



Linskill and North Tyneside Community Development Trust

Child Safeguarding Policy

Designated Safeguarding Persons:

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Section A - Policy

1: Intent and introduction

1.1 Statement of Intent

Linskill and North Tyneside Community Development Trust (LNTCDT) values and encourages the involvement of children and young people both in its own work and in the work of other organisations. Through its *Child Safeguarding Policy*, LNTCDT is committed to promoting their well-being and enjoyment ensuring the protection of their health, safety and general welfare while in the company or care of LNTCDT staff or volunteers.

1.2 Introduction

Children and young people may be involved with LNTCDT either as volunteers or as general service users. In promoting this policy LNTCDT is keen to take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of children and young people;
- Keep them safe from harm while in the care of its staff and volunteers;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;
- Support and protect the interests of staff and volunteers who have contact with, or access to, young people.
- Ensure through the terms and conditions for bookable space that any organisations providing services to children have an appropriate safeguarding procedure in place and recognise their responsibilities for their client groups.

1.3 Content

This policy has been compiled as a reference guide to LNTCDT policy and practices affecting children and young people. To help clarify the content, the document has been broken down into:

Policy: the guiding principles, definitions of those affected and the manner of implementation

Guidelines: instructions for best practice based on the guiding principles, which must be followed.

Although detailed, this policy is not intended to be comprehensive and as such does not attempt to deal with **all** the issues of working with children and young people. Instead it is intended as a practical guide for staff and volunteers involved with them.

The Nursery has a more detailed policy as required, this is available to those not working directly in the Nursery on request.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

2: Scope of the policy and those affected

2.1 LNTCDT personnel affected

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers (including Board members), and others representing LNTCDT who have contact with children and young people.

2.2 Other people affected; definition of a child or young person

The term child or young person within this policy refers to any person aged under 18.

2.3 Activities affected

Activities and involvement within the scope of this policy include:

- Interviewing young volunteers;
- Working with young people on volunteer-led projects;
- Supporting and working with young people volunteering in LNTCDT;
- Supporting and working with young people on work placement;
- Working with young people during LNTCDT advice sessions;
- Any other activity that might involve substantial, unsupervised access to children and young people.
- Activities and events delivered by LNTCDT

3: Guiding principles

3.1 In welcoming and working with children and young people LNTCDT aims to:

- 1) Provide a friendly welcome for them and promote their general welfare;
- 2) Recognise their rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect;
- 3) Consistently apply fair and objective methods of selecting employees, volunteers and contractors;
- 4) Plan appropriate activities involving young people with care to minimise risks to their health and safety;
- 5) Raise awareness of the dangers to which young people may be susceptible;
- 6) Develop appropriate procedures for responding to accidents, incidents, allegations, suspicions or disclosures of abuse.

Guides for good practice under each of the six points listed above are set out in **Section B**.

4: Implementation of the policy

4.1 Distribution of copies

Full copies of this policy will be distributed to the following in their inductions;

- Board Members
- Staff
- Volunteers

4.2 Training

A training programme and/or briefing sessions for all Board members, Staff and Volunteers and an annual refresher to support the policy and good practice will be delivered. The training and/or briefings are informed by the local authority Safeguarding training programmes.

A pamphlet highlighting key information will be distributed to all groups hiring LNTCDT facilities, working with and providing activities for children and young people.

LNTCDT recommends all external agencies hiring and using the Trust's facilities across all sites adhere to best practice and training is offered.

Designated Safeguarding Leads have additional training to attend in order to fulfil this responsibility. This training is completed via the local authority.

5: Other relevant policies, guidance and information

This policy should be implemented in conjunction with other policies, information and guidance.

LNTCDT Disciplinary Procedure;

LNTCDT Grievance and Complaints Policy;

LNTCDT Equality and Diversity Policy;

LNTCDT's Nursery Child Protection Policy

LNTCDT Whistle Blowing Policy

North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Section B – Guidelines

1: Welcome and Welfare

1.1 Promoting a friendly environment

As an organisation that values and encourages the involvement of young people, LNTCDT aims to provide a welcoming, safe, secure and enjoyable experience for all of its volunteers and service users.

