board-ksab>

Richmond and Wandsworth Safeguarding Adults Board - <https://sabrighmondandwandsworth.org.uk/>

DATA PROTECTION

- Challengers collect and store important personal detail about children/young people and their family.
- Each time data/information is moved it will be secure so that only the intended recipients/users can see/use the data – using locks, secure email, encrypted backups and secure server networks (on sites and data providers in ‘the cloud’).
- Consent to collect, store and share data will be collected from parents at first visit and refreshed as necessary – as wishes of child/family change and/or law/good practice changes.
- Details on data and how we keep and use it is included in our FIN003 Data Policy

SAFE PEOPLE

9. Safer Recruitment

See HR008 Safer Recruitment Policy

Our recruitment and HR is guided by this policy. As well as this all Challengers staff receive the Challengers Staff Handbook when they are successfully recruited to work.

The outcome of all Challengers recruitment procedures and process is that the charity has the choice of the best staff to select, who are suitable and safe to work with a vulnerable group of children/young people. Challengers will use these procedures for all Challengers applicants because of the risk and opportunities of access to detail and information about children in Challengers workplaces.

10. Application Procedure

A methodical approach to recruitment will select the best and safest staff. So, all candidates will:

- Complete Challengers on-line Application Pack (CVs are not accepted)
- 2 references provided
- Explanations for any gaps in an applicant’s work history;
- Reasons for leaving past positions

- Disclose any previous convictions, cautions, bind-overs (personal and/or professional life);
- Disclosure should be requested on the job application form. Any such details must be declared even if they would be considered 'spent' in other circumstances
- Complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Form and have no unsupervised contact with children until the clearance is seen and recorded by Challengers
- Complete an interview or a Challengers 'Recruitment Event' which will include a discussion or exercise of a 'real life' safeguarding scenario

11. Conditions/Qualifications for staff to be on rota

When staff are recruited and in post, all staff must be fit and safe to work with children and vulnerable young adults. Before staff are allowed on the rota, they need to have been recruited in line with the above policy and:

- Successfully attend and complete New Recruit Training and commit to annual Safeguarding updates
- 'Clean' DBS with all observations reported to DSL/DDSL and, DBS updated every 3 years.
- Staff complete HR008I Challengers Disclosure and Fitness to Work Update every year.
- Have worked for Challengers in the last 12 months.

If any of these conditions are not met staff cannot work at Challengers schemes and will not be able to be booked onto the staff rota.

12. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Challengers works with and provides services to children and vulnerable adults. Because of this all staff (age 16 and over) must complete an enhanced level of disclosure with the DBS so that the background and criminal history of all candidates can be checked. Challengers is a registered body and submits DBS applications on behalf of the applicant.

Referrals to DBS

If an allegation is substantiated and the employee or volunteer is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the subject's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his/her services, the LADO should discuss with the Challengers DSL/DDSL whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the information it should contain. If a referral is to be made to the DBS, it should be submitted within 1 month. If the person is subject to registration or regulation by a professional body or regulator, for example by the Health and Care Professions Council, General Medical Council, Ofsted etc. LADO to advise on whether a referral to that body is appropriate and, if so, the referral must be made in a timely manner. The named DSL will make the report to the disclosure and barring service.

13. Risk by association

In some cases, an allegation of abuse against someone closely associated with a member of staff e.g. partner, member of the family, or other household member, may present a risk to child(ren) for whom the member of staff is responsible. In these circumstances, Challengers will refer to LADO and a Strategy Discussion will consider:

- The ability and/or willingness of the member of staff to adequately protect the child(ren);
- Whether measures need to be put in place to ensure their protection;
- Whether the role of the member of staff is compromised.

This will all be done with advice from the LADO. All staff have a duty to disclose immediately to their line manager of the Challengers DSL when they think that they may be at risk by association. All staff will complete HR008I Challengers Disclosure and Fitness to Work Update every year.

14. Induction, Supervision and Training

Induction

All new staff and agency/locum staff will complete a minimum induction and guidance on Challengers Safeguarding Procedure and 'what to do if you are worried that a child is being harmed or at risk of harm'. Induction training also includes equality, diversity and inclusion, Challengers use these key documents to guide and track induction:

- HR008B Challengers Leader and Deputy Induction
- HR008C Challengers Play and Youth Worker Induction
- HR008D Disability Challengers Office Based and Non-Operations Staff Induction Form

Supervision

Regular supervision with staff provides a time to reflect on and review all areas of practice and performance. Staff with operational responsibility for safeguarding should receive supervision from their line manager every month. Alongside general discussion about performance supervision should address all safeguarding concerns and include:

- Training that staff may need
- Direction to appropriate policies
- Direction to appropriate external agencies for support and advice
- Update on current safeguarding incidents
- Discussion, advice and support on the management of complex incidents and safeguarding
- Address allegations, complaints, grievances to work towards resolution through investigation
- Written notes with actions and decisions provided after the meeting

Training

Staff	Training	0-6 months	12-24 months	Other
All Staff	Challengers Safeguarding Policy Statement	Receive copy at New Recruit Training	Remind where to find policy	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Challengers Safeguarding handbook	Receive copy at New Recruit Training	Remind where to find policy	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Types of abuse and significant harm, signs and symptoms	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	What to do if you are worried about a child, who to tell, how to tell	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Referrals to SPA/MASH/IFD	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Allegations about staff, who to tell, how to tell	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Referrals to LADO	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Safeguarding procedures at Challengers	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Good Practice	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Vulnerabilities of disabled children	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Local and National Safeguarding Themes	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Photos, phones and social networking	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Bruising in Non Independently Moving Children	New Recruit Training/ Online Safeguarding Training	Safeguarding Refresher Training	Induction, Monthly Group Supervisions, Scheme Training Days, Debrief
All Staff	Research and latest good practice	Group supervision, scheme training days	Develop and review scenarios	Develop with further scenarios
DSL/DDSL	DSL Training	Online DSL Training	Further safeguarding trainings	Refresh every 2 years, Safeguarding committee
Leader, Deputy, Service Manager	Local Authority level/module safeguarding training, conferences, or webinars			Additional modules, Leader Evenings, Further safeguarding training

15. Good Practices

- Everyday safeguarding means getting routine procedure right every time at Challengers schemes.
- Not following routine everyday procedure will put children & young people at risk.
- Not following procedure is a safeguarding concern and in turn reportable using this procedure.

Challengers practice should reflect a general approach to safeguarding through the *everyday* delivery of a high-quality service. This approach will include:

- Daily team meetings before and after sessions
- Up-to-date children's information filed at scheme and stored using Challengers online systems
- Quality, fun and engaging activities
- Staff teams who are supervised and supported and enough good quality staff for the task
- Up-to-date risk assessments for schemes that are shared with teams

- A shared understanding of key Challengers policy and procedure
- An open management culture that has an understanding and supportive approach not a blame culture – so that mistakes are declared and there is an intention to understand and improve.

Things to remember:

- Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example for others.
- Respect personal space and privacy.
- Ensure any actions cannot be misrepresented by someone else.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour.
- Do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- You must not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

16. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The Challengers DSL or Deputy DSL (DDSL) is available to help and support all staff with safeguarding procedure and concerns.
- All safeguarding incidents must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL – even if the investigation is led by senior staff other than the DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads will:

- Co-ordinate Challengers work with local safeguarding teams and/or children's services
- Attend DSL safeguarding training and refresher training at a minimum of every 2 years
- Attend further safeguarding trainings to expand knowledge
- Co-ordinate and develop safeguarding training and updates for the whole organisation – every year for service and office staff
- Ensure Challengers Safeguarding Policy, and internal procedures, are reviewed and updated
- Provision of child protection advice and support to staff;
- Refer concerns to local authority safeguarding teams, such as Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) following Challengers policy, Integrated Front Door (IFD)
- Ensuring all relevant information about a child/young person is disseminated to appropriate Challengers staff
- Ensure that children's/young person's records are maintained and kept securely regarding any safeguarding concerns/ investigations
- Co-ordinate allegations made against staff
- Receive and monitor all safeguarding incident/ CPOMS reports and referrals regarding staff and children
- Ensure all relevant authorities are informed, referred to or updated throughout any safeguarding process – Ofsted, LADO, HR, Charity Commission
- Check and close all safeguarding incidents on CPOMS

17. Leader and Deputy Roles

Leaders and Deputies will:

- Take a lead responsibility for safeguarding on-the-day at a Challengers 'setting', eg. A Challengers scheme
- Provide day-to-day support and advice to staff teams with what to do if they are worried that a child/young person is being harmed
- Attend Challengers safeguarding refresher training every year

- Attend Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership training at least every three years and additional modules as necessary

18. Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers will:

- Follow Challengers policy and procedure during day-to-day activities at Challengers
- Attend Challengers safeguarding refresher training every year

19. Trustees

See HR017 Trustee Handbook

SOCIAL CONTACT OUT OF WORK

- Challengers staff should not encourage or seek relationships and/or social contact with children and their families.
- Always use Challengers sites, events, work email, work phone whenever possible to contact Challengers families.
- Get help from DSL/DDSL or senior staff if you are unsure how to contact or manage a relationship with a family and/or a child.

