



Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Child abuse is the physical, sexual or emotional mistreatment or neglect by parents, guardians or others responsible for a child's welfare.

Definition of a child:

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ❖ Protect children and young people who use the services of INTERIM. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- ❖ To provide staff and volunteers (including Trustees) with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

INTERIM believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that keeps them safe.

Legal Framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely,

Children Act 1989

United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Children Act 2004

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Data Protection Act (1998) and GDPR (2018)

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Information sharing (Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, 2018)

Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

We recognise:

- ❖ the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- ❖ all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse
- ❖ working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare

We seek to help children and young people be safe by:

- ❖ valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- ❖ adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- ❖ providing an effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- ❖ recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary appropriate checks are made, references are taken up and gaps in employment are explored
- ❖ sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- ❖ sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately

Dealing with allegations

Challenge and report worrying behaviour and practice

- ❖ Use opportunities to reflect on practice, to support and challenge each other, and self report if you think you got it wrong or may be misinterpreted
- ❖ If necessary, voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can
- ❖ Pinpoint what practice is concerning you and why
- ❖ Approach the Chief Executive Officer or a Trustee/s or someone you trust and who you believe will respond
- ❖ Make sure you get a satisfactory response, don't let matters rest
- ❖ Don't think "What if I'm wrong?" think "**What if I'm right?**"

If a Child tells

DO:

- ❖ Listen carefully
- ❖ Record the conversation in the child's words and note the time
- ❖ Sign and date the record you make
- ❖ Take it seriously
- ❖ Reassure they are right to tell
- ❖ Explain what will happen next

DON'T:

- ❖ Ask leading questions
- ❖ Make promises you cannot keep
- ❖ Jump to conclusions
- ❖ Speculate or accuse anybody

It is not your responsibility to decide if the allegation is true or not

Please immediately inform the Chief Executive Officer or the Safeguarding lead Trustee (Louise Webb) who will manage and support those involved and are responsible for informing the Police, local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Charity Commission.

Trustees will seek to manage and minimise the risk of further incidents happening as far as this is reasonably possible and make any necessary changes to policies, procedures and work practices. Please also refer to our governance policies and procedures and particularly, the Safeguarding Policy and Strategy.

Safeguarding Strategy

Safeguarding Children: working Together to Safeguard Children defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as: “Protecting children from maltreatment” “Preventing impairment of children’s health and development” The document adds: “Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.”

INTERIM makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every child to stay safe. Our activities bring us into contact with children and vulnerable adults. This policy seeks to ensure that INTERIM undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children and vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers (including Trustees) and students or anyone involved with INTERIM in any capacity. It establishes a framework to support staff and volunteers in their practices, and clarifies the charity’s expectations. This policy links to other relevant organisational policies and procedures such as internet use, recruitment practices and equal opportunities.

Children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity and we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and we recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

To conclude

All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including people who do not have a specific role in relation to child protection, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Kinds of Abuse:

Physical Abuse

- ❖ Hitting
- ❖ Shaking
- ❖ Throwing
- ❖ Poisoning

- ❖ Burning
- ❖ Scalding
- ❖ Drowning
- ❖ Suffocating

Or otherwise causing harm to a child by

- ❖ fabricating the symptoms of,

Or

- ❖ deliberately causing ill health to a child,

Emotional Abuse

Is “persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.”

It may involve

- ❖ conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person,
- ❖ age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger,
- ❖ the exploitation or corruption of children.”

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone”

Sexual Abuse

- ❖ “involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- ❖ The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts
- ❖ They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material
or
- ❖ Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways”

Neglect

- ❖ “is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development,
- ❖ It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse
or
- ❖ involve a carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing,
or
- ❖ failure to ensure adequate supervision, or access to medical care or treatment
- ❖ It may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs”

Domestic Abuse and the Abuse of Children

- ❖ The domestic violence perpetrator may also be directly physically and/or sexually - abusive to the child
- ❖ Witnessing violence to their mothers may have an abusive and detrimental impact on the children
- ❖ Perpetrators may abuse the child as part of their violence against women

Internet Pornography

- ❖ The internet provides new opportunities to reach and abuse children
- ❖ Operation Ore 2002 identified 6,500 people in the UK who accessed sites using their credit cards

- ❖ In 2005, a convicted Surrey teacher had 750,000 images, and a New York Man in 2003, 1,000,000
- ❖ 1 in 3 in the U.S.A. in 2009 arrested for possession of indecent images, also had contact offences. There was Operation Snowball in Canada, Operation Pecunia in Germany, Operation Amethyst in Ireland and Operation Genesis in Switzerland.
- ❖ In August 2007 actor Chris Langham was convicted of downloading child pornography

Section 73 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 amended the Female Genital Mutilation Act to include FGM protection orders (FGMPOs)

Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 amended the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 to introduce the legal duty for regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to make a report to the police if:

- ❖ they are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM

or

- ❖ they observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Children may be more vulnerable to being harmed if they are:

- ❖ Babies
- ❖ Disabled
- ❖ Children who are picked on as being different e.g asylum seeking/refugee children; black children
- ❖ Children who are already thought of as a problem e.g. children in care; in secure accommodation

“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by;

- ❖ inflicting harm, or
- ❖ failing to act to prevent harm

Children may be abused in a family or in an Institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.”
They may be abused by an adult /adults or another child or children

Additional Indicators for Disabled Children

- ❖ Force feeding
- ❖ Unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- ❖ Rough handling
- ❖ Extreme behaviour modification
(deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing)
- ❖ Misuse of medication, sedation, tranquillisation

Victoria Climbié

- ❖ Victoria was known to:
- ❖ Three housing departments
- ❖ Four social services departments
- ❖ Two GPs
- ❖ Two hospitals
- ❖ NSPCC-run family centre
- ❖ Two police child protection teams
- ❖ Victoria had contact with a childminder and with faith based organisations.

Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman

- ❖ Ian Huntley had been known to police and social services between August 1995 and July 1999
- ❖ 11 separate allegations (9 for sexual offences)
- ❖ 4 Under age Sex Investigations (girls aged 13-15 years)
- ❖ 4 rapes
- ❖ 1 indecent assault on 11 year old girl
- ❖ He hadn't been convicted or cautioned for any offences

Peter Connelly (Baby 'P')

- ❖ Over the eight month period before his death Peter was seen 60 times by:
- ❖ Children's services
- ❖ NHS health professionals
- ❖ Police
- ❖ Whistle blower warned government of alleged failings in child protection at Haringey
- ❖ Peter lived in the London borough of Haringey under the same child care authorities that had 10 years earlier failed Victoria Climbié
- ❖ Peter died when he was only 17 months old

Children often don't tell because:

- ❖ they are scared because they've been threatened
- ❖ they believe they will be taken away from home
- ❖ they believe they are to blame
- ❖ they think it is what happens to all children
- ❖ they feel embarrassed and ashamed
- ❖ they feel guilty
- ❖ they don't want abuser to get into trouble
- ❖ they have communication or learning difficulties
- ❖ they may not have the vocabulary for what happened
- ❖ they are afraid they won't be believed
- ❖ they believe they have 'told', maybe by dropping hints; haven't been believed so what's the point in trying again?