When working with young people, LNTCDT intends that staff and volunteers see themselves as part of a team sharing this common interest.

As well as good public relations, such an approach should ensure that young people feel able to raise any concerns they may have and discuss anything they may be unhappy about.

1.2 Welfare paramount

The fundamental principle of this policy is that whenever the interests of young people are involved, their welfare must always be paramount. LNTCDT recognises this and all staff and volunteers should seek to implement this principle.

2: People as individuals

LNTCDT recognises the need to be aware of each person's needs and capabilities when working with children and young people or other service users.

Where practical, time should be taken to get to know each person individually, in order to make their experience with LNTCDT more rewarding. This also enables LNTCDT to be more responsive to individuals' needs.

3: Selection of employees and volunteers

LNTCDT will take appropriate steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people wherever possible. A thorough selection procedure for positions, both paid and unpaid, which could involve significant unsupervised contact with a young person is implemented to assess a person's suitability.

It should be noted that **anyone** who applies to work or volunteer with LNTCDT may have the potential to abuse, whether they are a member of staff, a volunteer, service user or other.

3.1 New appointments

LNTCDT will rigorously apply these procedures with applicants for all employee or volunteer posts that involve substantial unsupervised access to children and young people.

3.2 Job / task description

A job description will be drawn up for all employees with LNTCDT. Volunteers will have a volunteer role description outlining their role and general duties.

Person specifications will also be drawn up for all LNTCDT employees and volunteers, these will have a list of 'skills/qualities required' for any opportunities which involve working with these groups.

3.3 Application Form

All applicants will be asked to complete an Employee Application Form/Volunteer Application Form as applicable.

These ask applicants to provide:

- Details of previous experience, either voluntary or paid;
- A reference from their current or most recent employer or, if they have no employment history, from a lecturer, teacher or other appropriate professional.
- Details of any convictions;
- Consent for a criminal records check to be undertaken.

These forms will be returned to LNTCDT's Human Resources Manager in the case of applications for paid posts, or the appropriate LNTCDT staff member for applicants for voluntary posts. To protect confidentiality these forms will be kept in a locked drawer or cabinet.

3.4 Interview

Applicants for paid posts within LNTCDT involving work with children and young people will be interviewed by at least two LNTCDT employees / Board Members. Ideally one of these will have experience of working with this client group.

In both instances the interview will explore information contained in the Application Form. Particular care will be taken over any previous job/volunteering history connected with young people and why they left. Any gaps in work history must be investigated and motives for working with this client group discussed carefully.

If there are concerns about the identity of an applicant, they must be asked to provide two forms of identification, for example a driving licence, passport, or other form of identification.

3.5 References

All applicants, whether paid or voluntary, must provide a reference from their current or most recent employer or, if they have no employment history, from a lecturer, teacher or other appropriate professional. People with previous volunteering experience may provide a reference from their supervisor or line manager. LNTCDT reserves the right to request a second reference if there is insufficient information in the first reference. References must be on letterhead paper and signed by the referee. These should be sought before the applicant is formally offered a position within LNTCDT.

For potential employees, references should be provided by an ex-employer or professional person who can comment, from first-hand knowledge, on the applicant's experience and suitability for working with children and young people.

Written references should be read carefully for ambiguities or hidden meanings. If there is anything that raises doubts about the applicant, the referee should be contacted to discuss the matter further.

All applicants should be made aware that any appointment, whether paid or voluntary, is subject to satisfactory references. References should be treated confidentially and stored securely.

3.6 Disclosure and Barring Service checks

Employees and volunteers who will have substantial, unsupervised contact with children and young people will be subject to a criminal records check. Forms should be completed by the applicant and details of the returned check noted by LNTCDT's HR Manager, in accordance with data protection procedures.

All applicants should be made aware that any appointment, whether paid or voluntary, is subject to satisfactory checks. Information gathered through this process should be treated in the strictest confidence.

3.7 Settling-in period

For employees, written confirmation of appointment will state that the position is subject to making satisfactory progress towards the objectives specified in their *Job Description* and that their performance will be monitored as part of their regular support and supervision. There will be a formal review at 3 months and then annually as part of their Personal Review and Development process.