This section guides Challengers staff with safe professional conduct that will protect children and staff. This section uses guidance from *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People* Section 13.

'Social contact' is relationships and/or contact that is made outside the place and/or time of working or volunteering at Challengers (or another organisation), or times when staff are not under instruction or employed by Challengers.

- Adults who work with children and young people should not seek to have social contact them or their families.
- If a child/young person or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response but should always discuss this with their manager or with the parent of the child or young person.
- Adults should be aware that social contact may be misconstrued as grooming.
- In exceptional circumstances there maybe unintentional social contact – for example through interests outside of work or through the adult's own family or personal networks. In these cases, care should be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries.
- It is recognised that some adults may support a parent who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where a parent comes to depend upon the adult for support outside their professional role. This situation should be recorded and discussed with line manager and HR. Where necessary referrals made to appropriate support agency. Staff to complete HR008I Challengers Disclosure and Fitness to Work updates annually or if required.
- Challengers staff should seek help and support from senior staff if they feel unsure or concerned about contact made outside work with children/young people and/or families who use Challengers.

Communication with children (Including the use of technology)

- **SOCIAL NETWORKING** – Staff should not befriend or accept requests of friendship on any social network site from children or young people who use Challengers.
- **MOBILE DEVICES/PHONES** – Staff should not use personal mobile phones or connected devices to contact children/young people or families.

Communication with children/young people and their families should be solely motivated and because of duties required of staff in the course of their employment/deployment by Challengers and the work and service provided by Challengers.

Challengers staff should only use systems, methods and devices provided and managed by Challengers to communicate with children and young people. For example authorised Challengers email accounts, mobile phones provided by Challengers and internet sites managed and controlled by Challengers.

This section uses guidance from Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People section 13.

- Communication between children/young people and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes wider use of technology e.g. mobile phones text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites and blogs.
- Adults should not share any personal information with a child/young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role.
- Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Adults should also be careful in their communications with children/young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- They should not give personal contact details to children/young people unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents/carers.
- E-mail/ text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations; it may be interpreted as grooming behaviour. This also includes communications through internet sites.
- Internal e-mail systems should be used in accordance with HR001 Challengers Staff Handbook

PHONES, CAMERAS, PHOTOS, THE INTERNET

- **PHONES** – While working at Challengers personal phones must not be used.
- **CAMERAS** – All photos taken at Challengers are for the use of Challengers and not for personal use. Use cameras/phones that Challengers provide not personal devices.
- **INTERNET** – Supervise and monitor children and young people's use of the internet.

20. Phones

All Challengers schemes have the use of a phone (mobile) so that staff can communicate effectively with colleagues, families and other agencies. Phones are increasingly complicated devices and allow users to communicate and connect to networks in a number of ways. We should be aware of the risks that phones present to staff and children in our care.

- While working at Challengers personal phones must not be used. Use of phones will distract staff from their duty. Our focus should always be on the child – interruption by personal calls, texts /emails is highly unprofessional and an example of neglect of a vulnerable group
- Staff working at Challengers schemes should leave personal phones (and any 'connected' devices) in the staff room/area. This removes any misunderstanding of the unsafe or misuse of the device and protects staff property from damage.
- There may be exceptional circumstances when it is appropriate the Leader recommends the use personal phones while at work. An example of this is on trips out and a personal phone will allow the group to communicate if the group is separated.

Use of phones by children and young people

It is the responsibility of parents and/or carers to decide if a child/young person has the capacity to use their device safely, and that they understand the importance of keeping sensitive data (Phone number, address, email etc) safe from other children, young people and staff. Challengers staff will when possible, supervise and support the use of devices at our settings.

- Children/young people may bring their own phones and connected devices to Challengers schemes.
- Challengers staff teams must consider and agree the safest way to support the appropriate use of the devices with advice about how they can be used for fun but also in a safe way that protects them from harm, for example asking permission to take a photo of someone else.
- If the use of devices places any children/young people at risk of harm they will need to be asked to leave their device in a safe place ('phone box') away from their and others use. This will keep the device safe and reduce the risk of any misunderstanding.
- Staff teams to develop an understanding of disabled children's/young people's vulnerability to abuse and exploitation in general and via online networks.
- Provide devices managed by Challengers and that we can control content and connectivity.
- The Leader may ask children/young people not to bring/use connected devices

21. Using images, photos and film of children

The use of images (photos and film) of children and staff at Challengers is fun and enjoyed by children/young people, families and provides wonderful images that the charity can use to promote the service and positive images of disabled children/young people and play.

How to use photos and film of children at Challengers

- Ask the child and parent for permission.
- Record permission/consent using OPS015 Challengers Children and Young People's Information Sheet or a specific photo permission agreement – this will be recorded on the Challengers database.
- Permission will be collected for:
 - photographs
 - film
- Care must be taken when using/making images of children/young people who are:
 - Looked after by the local authority
 - Looked after by a foster parent
 - Known to have been subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Do not use children's names within the image/titles/captions. If a child's/young person's name can be seen do not use the photograph.
- Allow families to withdraw consent to use images/film of their child/ young person.
- Store images securely on Challengers devices and/or accounts – images must not be stored on personal devices/accounts.

External and professional photographers/film

State written expectations of professional photographers or press who are invited to an event. These should make clear the organisation's expectations of them in relation to safeguarding.

Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children/young people.

22. The Internet

Challengers will offer children/young people safe use of the internet and technology when it is appropriate in the course of play and youth services at Challengers.

Supervise and support children/young people to understand safe and appropriate behaviour while using the internet and online device.

- Where possible support children/young people with safe use of technology that they own and bring to Challengers
- Put in place systems to limit and/or control access to technology and the internet to limit risk of harm, for example use technology to block certain websites, use software to stop viruses and use security permission to control the change of settings on network and remote devices.
- Report any concern about use of technology or online content, for example:
 - Exposure to inappropriate text or images, including child/adult pornography and extreme or obscene material.
 - Offensive or indecent images/film of children/young people.
 - Requests to make and transmit pornographic images of themselves or to perform sexual acts online.
 - Invitations to meet online contacts.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

23. Risk Assessment

It is expected that risk assessments will be undertaken for both regular, occasional or specific activities and events. This documentation will need to consider any safeguarding element. Particular attention should be paid to doors, entrances and exits of any room or buildings in use during a play session or activity remembering that:

- exit may be required in the event of an incident that requires emergency evacuation
- secure closure may be required in the event of an incident that requires 'lockdown'
- someone leaving a room, building or site without agreement or appropriate supervision may lead to a major safeguarding risk of harm.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that Challengers sessions, events and activities are safe. Safety in this context includes both the safety of the environment (primarily addressed through the health and safety policies and procedures that are in place e.g.: fire and evacuation etc.) but also in relation to the prevention of, or appropriate response to, situations that may pose a risk to the wellbeing and safety of anyone associated with Challengers.

24. Supervision of children, young people and adults

As above, particular attention should be paid to:

- Staffing in accordance with care needs
- Medication Administration in line with policy
- 1 to 1 work – staff remaining with their 1 to 1
- Arriving on time and in time for briefing
- Ensure all staff study relevant care plans
- Supporting extra ratio needs in emergency situations 2 to 1 or higher

25. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

It is critical that all staff are briefed appropriately and follow emergency procedures as and when necessary.