During the first 6 months a new employee will be supervised closely, especially if they have never worked with young people before. They will not be left unsupervised or be working alone with a young person over an extended period during the first 6 months of their employment.

Written records of formal reviews will be kept in the employee's Support & Supervision file.

Similarly, volunteers will also be closely supervised during their first 6 months. Reviews will also take place but will be less formal.

3.8 Irrelevant information

Certain information revealed by the selection procedures may be immaterial to the protection of young people. Assurances will be given that information will be dealt with confidentially.

An applicant may disclose, for example, a minor offence that may have no relevance to their current lifestyle or behaviour. Having a conviction should not automatically eliminate someone without first considering its relevance and age, whether there is a pattern of convictions and if their circumstances have changed since the offence was committed.

3.9 New and existing appointments

All new and existing employees, Board members and volunteers will receive a copy of this policy. This will be included in the Staff Handbook, Board Members Induction Pack and Volunteer's Induction Pack, along with other relevant policies and procedures.

Basic awareness training will be provided to employees, Board members and volunteers in relation to this policy.

3.10 Support, supervision and personal development

All employees will receive regular formal support and supervision sessions with their line manager as well as an annual appraisal. For those employees who are working with children and young people, time will be taken to explore their working practice and to check that this complies with the practice as outlined in this policy.

Support and supervision sessions and appraisals will give either party the opportunity to identify training needs and discuss any areas of concern in relation to the employee's work with young people.

Support and supervision sessions and appraisals will be recorded in writing and both parties will be given a copy.

Volunteers will also receive regular, informal support and supervision from the appropriate department supervisor.

This will provide both parties with the opportunity to discuss any concerns or problems the volunteer may be experiencing and to identify any training needs they may have.

4: Planning activities to minimise risk

4.1 Risk assessments and other general considerations

Health and safety requirements in accordance with LNTCDT's policy and practice must be carefully considered when planning and carrying out activities involving children and young people. LNTCDT's health and Safety Policy applies to volunteers as well as employees.

All employees and volunteers will carry out thorough risk assessments prior to undertaking events/activities with children young people. By doing this any problems can be addressed before any accident or harm takes place. Risk assessments should consider:

- The suitability of the task to be tackled/activities to be undertaken;
- The suitability of premises, tools and equipment;
- The provision of appropriate clothing (e.g. wet weather clothing, footwear);
- The provision of safety information to all staff, volunteers and participants;
- The provision of first-aid facilities;
- Communications and emergency procedures, including action in the event of an accident;
- Fire precautions;
- The provision of appropriate training.

4.2 Planning and supervision

LNTCDT's guidelines on appropriate planning and supervision need to be observed to reduce risk. This applies whenever an employee or volunteer works with children and young people (whether or not carers remain ultimately responsible).

- Activities involving children and young people should be carefully planned to ensure the maximum protection is provided at all times;
- Particular attention should be paid to health and safety requirements as outlined in LNTCDT's Health and Safety Policy;
- Those who are involved in an activity organised by LNTCDT should be supervised and supported wherever possible. This will depend on the nature of the activity, the number and age range of the people involved and whether anyone involved has any special needs;
- A common sense approach should be adopted regarding the supervision of young people. Where deemed appropriate, children and young people may be left unsupervised, however each situation should be judged on its own merit. At all times staff should know where they are and what they are doing;

- Wherever possible at least two workers should be present to protect workers from allegations of abuse. Wherever possible both female and male employees/volunteers should be present when working with mixed gender groups.

4.3 Codes of conduct

Some actions, no matter how well intentioned, may be misinterpreted and leave all parties vulnerable. The following is a quick reference guide to appropriate behaviour when working with children and young people.

Employees and volunteers **must**:

- Remember they are a role model and provide an example for those they work with to follow;
- Bear in mind that some actions, no matter how well-intentioned, may be easily misinterpreted and so leave all parties vulnerable;
- Be alert to any potential harm or inappropriate behaviour by young people;
- Aim for separate sleeping accommodation for males and females during residential activities;
- Ensure they have adequate training if supervising sports games (e.g. football);
- Respect an individual's rights to privacy;
- Provide access for young people to discuss any concerns they may have;
- Speak to their line-manager if they have concerns about an individual's safety.

Employees and volunteers **must not**:

- Arrange to see young people in circumstances unconnected with their work;
- Be left alone for substantial periods of time with a young person. Where one-to-one work is necessary, they should inform another staff member where they are going, with whom and for how long;
- Permit abusive behaviour by others or engage in it themselves (e.g. ridiculing and bullying);
- Show favouritism to or become too closely associated with an individual. Nor should they get drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour (e.g. crushes);
- Allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching of a kind which could be misunderstood;
- Promise to keep secrets;
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- Do anything which might undermine LNTCDT's good reputation for providing a safe environment;
- Hesitate to share concerns on any of these matters with the appropriate LNTCDT representative.

5: Raising awareness of dangers

Definitions and indicators of abuse

The signs and indicators of abuse have been sourced from the NSPCC (2019). The examples are not exhaustive. For a full and comprehensive guide, please visit www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse

1. What is Neglect?

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Types of neglect

Broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.

- **Physical neglect**
A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.
- **Educational neglect**
A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.
- **Emotional neglect**
A child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.
- **Medical neglect**
A child isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

Signs of neglect

Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

- poor appearance and hygiene
- health and development problems
- change in behaviour housing and family issues

2. What is Emotional Abuse?

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse, which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.

Signs of emotional abuse

There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point'. That's why it's important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- seem unconfident or lack self-assurance
- struggle to control their emotions
- have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

3. **What is physical abuse?**

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes:

- hitting with hands or objects
- slapping and punching
- kicking
- shaking
- throwing
- poisoning
- burning and scalding
- biting and scratching
- breaking bones
- drowning

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Signs of physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include for example:

- bruises
- broken or fractured bones

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- scarring

- the effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it's important to be aware of these.

4. What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember 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 can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Types of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- threatening another family member or pet.

Signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers

5. What is grooming?

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Types of grooming

Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both – by a stranger or someone they know. This could be a family member, a friend or someone who has targeted them – like a teacher, faith group leader or sports coach. When a child is groomed online, groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this will be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a "peer". They might target one child online or contact lots of children very quickly and wait for them to respond.

The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms. This could be:

- a romantic relationship
- as a mentor
- an authority figure
- a dominant and persistent figure.

A groomer can use the same sites, games and apps as young people, spending time learning about a young person's interests and use this to build a relationship with them. Children can be groomed online through:

- social media networks
- text messages and messaging apps, like WhatsApp
- email
- text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.

Whether online or in person, groomers can use tactics like:

- pretending to be younger
- giving advice or showing understanding
- buying gifts
- giving attention
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Groomers might also try and isolate children from their friends and family, making them feel dependent on them and giving the groomer power and control over them. They might use blackmail to make a child feel guilt and shame or introduce the idea of 'secrets' to control, frighten and intimidate.

It's important to remember that children and young people may not understand they've been groomed. They may have complicated feelings, like loyalty, admiration, love, as well as fear, distress and confusion.

Signs of grooming

It can be difficult to tell if a child is being groomed – the signs aren't always obvious and may be hidden. Older children might behave in a way that seems to be "normal" teenage behaviour, masking underlying problems.

Some of the signs you might see include:

- being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online
- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- underage drinking or drug taking
- spending more or less time online or on their devices
- being upset, withdrawn or distressed
- sexualised behaviour, language or an understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age
- spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

6. What is Sexual Abuse?

- When a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online. For example, forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos.

Signs of sexual abuse

Knowing the signs of sexual abuse can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out. Some of the signs you might notice include:

- Emotional and behavioural signs can include but aren't exclusive to:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.

- Physical signs can include but aren't exclusive to:

- Bruises.
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might for example spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media

7. What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and 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.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.

Types of child sexual exploitation

CSE can happen in person or online. An abuser will gain a child's trust or control them through violence or blackmail before moving onto sexually abusing them. This can happen in a short period of time.

When a child is sexually exploited online they might be persuaded or forced to:

- send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- film or stream sexual activities
- have sexual conversations.