Things to be aware of:

- Fire evacuations
- Gas/Carbon Monoxide
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)
- Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)
- Medications/ Emergency Medical Situations

26. Emergency 'Stay Put'/Lockdown Procedures

Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of everyone on the site of scheme or building being used for a Challengers activity. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the play environment whilst ensuring everyone's safety. Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical situations might be:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to anyone involved in a Challengers activity or on a Challengers site).
- An intruder on the site or likely to be on the site with the potential to pose a risk to anyone involved in a Challengers activity or on a Challengers site. In exceptional circumstances this could be someone known to a child, young person, young adult or a Challengers' member of staff or a volunteer.
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc) or chemical, biological or radiological contaminants.
- A major fire in the vicinity of the site.
- The close proximity of a dangerous animal roaming loose.

Lockdown arrangements should be determined by each site on an individual basis, as they will be dependent on local circumstances such as premises design and layout, room arrangements, resources available, etc. Schemes should consider having two types of lockdown; 'partial' and 'full'.

27. Partial Lockdown

In a partial lockdown everyone should remain in the building and all doors leading outside should be locked. No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building; however, activities can continue as usual. This may be as a result of a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to those on the site and in the building. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, everyone return to building.
- All staff and young people remain in building and external doors and windows locked.
- Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances.
- In the event of an air pollution or chemical, biological or radiological contaminants issue, air vents, fans, heating and air conditioning systems should be closed or turned off.
- Use anything to hand to seal up all the cracks around doors and any vents into the room – you aim to minimise possible ingress of pollutants.
- Staff should await further instructions.

All situations are different. Once everyone is safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. Inform your DSL or Deputy DSL. A 'partial lockdown' may also be a precautionary measure but puts the scheme in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

28. Full Lockdown

This signifies an immediate threat to the site and those present and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. The aim of a full lockdown is for the site and its rooms to appear empty.

Immediate action:

- Everyone stay together in the agreed area for the scheme. Office staff should remain in their office.
- External doors locked. Room doors locked (where a member of staff with key is present).
- Windows locked, blinds drawn, internal windows covered (so intruder cannot see in).

- Everyone sit quietly out of sight and where possible in a location that would protect them from gunfire (bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal. Consider locations behind substantial brickwork or heavy reinforced walls).
- Lights, smartboards and computer monitors turned off.
- All mobile phones turned off (or turned onto silent so they cannot give away your position).
- A register to be taken of everyone in each room/office.
- Communicate register to a pre-agreed central office.
- Staff should await further instructions.

Everyone to remain in lock down until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff/emergency services. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open but not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important communication.

Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown.

29. Water Safety

Water safety is a critical part of keeping children safe, as drowning remains a major cause of accidental death. Preventative measures include direct supervision of young children, talking to them about hidden dangers, and teaching them to "Float" if they get into trouble in the water.

The Royal Life Saving Society – Water Safety Code:

Whenever you are around water:

- Stop and Think – Take time to assess your surroundings. Look for the dangers and always research local signs and advice.
- Stay Together – When around water always go with friends or family. Swim at a lifeguarded venue

In an emergency:

- Call 999 – Ask for the Fire and Rescue Service when inland and the Coastguard if at the coast. Don't enter the water to rescue.
- Float – Fall in or become tired? Stay calm, float on your back and call for help. Throw something that floats to somebody that has fallen in.

Surrey Fire and rescue – Water Safety

Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death in the UK. Drownings can happen quickly with most people having no intention of entering the water. 40% of people who accidentally drowned in 2022 had no intention of entering the water. Never enter the water and attempt to rescue someone yourself. In Surrey we have many different bodies of water, large lakes and the river Thames. They should all be treated with respect - water can kill.

What to do in an emergency

- Call 999 immediately and ask for help. If you are inland ask for the fire service, if you are at the coast ask for the coastguard
- Give an accurate location as possible
- Keep your eye on the person in the water, or where they last were
- **Do not enter the water** and attempt to rescue someone, and do not get too close to the waters' edge
- Shout to the person in the water, and encourage them to float on their back and breath normally

- Look for lifesaving equipment such as throwlines, floats or rings to throw to the person in the water
- If the person manages to get out of the water, they will need medical attention, even if they seem okay

Be aware of the risks

- Cold water shock kills. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) encourage people to ["float to live"](#), fight the instinct to thrash and give your body a chance to breath.
- Take notice and obey of warning and safety signs
- Stick to proper footpaths, riverbanks and cliff edges can be unstable
- Water and alcohol/drugs do not mix. Plan your route home away from water. 26% of people who accidentally drowned in 2022 had alcohol and/or drugs in their system
- Going out on your own? Let someone know where you are going and when you aim to return
- Never enter the water to rescue your dog, who will rescue you? Most dogs manage to scramble out - some owners are not so lucky
- Never enter the water if you don't know how deep the water is, or how fast the current is

Enjoy water safely

- If you are taking part in outdoor water activities, do so in a designated area and find out about local clubs
- Weather can affect the water so check forecasts and tides before you go out
- Wear a lifejacket and make sure it's right for you and the activity
- Keep in touch - have your mobile phone with you, tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back
- Children should always be supervised by an adult

POSITIVE TOUCH AND BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Challengers promotes positive physical contact at schemes as an important component of good play and youth work. Alongside this policy, staff behaviour will be monitored by Leaders day to day.

Touch is normal and plays an important part in communication and development. We must pay attention to sliding scales in a relationships, children can sometimes misunderstand relationships and what the appropriate responses are. Staff are to support, direct and teach through different situation that may arise. Even with children with delayed development we will endeavour to conduct ourselves with age appropriate responses and support.

We use the idea of a 'Snapshot of touch' – can you justify it if a parent walks in and sees it? It is important to always have this in the back of your mind when at Challengers.

30. Helpful Tips

It is helpful to remember that physical contact is behaviour and, in turn, communication. A guide for Challengers staff good practice is to think why are you (staff) *doing the behaviour* and what is it *communicating* to the child? This behaviour should be appropriate to the play and youth activity, and the outcome should be that children/young people feel safe and happy.

Challengers will support children/young people and staff to develop an understanding of behaviour and physical contact that is appropriate for 'public' and 'private' environments, times and parts of the body. Challengers staff behaviour assumes that Challengers is a 'public' place for children/young people and staff and that we do 'public behaviour' – behaviour appropriate and safe for public places.

Staff can also help where appropriate with explaining which bits of their/our bodies are 'private' – the NSPCC site has useful and accessible resources:

'Let's Talk Pants'

P: Privates are Private

A: Always remember your body belongs to you

N: No means no!

T: Talk about secrets that upset you

S: Speak up, someone can help

31. Positive physical contact indicators

Some indicators that the physical contact can be promoted and is positive may be that it:

- Is helpful to the child's development and enjoyment.
- Makes sense to the child/young person and staff team and is relevant to the activity – e.g. 'rough and tumble' on the soft play, a cuddle when a child/young person has fallen over or is missing their parent.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the child/young person's vulnerability in terms of their understanding of what the physical contact communicates.
- Is in a public/open environment – not done in secret – an open environment where staff behaviour can be challenged professionally.
- Providing necessary personal care.
- Moving and handling children/young people to and from an activity.
- Keeping a child/ young person safe to protect them from harming them self and/or others.

32. Concerning/unsafe physical indicators

At Challengers we see 1000s of children/young people who will display a range of behaviour. Some of this behaviour will be concerning and may put them and/or others at risk of harm and is unsafe. Some indicators of concerning/unsafe physical behaviour are:

- A child/young person being physically aggressive, e.g. Harming themselves and/or others.
- A child/young person 'acting out' explicit sexualised and/or aggressive behaviour.
- A child/young person seeking and/or coercing other children or staff for the purpose of sexual arousal.
- A child/young person inviting or asking for inappropriate physical contact, e.g.: Asking for 'private' areas of their body to be touched over or underneath their clothing - especially their genitals and/or breasts.
- Staff inappropriately seeking to provide personal care for a particular child/young person or children/young people;
- Staff inappropriately seeking long periods of unsupervised time with a particular child/young person or children/young people.
- Repeated persistent problematic behaviour.
- Behaviour where one child/young person exploits their power over the other, e.g.: Through their age/stage of development. This would suggest coercion and absence of consent.