Once an abuser has images, video or copies of conversations, they might use threats and blackmail to force a young person to take part in other sexual activity. They may also share the images and videos with others or circulate them online.

Gangs use sexual exploitation:

- to exert power and control
- for initiation
- to use sexual violence as a weapon.

Children or young people might be invited to parties or gatherings with others their own age or adults and given drugs and alcohol. They may be assaulted and sexually abused by one person or multiple perpetrators. The sexual assaults and abuse can be violent, humiliating and degrading.

8. What is child trafficking?

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

Types of child trafficking

Traffickers often groom children, families and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere.

Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they'll make a profit from money a child "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They'll often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family "owe" to the traffickers.

Traffickers may:

- work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in
- be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children and young people on a small scale
- be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and a large number of victims.

Signs of child trafficking

Knowing the signs of trafficking can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children 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 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
- 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

Any child is at risk of child trafficking.

Human trafficking happens due to:

- inequalities between countries, such as different education or employment opportunities
- poverty
- the effects of war
- the demand for cheap or free labour or a workforce who can be easily controlled and forced into criminal activity
- low levels of education
- lack of equal opportunities, discrimination or marginalisation.

Report child trafficking

Children who are trafficked are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them. If you're worried about a child, you can take steps to keep them safe.

- If you think a child or young person is in danger, contact the police on **999**.
- Contact the Modern Slavery Helpline to get help, report a suspicion or seek advice. Call 0800 012 1700 or fill in their online form.

6: Responding to accidents, incidents, concerns, suspicions allegations and disclosures

Responsibilities of staff, volunteers and other representatives of LNTCDT

All staff, volunteers and representatives of LNTCDT must be familiar with the child protection policy and be aware of the problem of abuse and the risks to children.

Everyone's prime responsibility is to prevent child and young person abuse.

This means raising any concerns you may have about the safety of children and young people and/or the behaviour of adults.

6.1 Responding to accidents / incidents

In the event of an accident to an individual, first-aid should be administered, preferably by a trained first-aider and the situation managed to ensure the welfare of the individual and the safety of others. The emergency services should be called for where appropriate.

An Accident/Incident Report Form should be completed. Where appropriate the circumstances to the accident should be investigated to establish the cause and to identify what remedial action should be taken to minimise the possibility of a recurrence.

Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences should be notified without delay to the appropriate line manager, after alerting the appropriate authorities.

Where an accident/incident involving children or young people has been narrowly avoided, employees and volunteers should detail its nature and pass the information on to the appropriate line manager or LNTCDT's Health and Safety Officer.

6.2 Dealing with concerns, suspicions, allegations or disclosures

Possible abuse may become apparent in number of ways:-

- A child or young person may tell you.
- A third party may have reported an incident or may have strong suspicion.
- You may have a suspicion that child or young person abuse is occurring or a risk of it occurring.
- You may witness an inappropriate incident occurring.

It is not the responsibility of those working for LNTCDT to decide that abuse to a young person is occurring but it is their responsibility to follow these procedures where there are any concerns that child abuse may be occurring.

Procedure to follow if a person wants to make an allegation or disclosure

If a young person wants to allege or disclose abuse, it is essential that the employee or volunteer:

- Listens carefully to what the person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly;
- Takes seriously what is being said;
- If they can't communicate with the young person, get someone who can;
- Let's them know that to help them someone else must be told;
- Reassures them that they are not to blame;
- Is aware that they may have been threatened;
- Does not push them for information;
- Reassures them that they are right to talk about it and what they say is accepted, avoiding unnecessary contact;
- **Lets** them know what will happen next and undertakes to let them know the outcome.
- As soon as possible makes a written record in the child/young person's words of what has been disclosed. This means using the language used by the child/young person.
- Informs their line manager or LNTCDT point of contact who will then inform one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL). In the absence of a DSL the Chief Executive must be informed. The DSL (or Chief Executive) will then telephone the Front Door Service as appropriate dependant on severity and potential danger/risk and follow the procedures in line with their roles and responsibility as DSL. This must be done immediately and certainly within 48 hours.
- If a DSL is not on duty (i.e. out of hours) the **Front Door Service** can be contacted on **Tel 0345 2000 109 (office hours) or 0330 333 7475 (evenings and weekends)**.
- **If you think a child is in immediate danger, call 999.**