Any one of these behaviours and types of physical contact may put children/ young people at risk of harm and may be a sign of abuse. If any of these indicators are seen at Challengers they must be reported to the Leader or a senior member of Challengers staff as a safeguarding incident immediately - Section 54 and 57 of this handbook.

33. Managing concerning/unsafe physical indicators

For children displaying behaviour Challengers staff teams will use OPS005B Challengers Behaviour Support Plans to support and guide the child/young person's behaviour and development. This will involve the family and may be helpful to contact other agencies such as school or their social worker.

Share the plan and discuss the behaviour as a team to understand the behaviour and establish a team approach. Service staff and leaders will promote an open culture of support and understanding so that Challengers staff feel confident to discuss and report what can be a complex and sensitive area of practice.

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There is a risk that prejudice, low expectations and perceptions of disabled children/young people will lead to an approach that does not acknowledge or allow for the developing sexuality of disabled children & young people. Challengers teams will be supported by leaders and senior members of the Service Team to understand how children's sexuality and understanding of relationships develops and how this development may be affected by a child/ young person's impairment

Any behaviour that is concerning must be reported to the Leader and recorded using OPS004A Disability Challengers Incident Form/ CPOMS.

34. Healthy Sexual Development vs Sexual Behaviour

See section 49 of this handbook

PERSONAL CARE

Providing personal care requires staff to have 'intimate physical contact' with children/young people. This includes:

- Changing nappies and pads.
- Washing and cleaning a child's/young person's body, including a child's/young person's genitalia.
- Feeding a child/young person.
- Escorting a child to the toilet or changing area.
- Administering 'invasive' medical procedures, e.g. rectal diazepam and enteral feeding systems (gastrostomy).

35. Keeping children safe when providing personal care

To further ensure a child's/young person's safety during personal care, staff can use OPS014E Challengers Guide to Personal Care and attend training provided by Challengers.

Other support available:

- Practical on-the-ground support from Leaders/senior staff.
- Agreeing the right and appropriate level of support for a child/young person's needs – taking in to account any Moving People tasks or known risks for the child/young person.
- Actively providing choice to children/young people about who, how and when they like to receive personal care, including explaining the importance of personal care to the child/young person.
- Using OPS015 Challengers Children and Young People's Information Sheet to gather detail about a child's/young person's personal care.
- Following instructions and using training to manage any equipment required safely.

FOUR MAIN TYPES OF HARM

36. Physical

This is when someone hurts or harms a child/young person deliberately.

Examples: Hitting, slapping, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, shaking (babies/infants), poisoning, scratching, biting, drowning, burning/scalding

Signs and Symptoms

Bruises, broken or fractured bones, burns, scalds, bite marks, scarring

37. Emotional

Any type of abuse that involves the continuous and deliberate emotional mistreatment of a child/young person.

Examples: Humiliating, criticising, threatening, shouting, name calling, blaming, exposing them to upsetting events/situations, ignoring them, manipulating

Signs and Symptoms

May not be anything obvious, and the child/young person may not say anything until it reaches 'crisis point', lack confidence, struggle to regulate emotions, find friendships difficult, act in an inappropriate way for their age

38. Sexual

When a child/young person is forced or tricked into sexual activities. In person or online.

Examples: Contact abuse - When an abuser makes physical contact with a child/young person: sexual touching of any part of a child's/young person's body clothed or not, using a body part or an object to penetrate a child/young person, forcing a child/young person to take part in sexual activity, making a child/young person undress, making a child/young person touch someone else

Examples: Non-Contact abuse - When a child/young person is abused without being touched by the abuser. Can be in person & online: Exposing, flashing, showing pornography, making them masturbate, exposing a child/young person to sexual acts, forcing a child/young person to make/view/share child/young person abuse images or videos, making/viewing/distributing child abuse images or videos, forcing a child to take part in sexual activity conversation

Signs and Symptoms

Avoiding or afraid of people/person they know, language or behaviour you wouldn't expect, nightmares, bedwetting, self-harm, substance misuse, pregnancy, STIs, changes in mood, being secretive, spending more/less time online

39. Neglect

The ongoing failure to meet a child's/young person's basic needs and the most common form of child/young person abuse.

Examples: A child/young person might be left hungry, dirty, without proper clothing, supervision, shelter or healthcare. 4 types of neglect - Physical, Educational, Emotional, Medical.

Signs and Symptoms

Poor appearance and hygiene, smelly or dirty, hungry, inappropriate clothing, low attendance record, falling behind at school, missed medical appointments, thin, poor language skills, repeated accidents/injuries, tired, being left for long periods of time, substance misuse. Neglect can be difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child/young person is being neglected.

CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING - NATIONAL AND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING

As well as threats from circles of care, children/young people are vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from elsewhere.

These external threats might arise at school, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the community and/or online.

Children/young people can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups e.g. - county lines, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation, extremism leading to radicalisation.

This can be referred to as Contextual Safeguarding.

40. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

This is when a child/young person is sexually exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children/young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's/young person's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time. Once an abuser has images, video or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a child to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Signs and Symptoms

- Being secretive
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Pregnancy
- Being frightened of certain people, places or situations
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Staying out late or overnight
- Missing from home or care, or stopping going to school or college
- Involved in criminal activity or involved in a gang

41. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Criminal exploitation is child/young person abuse where children/young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Once a child/young person has committed crimes, this is usually used against them to scare them into continuing.

42. County Lines

County Lines is often talked about in relation to criminal exploitation of children/young people. County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting children/young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets, such as suburban areas or and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

Signs and Symptoms for CCE and County Lines:

- Frequently absent from or doing poorly in school
- Going missing from home, staying out late or travelling about with unexplained reasons
- In a relationship or hanging out with older people

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- Having unexplained money and buying new things
- Taking secret calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone.

Some dangers include:

- Being subject to threats, blackmail, and violence
- Not being able to leave or cut off ties with the gang
- Being exploited and forced to commit crimes
- Friends and family safety being threatened
- Risk of severe injury or being killed

43. Gangs

It's not illegal for a child/young person to be in a gang, there are different types of 'gang' and not all are criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

Signs for this can be similar to above.

44. Knife Crime

Knife crime involving children/young people refers to offences where individuals under 18 possess, threaten with, or use knives or sharp objects, often driven by fear, gang involvement, or exploitation.

If any child/young person in Challengers care is found with a knife or sharp object on their person or with their belongings, this will result in immediate police involvement. Challengers staff are to risk assess the situation and follow any other relevant supporting policy or procedures, complete CPOMS, call On-Call and DSL for further support.

45. Radicalisation and The Prevent Duty

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It is in itself a form of harm.

The Prevent Duty is part of the governments' counter terrorism strategy. It is to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists or violent extremism/ideologies. Extremism was defined by the Home Office in 2011 as a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values.

There is no obvious profile or single indicator for a person who is likely to become involved in extremist views or violence.

Children/young people can be exposed to or drawn into violence and extremist messages by many means. This can include; family members, friends, and through direct contact with extremist groups often via the internet.

Childcare provisions are asked to actively promote British values. The government has set out the need for 'British values' to help everyone live in safe and welcoming communities where they feel they belong.

The risk of radicalisation is the product of several factors, often combined with other vulnerabilities. These can include:

- Isolated and lonely or wanting to belong
- Unhappy about themselves and what others might think of them
- Embarrassed or judged about their culture, gender, religion or race

- Stressed or depressed
- Fed up of being bullied or treated badly by other people or by society
- Angry at other people or the government
- Confused about what they are doing
- Pressured to stand up for other people who are being oppressed

Signs and Symptoms

- A change in behaviour
- Changing their circle of friends
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Accessing extremist material online
- Using extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Writing or creating artwork promoting violent extremist messages

46. Fundamental British Values

Fundamental British Values underpin what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Great Britain valuing our community and celebrating diversity of the UK. These values are:

Democracy

- Your opinion counts

The rule of law

- No one is above the law
- Laws protect everyone
- Innocent until proven guilty

Individual Liberty

- Freedom of speech

Respect and Tolerance

- All backgrounds and cultures
- All ages
- All genders and sexualities
- All religions and beliefs

47. Bully and Cyber Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child/young person both physically and emotionally.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone.

The effects of bullying can last into adulthood. At its worst, bullying has driven children/young people to self-harm and even suicide.

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Children who are bullied:

- may develop mental health problems like depression and anxiety
- have fewer friendships
- aren't accepted by their peers
- are wary and suspicious of others
- have problems adjusting to school, and don't do as well.

All children/young people who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are bullied, they bully others or they witness bullying.

Any child/young person can be bullied for any reason. If a child/young person is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk.

This might be because of their:

- race or ethnic background
- gender
- sexual orientation

Or it could be because they:

- appear anxious or have low self-esteem
- lack assertiveness
- are shy or introverted

Popular or successful children/young people are also bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them. Sometimes a child's/young person's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them.

Disabled children/young people can experience bullying because they seem an easy target and less able to defend themselves.

Signs and Symptoms

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

Types of bullying

Bullying can take different forms. It could include:

- physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing someone
- verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone
- non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages
- emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulative behaviour
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

The following types of bullying are also hate crimes:

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- racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying
- bullying someone because they have a disability.

Types of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children/young people from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child/young person
- encouraging children/young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a child/young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children/young people into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

48. E-Safety and Online Safety

What are the risks for children/young people online?

What they might see:

- Inappropriate content
- How this makes them feel

Who they might speak to:

- People they don't know
- Online friends & Offline friends

How they behave:

- Do they feel anxious
- Do they get angry

If you have concerns:

- Try to remain calm and balanced. It can be very easy to show shock, even anger about something you may have heard.
- Be positive but also open about anything you're worried about. You could say "I think this site's really good," or "I'm a little worried about things I've heard about this app."
- Ask if they're worried about anything and let them know they can come to you or another adult they trust.
- Listen for the reasons why they want to use apps or sites you don't think are suitable, so you can talk about these together.
- Ask the child/young person what they think's okay for children/young people of different ages, so they feel involved in the decision making.

49. Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including:

- social media
- text messages and messaging apps
- emails
- online chats
- online gaming
- live-streaming sites

Children/young people can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.

Types of online abuse:

- Cyberbullying
- Emotional abuse
- Grooming
- Sexting
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation

Signs of online abuse:

A child/young person experiencing abuse online might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Effects of online abuse:

Online abuse can have long-lasting effects on children/young people. It can lead to:

- anxiety
- self-harm
- eating disorders
- suicidal thoughts

Some of the signs and effects of online abuse are similar to other abuse types discussed previously.

Online Safety Act 2023

The Online Safety Act 2023 is a UK law designed to protect children and adults online by placing strict duties on social media companies, search engines, and messaging apps to tackle illegal content and reduce harm.

- **Focus on Platforms:** The main aim is to hold social media, search engines, and messaging apps accountable for the content they host, requiring them to remove illegal content and protect children.
- **User Empowerment:** The Act provides individuals with more control over the content they see and enables them to block non-verified users.

- Existing Law Enforcement: While the Act focuses on corporate responsibility, it works alongside existing laws regarding criminal behavior online, such as harassment or threats, which can still be enforced against individuals.
- Adult Protection: The Act includes measures for adults to reduce the likelihood of encountering legal but harmful content (e.g., encouragement of self-harm, hate speech).

The criminal offences introduced by the Act came into effect in January 2024. These offences cover:

- encouraging or assisting with serious self-harm
- cyberflashing
- sending false information intended to cause non-trivial harm (Fake News)
- threatening communications
- intimate image abuse
- epilepsy trolling

These new offences apply directly to the individuals sending them, and convictions have already been made under the cyberflashing and threatening communications offences.

50. Harmful Practices

Harmful practices are persistent practices and behaviours that are grounded on discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, age and other grounds as well as multiple and/or intersecting forms of discrimination that often involve violence and cause physical and/or psychological harm or suffering.

UNICEF identifies that both boys and girls are at risk of harmful practices, although girls are often at greater risk. It also notes that communities where harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation take place, often reflect values that hold girls in low esteem.

In many cases, the children who might be more vulnerable to harmful practices are the same as the groups vulnerable to other forms of abuse, e.g., those with additional needs, and children who have been or are currently experiencing forms of harm and or neglect. However, harmful practices may also take place in households and areas where no other issues are present other than the particular beliefs of the family and, possibly, the associated wider community.

Culturally competent practice

Many child safeguarding practice reviews identify a lack of knowledge about a particular culture or faith as an issue leading to abuse often not being identified, challenged and or stopped. It has been identified that things like structural racism, unconscious bias and a lack of cultural competence among professionals can leave children and families from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic and cultural backgrounds at risk of harm.

There is always a duty to keep the child safe, but when dealing with any allegation of child abuse linked to faith, belief, and/or cultural practices, agencies must also engage with individuals, families and, in some cases, the wider communities to challenge the belief that underlies the harm. You may have a role in this, but your main focus should remain the child's safety.

51. Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (ALFB)

Abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community. Faith abuse is often considered as part of the group that comes under the umbrella term of harmful practices.

ALFB can include a belief in concepts of:

- witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children/young people or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs);

- the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context);
- ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies;
- use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children/young people to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

Research has suggested that in communities where there is ALFB sometimes there is:

- a community belief in things such as witchcraft;
- an influential person who promotes ideas such as people being possessed whilst also promoting abuse of the child/young person as the solution.

Coupled with this, parents/carers/abusers are more likely to have the belief that what they are doing will save the child/young person, the family or the wider community and therefore it is for the greater good.

The forms the abuse can take include:

Physical: beating, burning, cutting, stabbing, semi-strangulating, tying up the child, or rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's/young person's genitals or eyes

Emotional: in the form of isolation (e.g. not allowing a child/young person to eat or share a room with family members or threatening to abandon them). The child/young person may also be persuaded that they are possessed

Neglect: failure to ensure appropriate medical care, supervision, school attendance, good hygiene, nourishment, clothing or warmth

Sexual: within the family or community, children/young people abused in this way may be particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation

It should be noted that a child/young people can be abused because of faith or belief without these factors being present and not all those who believe in witchcraft or spirit possession harm children/young people.

Common factors that put a child at risk of harm include:

- Belief in evil spirits
- Belief that the child/young person could 'infect' others with such 'evil'.
- Disabilities - learning disabilities, mental ill health, epilepsy, autism, a stammer and deafness
- Changes and/ or complexity in family structure or dynamics
- Change of family circumstances for the worse - a spiritual explanation is sought in order to rationalise misfortune
- Parental difficulties - a parent's mental ill health, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and schizophrenia.

Signs and Symptoms

- A child's/young person's body showing signs or marks, such as bruises or burns, from physical abuse
- A child's/young person's becoming noticeably confused, withdrawn, disorientated or isolated and appearing alone amongst other children;
- A child's/young person's personal care deteriorating, for example through a loss of weight, being hungry, turning up to school without food or food money or being unkempt with dirty clothes and even faeces smeared on to them;
- It may also be directly evident that the child's/young person's parent does not show concern for or a close bond with them;
- A child's/young person's attendance at school becoming irregular, or being taken out of school all together without another school place having been organised;

A child's/young person's or family members talking about being evil, having the devil beaten out of them or using specific words like: kindoki, djinn, juju, voodoo

52. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

This is when a female's genitals are intentionally altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It is also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting' but has many other names. It is often completed by someone with no medical training.

FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth. But FGM is a harmful practice that isn't required by any religion and there are no health benefits of FGM.

FGM goes back almost 2000 years and has been described as a mark of upper class and a female rite of passage. It has deep roots in cultural traditions and social norms. It is performed more often in patriarchal societies where women often have poor education and little decision-making power. The practice is meant to control women's sexual behaviour and improves chances a woman will maintain her virginity until marriage.