Do not:-

- Agree to keep anything 'secret'
- Panic
- Assume or guess what has happened

- Do not investigate, only ask questions to ascertain what the child is telling you. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed by courts if it appears that the child has been led into saying something.
- Ask a child or young person to show you any injuries.
- Make the child or young person repeat the story unnecessarily
- Change the language used to a more formal style when writing up the disclosure
- Delay
- Take sole responsibility for further action
- Pass judgement or make personal beliefs or standards known.
- Do not discuss with parents if this will place the child or young person in more danger,
- Do not interfere with the collection of evidence or delay referral.

6.3 Dealing with concerns, suspicions, allegations or disclosures involving a LNTCDT employee or LNTCDT volunteer

Where it is suspected that an employee or volunteer may be involved in the abuse, employees and volunteers will let the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) know as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours. The employee or volunteer will be immediately removed from access to children and young people but be assured that no presumptions have been made and that the allegation will be fully investigated by the LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer. LNTCDT Whistle Blowing Policy will be adhered to.

If gross misconduct is reasonably suspected, it may be appropriate to ask them not to attend the office or property at all while the matter is under investigation (suspended on full pay if an employee). Once the LADO enquiry has concluded, the Chief Executive of LNTCD will decide what further action is appropriate in conjunction with LNTCDT's other relevant policies. (For example, policies in Grievance, Discipline and Complaints for employees and LNTCDT's Volunteers Policy for volunteers).

Reporting to LNTCDT's Board

The Board of Trustees have ultimate responsibility for the organisation and it is important to keep the Board fully informed when a serious allegation is made against a LNTCDT employee or volunteer. An initial report will, in the first instance, be made by the Chief Executive to the Chair of the Board to decide how to proceed. Each case must be decided on an individual basis and the Board may take further advice and may need to refer to other policies and procedures such as Whistle Blowing Protocol and the Disciplinary Procedure.

6.4 Accurate records

Full and accurate records (i.e. **word for word**) must be written as soon as possible, using LNTCDT's pro forma if available (Appendix 2). Where a pro forma is unavailable notes should include:

- The date and time of the alleged incident or disclosure;
- What was said;
- The parties involved;
- What was alleged ; and
- The action taken.

Records should be as accurate as possible as they may be invaluable to the investigation and used as evidence in court. A copy should be kept by the appropriate LNTCDT representative.

Records will be held in accordance with LNTCDT GDPR Policy.

6.5 Confidentiality and sensitivity

When dealing with personal and emotive details of this nature, confidentiality must be maintained at all times since the allegations or suspicions may prove to be unfounded. Notes and records should be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

A sensitive approach should be taken with the accused to explain why an investigation has taken place and to reassure them that the matter will be handled discreetly and even-handedly by LNTCDT.

No assumptions of guilt should be made unless and until an actual conviction has been obtained in the proceedings. Impartial contact will be maintained by a nominated LNTCDT staff member during this process.

An individual's wishes cannot override LNTCDT's duty to act. Informed consent to share information should be obtained but if this is not possible and a young person is at risk it may be necessary to override this.

Appendix One: Related Policies and Documents

- (1) Equality and Diversity Policy (Policy File)
- (2) Terms of Employment (Policy File)
- (3) Nursery's Child Protection Policy (Linskill Nursery)
Further information can be sourced here regarding:
 - FGM – Female Genital Mutilation
 - Peer on Peer Abuse
 - APVA – Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse
- (4) Whistle Blowing Policy (Policy File)

Appendix Two: Pro forma for recording disclosures, allegations or signs of abuse witnessed

Name of person disclosing, alleging or displaying signs of abuse:

Date and time of disclosure received / signs of abuse witnessed:

Day	Month	Year	Time
			: am/pm

Is the person disclosing

Male

Female

What is their date of birth? (if known):

Day	Month	Year

What is their address? (if known):

Please detail what the person said (word for word) or signs of abuse witnessed:

Other observations / comments:

Name of person completing this form:

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