Signs and Symptoms

FGM is a form of abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK. We know:

- there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM
- it is often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades
- they are rarely given anesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained
- it's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:

- when a baby is new-born
- during childhood or as a teenager
- just before marriage
- during pregnancy

Signs it might happen:

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad.
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'.
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM.
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays.
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school.
- A girl struggles to keep up in school.
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home.

Signs it has happened:

- Difficulty in walking, standing or sitting
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college
- Not wanting to go to appointments, doctors or routine medical examinations
- Asking for help but not explicit about the issue as they are scared or embarrassed

It can cause serious harm, including:

- severe and/or constant pain

- infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- pain or difficulty having sex
- infertility
- bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- organ damage
- problems during pregnancy and childbirth, which can be life-threatening for the mother and baby
- mental health problems, such as depression, flashbacks and self-harm
- death from blood loss or infections.

Any female who has faced, or is worried about FGM, might not realise what's happening is wrong. And they might even blame themselves.

53. Breast Ironing & Flattening

Breast flattening or breast ironing is the process during which young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged, flattened and/or pounded down over a period of time (sometimes years) in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as gender-based violence.

In many cases, the abuser thinks they are doing something good for the child by delaying the effects of puberty and the practice is designed to:

- Make teenage girls look less "womanly" and no longer sexually attractive to men.
- Prevent pregnancy and rape.
- Enable the girl to continue and focus on her education.
- Prevent dishonour being brought upon the family if the girl begins sexual relations outside of marriage.
- Deter unwanted attention.

There are no health benefits to breast ironing or flattening.

Signs and Symptoms – It has/ might happen

- A girl is embarrassed about her body.
- A girl is born to a woman who has undergone breast flattening.
- A girl has an older sibling or cousin who has undergone breast flattening.
- If there are references to breast flattening in conversation, for example, a girl may tell other children about it.
- A girl may request help from another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- A girl from an affected community is withdrawn from Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and/or Sex and Relationship Education as her parents wish to keep her uninformed about her rights and body.
- A girl may be fearful of taking part in Physical Education (PE).
- One or both parents, or elder family members, consider breast flattening integral to their cultural identity.
- The family indicate that there are strong levels of influence held by elders who are involved in bringing up female children and support breast flattening/ironing.
- A girl/family has a limited level of integration within the UK community.

Due to the type of instruments that may be used in breast flattening, the type of force used and the lack of aftercare, significant health and developmental issue may occur. These can include:

- Abscesses
- Cysts

- Severe pain
- Itching
- Tissue damage
- Infection
- Discharge of milk
- Dissymmetry of the breasts
- Fever
- The complete disappearance of one or both breasts
- Breast cancer
- An impact on the child's social and psychological wellbeing
- Relationship issues
- Long-term mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), body dysmorphia or severe depression

54. Infant Oral Mutilation (IOM)

Infant oral mutilation (IOM) also known as milk teeth extraction is a harmful traditional practice, where healthy, developing, unerupted primary tooth buds (usually canines) are gouged out of an infant's gums in the belief it will prevent or cure childhood illnesses. The bulges in a child's gums, representing developing primary canines, are perceived to be 'tooth worms' responsible for childhood illness and must be removed to prevent the child from dying.

This can take place anytime from the child being days old up until 18 months. Typically done by elders or community healers, religious leaders, traditional birth attendants and sometimes family members. Without the use of anaesthesia, IOM is carried out in non-sterile settings with common sharp objects like fingernails, hot nails, bicycle spokes, and regular knives.

Children are put through unnecessary pain and are at risk of serious short and long term health and well-being consequences. After the procedure children can experience trauma, pain, excessive bleeding, infections and inflammation, in worst case scenarios it can be fatal. Long term consequences can range from improper teeth alignment resulting in braces, benign tumours, defective or lack of adult teeth. Removal of teeth can cause affect eating, smiling, and speech development.

Signs and Symptoms

- Missing primary teeth - Specifically lower or upper primary canines or incisors.
- Fresh trauma - Lacerated, swollen, or bleeding gums, especially in the canine areas.
- Symptoms of severe infection such as fever, dehydration, tetanus, or localized abscesses.
- Missing, misplaced, or underdeveloped permanent teeth
- Scarring – Visible scars on the gum tissue
- A child talking about siblings or family members doing something or having something done to their teeth
- Family members discussing traditions of IOM

55. Domestic Abuse

Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, bullying, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence and abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender and sexuality.

This can include, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour

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- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Not letting someone leave the house
- Reading emails, text messages or letters
- Economic abuse
- Threatening to kill or harm someone, another family member or pet
- Psychological and emotional abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

It's important to remember that domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Children/young people that live within households where domestic violence is happening are identified as 'at risk' of harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others. This would include witnessing domestic abuse.

Signs and Symptoms

- Change in sleeping patterns
- Nightmares/ bed wetting
- Withdrawn or excessively clingy behaviour
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm
- Stress related illness
- Depression
- Aggressiveness
- Disruptive behaviour
- Lack of confidence
- Low self esteem
- Suicidal feelings
- Older children/young people may show risk taking behaviours such as alcohol or drug misuse

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child/young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour.

This can continue after the adults' relationship has come to an end, and post-separation abuse and coercive controlling behaviours can continue to remain a factor in the child's life. The impact can last into adulthood.

56. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Challengers is committed to preventing, identifying, and responding to all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). This includes, but is not limited to, domestic abuse, sexual violence, harassment, coercive

control, stalking, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), online abuse, and any behaviour that threatens the safety, dignity, or wellbeing of women and girls.

We recognise that VAWG is a serious safeguarding concern and a violation of fundamental human rights. We are committed to creating an environment where women and girls are safe, heard, respected, and supported.

We will do this by:

- Not accepting any form of violence, harassment, discrimination, or abuse, and making sure concerns are taken seriously and acted upon.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including recognising signs of VAWG and responding in a sensitive, appropriate, and supportive way.
- Supporting survivors with empathy and respect, listening carefully, believing their experiences, and signposting them to specialist services for further help.
- Actively challenging inequality, harmful stereotypes, and behaviours that may contribute to or normalise abuse.
- Working in partnership with local safeguarding boards and VAWG-specialist organisations to ensure our practice remains effective, current, and informed by best practice.
- Responding promptly to all concerns, following our safeguarding procedures and working with statutory agencies whenever needed.

57. Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Trafficking is where children/young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children/young people are trafficked for:

- sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.

Trafficked children/young people experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children/young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.

Traffickers:

- often groom children, young people, families and communities to gain their trust
- may threaten families with violence or threats
- often promise children, young people and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere
- may ask families for money for providing documents or transport
- tell families they'll make a profit from money a child/young person "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime
- often tell families this money is to pay off a debt they "owe" to the traffickers

Trafficking is an economic crime.

Knowing the signs of trafficking can help give a voice to children/young people.

Sometimes children/young people won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out.

It may not be obvious that a child/young person has been trafficked, but you might notice unusual or unexpected things.

They might:

- spend a lot of time doing household chores
- rarely leave their house or have no time for playing
- be orphaned or living apart from their family
- live in low-standard accommodation
- be unsure which country, city or town they're in
- can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have no access to their parents or guardians
- be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- have injuries from workplace accidents
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

58. Child/ Young Person Sexual Development, Behaviour and Abuse

Healthy Sexual Development vs Concerning Sexual Behaviour

- All children/young people go through phases of sexual development (NSPCC)
- Typical sexual behaviours (NSPCC)
- Age groups - Under 5yrs, 5-9yrs, 9-13yrs, 13-17yrs (NSPCC)
- Individual differences to consider
- Changes or escalations in behaviour
- Signs & Symptoms of abuse
- Allegations from other children
- Harmful sexual behaviour (NSPCC)

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children/young people which is harmful or abusive

Peer-on-peer sexual abuse is a form of HSB where sexual abuse takes place between children/young people of a similar age or stage of development.

Child-on-child sexual abuse is a form of HSB that takes place between children/young people of any age or stage of development.

Problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) is developmentally inappropriate or socially unexpected, sexualised behaviour which doesn't have an obvious element of victimisation or abuse.

59. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)

Adverse childhood experiences are stressful and/or traumatic events which take place in childhood or adolescence. ACEs can be a single event or continued threats to a child/ young person's safety, physicality, or trust.

Examples of ACEs include the following (although this list is not exhaustive):

- Experiencing emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse.

- Living with someone who abused drugs or alcohol.
- Being exposed to domestic violence.
- Living with someone with serious mental illness.
- Living with someone who has been incarcerated.
- Losing a parent through divorce, abandonment, or death.

What are the risks for children who have ACEs?

A higher number of ACEs can be connected with increased risks of chronic disease, mental health issues, violence, and lower academic achievement.

ACEs are difficult experiences that impact children/young people and can be very difficult for children to manage as they get older.

Getting support and help at the earliest stage can really make a difference and allow children, young people and families to better manage the effect of ACEs.

BRUISING

Children/young people can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

Where can I expect to see bruising from an accidental injury?

The shins and the knees are the most likely places where children/ young people who are walking, or starting to walk, get bruised.

Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body – such as the knees and elbows – and are often seen on the front of the body.

When should I be concerned?

There are some patterns of bruising that may mean physical abuse has taken place:

- Abusive bruises often occur on soft parts of the body – such as the abdomen, back and buttocks
- As a result of defending themselves, abused children/young people may have bruising on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet.
- Clusters of bruises are a common feature in abused children/young people. These are often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh, or on the body.
- Severe bruising to the scalp, with swelling around the eyes, may occur if the child/young person has been “scalped” – ie, had their hair pulled violently.
- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face and neck
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks, genital area and/or inner thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Helpful Tips

- You can't age a bruise
- Detail the colour, area and shape
- Compare to coin sizes or other general items other will know and understand

Bruises on different skin tones

Bruises on dark skin develop in the same way as bruises on light or medium toned skin. The colours of a bruise can appear different, depending on the person's skin tone, and bruising may be less apparent on dark skin due to contrast.

Bruises can be harder to identify on skin that contains a lot of melanin, which is the pigment in cells that gives skin its colour. Although very dark pigmentation in the skin may make the visual signs of a bruise less obvious, other signs will still be there, such as pain or swelling.

Unexplained bruises or marks

Any bruises or marks on a child/young person's body that are unexplained must be recorded and reported.

A bruise or mark on the body is unexplained when:

- A bruise/mark is found on a child/young person and the mark has not been reported by the parent at the start of the session.
- A bruise/mark is found on a child/young person and there is no incident at Challengers that is consistent with the bruise/mark.
- An explanation is given by the child/young person/parent/carer/staff and it is inconsistent with the bruise/mark seen.
- A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Requires immediate referral:

- **Bruising on non-independently mobile children/young people:** Any bruising on a child/young person is a concern particularly if the child/young person is not independently mobile. An explanation should always be sought and the child/young person's history taken into consideration but should always be referred. Any response needs to be appropriate to the level of concern and non-accidental injury should always be considered. A referral should be made to Children or Adult Services if there are concerns for the child/young person's safety or welfare.
- **Unexplained bruising:** No one knows when or how a child/young person received the bruising
- **Bruising in concerning areas:** Head, face, ears, neck, chest, abdomen, back, inner thigh, genital area including anus, bottoms of feet, back of legs or any other area which is a concern, may suggest abuse.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON IS BEING HARMED OR AT RISK OF HARM

- The safety of the children/young people is our first priority.
- Tell your Leader or a senior member of Challengers staff immediately.
- **ACT IMMEDIATELY** – Leader or senior member of Challengers staff make a referral to the local authority safeguarding team.
- If your line manager or Challengers does not respond in the right way you must make the referral to the local authority safeguarding team yourself.

60. Where might information come from?

- A declaration by the child/young person – verbally or using signs or their behaviour
- Another child/young person
- A member of staff – their observations or feelings
- The family of the child/young person concerned – the family/carers may perceive their report as ‘normal’ but Challengers may still consider the information to be a safeguarding concern
- A member of the public
- Another professional

61. Managing disclosures from a child/young person

If the child/young person makes an allegation/discloses information which raises concern, we should:

- See and speak to the child/young person
- Listen to what they say
- Collect accurate information
- Treat the child/young person as competent and intelligent
- Take the child/young person and their declaration seriously
- Record all conversations/ actions using a OPS004A Challengers Incident Form/ CPOMS
- Clarify the concerns
- Offer reassurance about how they will be kept safe
- Do not promise to keep the declaration a secret
- Reassure the child/young person (or the reporting person) that they have done the right thing to tell
- Explain that the information may be passed to Children's Services and/or the Police.

Children/young people are clear about what they want from an effective safeguarding system. These asks from children/young people should guide the behaviour of practitioners.

Children/young people have said that they need:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee

The child/young person must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality. Such well-intentioned actions could prejudice Police investigations.

Consideration must always be given to issues of diversity, so that the impact of cultural expectations and obligations are taken into consideration. It is vital that if there are any communication difficulties, appropriate support is sourced.

Whilst the child's/young person's view should be considered, it remains the responsibility of Challengers staff/the professional to take whatever action is required to ensure the safety and best interests of that child/young person and any other children/young people.

What if a child/young person is the 'perpetrator' of the harm

If the concern is about a child causing harm to another child/young person then both children/young people must be considered as at risk of harm and the incident(s) reported appropriately for each child/young person.

If the individual/s is/are over 18 years of age Adult Social Care must be contacted to support with further investigations.

62. Making referrals to Local Authorities

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child/young person you must call the MASH, SPA or IFD team for advice/ referral.

- Discuss the concern/referral with DSL, DDSL, Service Manager but this should not delay or obstruct any referral.
- Do it quickly – do not delay.
- Report before you call any other agency. (LADO, Ofsted etc.)
- Record in writing discussions about a child/young person's welfare. Make sure you reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken
- Within 24 hours follow up the referral with a copy of the Challengers incident form/CPOMS or the specific team's own referral form.

- Each local authority will have a Safeguarding team who receive and manage all safeguarding concerns for that area – **select the county where the child/young person lives**
- Receipt of a referral should be acknowledged to Challengers within 24 hours – If you complete an online referral form download and keep with all other incident documents/ upload to CPOMS.
- Record names, times, dates of who you spoke to, especially if transferred to other professionals
- Be aware of the information you are sharing, and record what has been shared, with who and why
- OPS023 Emergency Contact List should be available at all services and used for contact information

Child/Young Person Concern Flowchart

See OPS001 Safeguarding Policy Statement

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER

If you are concerned a staff member who works with children/young people has: Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/young person, you must call the LADO for advice/referral.

- Discuss the concern/referral with DSL, DDSL, Service Manager but this should not delay or obstruct any referral.
- Do it quickly – do not delay.
- Record in writing discussions about the incident. Make sure you reach a clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken
- Within 24 hours follow up the referral with a copy of the Challengers incident form/CPOMS or the specific team's own referral form.

63. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO is responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children/young people. This involves working with police, children's social care, adult social care, employers and other involved professionals.

The LADO does not conduct investigations directly, but rather oversees and directs them to ensure thoroughness, timeliness and fairness.

Ordinarily, to ensure impartiality, the LADO will not have direct contact with the adult against who the allegation has been made, or the family of the child/children or young person/young people involved but will, as part of their role ensure that they have information regarding outcomes.

Challengers HR will conduct investigations with DSL, DDSL, service managers or other members of the senior team, following LADO's advice.

64. Person in a Position of Trust (PIPOT)/Adult Services

This role manages allegations or concerns about adults who work with or care for vulnerable adults at risk.

If you are concerned about a staff member working with an adult at risk, you should report it directly to the Local Council's Adult Safeguarding Team.

65. Managing allegations against staff

These procedures should be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children/young people/young adults, in connection with their employment (paid or voluntary), has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person/young adult, or may have harmed a child/young person/young adult
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person
- Behaved towards a child/young person/young adult or children/young people/young adults in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children/young people/young adults
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children/young people/young adults

In addition, these procedures should be applied when there is an allegation that any person who works with children/young people/vulnerable young adults:

- Has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child/young person/young adult but could, for example, include:
 - Arrest for possession of a weapon or indecent images of children/young people/vulnerable young adults.
 - As a parent or carer, your own child/young person under the age of 18yrs, becomes subject to child/young person protection procedures and or you and your family become involved with social services for safeguarding reasons. This does not always apply to vulnerable young adults.
 - Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (e.g. partner, member of the immediate family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to children/young people under the age of 18yrs, for whom the member of staff is responsible in their employment/volunteering.

This is a serious matter for the child/young person/vulnerable young adult, the organisation and the staff member/ volunteer concerned. Advice needs to be followed from the LADO and HR including possible

suspension while an investigation takes place. However, at the same time all efforts must be made to support the staff/volunteer during the process. Further advice to be sought from HR and LADO.

Where required PIPOT/Adult Services would replace LADO.

Staff Concern Flowchart

See OPS001 Safeguarding Policy Statement

RECORDING, REPORTING AND CONTACTING

Record all actions, decisions and names of professionals using OPS004A Challengers Incident Form/CPOMS.

The person making the referral should provide as much of the information listed below as they can within the same working day and as soon as possible:

- Full name, date of birth and gender of child/ren/young person/people
- Full family address and any known previous addresses
- Identity of those with parental responsibility
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid
- Any impairments child/ren/young person/people have
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child/young person or family's life
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- Identity and current whereabouts of the suspected/alleged perpetrator
- Child's/young person's current location and emotional and physical condition
- Whether the child/young person is currently safe or is in need of immediate protection because of any approaching deadlines (e.g. child about to be collected by alleged abuser)
- Child's/young person's account and the parent's response to the concerns if known
- Referrers relationship and knowledge of the child/young person and parents/carers
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals
- Information about parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral

If this is not all discussed on the phone, you will be directed to complete an online referral form which will have similar questions.

66. Informing Families/Carers

Challengers will always inform and involve families/carers when we contact children or adult's services about their child/young person/vulnerable young adult – unless we are advised not to by Local Authority – this will be highly unusual.

Practically staff need to consider:

- Whether or not it is safe to speak to the family/carer before contacting the Children/adult's Services MASH, SPA or IFD
- If in doubt call Children/Adult Services first and get advice about how/if Challengers should inform the family/carers.
- When the family/carer is informed record their reaction about the incident/referral.
- Inviting families/carers to meetings about their child's/young person's/vulnerable young adult's care alongside advice Challengers have asked for and/or received from Children/Adult Services. These meetings need to be recorded, and notes and any documents generated shared with the family/carers.
- Do not wait to tell the family/carers if this delays a referral.
- Contact with Children/Adult Services Teams should be a positive experience for the child/young person/vulnerable young adult, family/carers and Challengers – the child's/young person's/vulnerable

young adult's safety and happiness should be the outcome. Challengers should promote this aspect to families/carers.

- Challengers staff do not need parental/carer permission to contact the Children/Adult Services about a concern but involving and describing the concern to parents/carers may improve trust and the quality of relationship Challengers has with the child's/young person's/vulnerable young adult's family/carers.
- Reason/s for proceeding without parental/carer agreement must be recorded.
- Children/Adult Services must be told that the parent/carers has withheld her/his/their permission.

67. Key contacts when you are worried about a child/young person/vulnerable young adult

The individual reporting the concern must be sure that the person they report to will take action to keep the child/young person/vulnerable young adult safe from harm. The individual must not stop until this can be confirmed. This will usually be achieved by following Challengers procedure.

68. Whistleblowing

If you report wrongdoing including in relation to someone's behaviour or in relation to processes and arrangements at Challengers that may potentially harm someone or may actually have harmed someone associated with the organisation – especially, of course, those who use the services that Challengers provides - this is commonly called whistleblowing.

This will usually be about something you've seen at work - though not always. If the staff do not think that their line manager or Challengers as an organisation have acted to keep children/young people/Adults with care and support needs safe the individual must use OPS023 Emergency Contact List to escalate their concerns. This might involve contacting the DSL, CEO, The Safeguarding Trustee and/or commissioning and regulatory bodies.

69. Notifying Ofsted

Challengers will report to Ofsted:

- All allegations or concerns about staff who work at schemes registered with Ofsted that are referred to the LADO
- All significant harm to a child/young person that happens at a Ofsted Registered Challengers play age service– even if the harm is caused through legitimate play/leisure and not caused by staff behaviour
- Anyone at any time can notify Ofsted about a concern at Challengers – to do with the safety of children/young people or actions of staff.

HOW TO CONTACT OFSTED:

- **Phone:** 0300 123 1231
- **Email:** enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- **Website:** www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted or <https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-form>
- **Address:** Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

70. Notifying Charity Commission

Challengers will report to the Charity Commission when:

- Harm to people who come into contact with the charity through its work
- loss of your charity's money or assets
- damage to your charity's property
- harm to your charity's work or reputation

The main categories of reportable incident are:

- protecting people and safeguarding incidents – incidents that have resulted in or risk significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work
- financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime and money laundering
- large donations from unknown or unverifiable source, suspicious financial activity using charity's funds
- other significant financial loss
- links to terrorism or extremism, including 'proscribed' (or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze, or kidnapping of staff
- other significant incidents e.g. Insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches/losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect charity

HOW TO CONTACT CHARITY COMMISSION:

- Email: RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

71. Emergency Contact List

This document contains all emergency contact details for Challengers, it also includes information on contacting local children's services, adult services and LADO.

FURTHER READING, RESOURCES, REFERENCES, INFORMATION

Legislation

Children Act 1989 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

Children Act 2004 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Children and Social Work Act 2017 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

Care Act 2014 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Equality Act 2010 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Mental Capacity Act 2005 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents>

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents/enacted>

Data Protection Act 2018 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework 2024 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Policy & Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (DfE) -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (DfE) -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Care and Support Statutory Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance 2009 -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-disabled-children-practice-guidance>

Regulated activity in relation to children: scope. Factual note by HM Government -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80bdfbed915d74e33fc265/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf

A Guide to Child Workforce Roles (v.9) - https://arcengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/DBS_Child_workforce_guidance_v9.0_091216.pdf

A Guide to Adult Workforce Roles (v.9) - https://arcengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/DBS_Adult_workforce_guidance_v9.0_111216.pdf

A Guide to Adult Workforce Roles (v.9) - https://arcengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/DBS_Adult_workforce_guidance_v9.0_111216.pdf

OPS002 SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

Revised Prevent Duty Guidelines: England and Wales 2023 -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships (LCSP)

Surrey - <https://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/>

Hampshire - <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/procedures/>

West Sussex - <https://westsussexcs.trixonline.co.uk/>

Kingston and Richmond – <https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/>

Further Reading

NSPCC Website - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY

Plan Version No.	Release Date	Summary of Changes	Changes Made By
1.	May 2019	Overall Update	CEO – Laura Sercombe
2.	Dec 2019	Overall Update	CEO – Laura Sercombe
3.	July 2020	Contacts Update	Operations Manager Kat Link
4.	Jan 2021	– Updated section 17.1 emergency contact	Head of Operations – Paul Wilson
5.	Feb 2022	General Update throughout document	Head of Operations – Paul Wilson
6.	Sept 2022	Review to check in line with Surrey's procedures	Charlotte Bagchi
7.	March 2023	Added appendix on Domestic Abuse	Head of Service -Paul Wilson
8.	March 2024	Overall Update – Created separate Safeguarding Policy Statement OPS001A and updated & renamed this document to Safeguarding Policy Handbook OPS001B	Head of Service – Paul Wilson DSL, and Ash Morgan DDSL
9.	March 2025	Section 1 – G555 service update, Section 8 – West Sussex LSCP link/name, Section 61 – Link updates	Head of Service – Paul Wilson DSL, and Ash Morgan DDSL
10.	February 2026	Pre-school sections removed	Madeline Church – Impact and Evaluation Officer
11.	June 2026	Overall update – Updating whole document, Adding Adult Safeguarding details throughout.	Head of Service - Paul Wilson DSL, Cress Robinson DDSL, Ash Morgan DDSL
12.	July 2026	Added Sections 29 Water Safety, 50 Harmful Practices, 52 Breast Ironing, 53 IOM	Ash Morgan DDSL



Paul Wilson – Head of Service – Designated Safeguarding Lead