

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy provides details of how Making Me (the **Charity**) aims to establish and maintain an environment where children:

- feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern;
- know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried.

1.2 The Charity recognises its responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe, and is committed to practising in a way that ensures that all children involved with the Charity are safe and protected.

1.3 This policy is based on “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2019, pursuant to which the Charity recognises it’s following statutory duties:

- to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002;
- to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (“The Prevent Duty”) under the counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015;
- to work together with other organisations and partners in order to achieve this under the Children Act 1989;
- To comply with mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation in accordance with the FGM Act 2003: and
- our Common Law duty to protect and keep children safe whilst in our care.

1.4 The Charity recognises that the welfare of each child is paramount (as enshrined in the Children Act 1989) and that 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 or abuse.

1.5 The Charity also recognises that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

1.6 The Charity asserts its commitment to working in partnership with the children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies in order to promote young people’s welfare.

1.7 This policy applies to all staff, trustees and volunteers and any person working on behalf of, or in any way representing the interests of, the Charity.

1.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the NSPCC guidance ‘*Children at Possible Risk of Abuse*’ included in Appendix 5, together with, where necessary, the legislation listed at Appendix 1 and the Government guidance documents listed at clause 11 below ‘*Taking matters of concern or disclosures of abuse forwards after they have been reported*’.

1.9 The purpose of this policy is to:

- make all staff, trustees and volunteers aware of what abuse is and how to spot it;
- protect children and young people who receive the services of the Charity;
- ensure that the Charity operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance on Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- provide guidance to the relevant Safeguarding Officers when deciding whether to take further action about a specific concern; and
- provide all staff, trustees and volunteers with details of the principles and procedures that they must follow in order to comply with the Charity's approach to safeguarding and child protection.

1.10 This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for terms used in this policy:

Safeguarding is as defined in '*Working together to safeguard children, 2018*' and includes:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health and development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (the **DSO**) is the person responsible for reporting and handling any Safeguarding matters on behalf of the Charity.

Safeguarding Report Form (the **SRF**) refers to the Charity's Safeguarding Report Form, a pro-forma of which is included at Appendix 2 of this document.

School Notification Form (the **SNF**) refers to the Charity's School Notification Form, a pro-forma of which is included at Appendix 3 of this document.

Safeguarding Children Guidance procedure (the **SCG**) refers to the Charity's Safeguarding Children Guidance procedure, a pro-forma of which is included at Appendix 4 of this document.

3. The Designated Safeguarding Officers

The Charity recognises that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, however, the Lead DSO for the Charity is Mrs Elizabeth Fordham, the Deputy DSO, appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the lead DSO is Mrs Natalie Tillet. In addition, the Lead Trustee DSO is Mrs Ginny Gilks and the Deputy Trustee DSO is Mrs Alexia Stenning.

4. Safeguarding Policy

4.1 It is the role of the Lead DSO or, in their absence, the Deputy DSO and the Lead Trustee DSO or, in their absence, the Deputy Trustee DSO to:

- ensure that the Lead DSO and the Lead Trustee DSO receive refresher training at 2 yearly intervals to keep their knowledge and skills up to date;
- adopt safer recruitment practices to check the suitability of both staff and regular volunteers;
- develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse;
- ensure that all staff, volunteers and trustees who work for or represent the Charity and who are in contact with children, undertake or have undertaken a full DBS check;
- ensure that all staff and permanent volunteers who work with children on behalf of the Charity undertake or have undertaken appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection effectively;
- ensure that all staff and permanent volunteers who work with children on behalf of the Charity are aware of and have access to the Charity's:
 - Safeguarding Report Form (Appendix 2)
 - School Notification Form (Appendix 3) and
 - Safeguarding Children Guidance (Appendix 4);
- ensure that all temporary staff or volunteers are made aware of the Charity's arrangements for safeguarding;
- ensure that the Lead DSO and the Lead Trustee DSO are kept fully informed of any concerns;
- liaise with the appropriate social care teams when matters of safeguarding or abuse are disclosed;
- where disclosure within the school environment occurs, ensure that the school is fully informed of such disclosure and a copy of either the SRF or the SNF is sent to them;
- ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept 'Strictly Confidential' in accordance with Information Sharing Guidance 2018;
- where requested, submit reports to any Child Protection Conferences as required; and
- provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.

4.2 Where Charity staff, trustees or volunteers have undergone a DBS check, and, where applicable, appropriate safeguarding training which enables them to work at a corresponding level with children (e.g. as a GP or school teacher), it is the duty of the Lead DSO or the Deputy DSO to obtain physical evidence of this and to ensure that both the DBS certification and the Safeguarding training are valid and up to date, in accordance with the requirements of the Charity as set out in this document.

5. The Role of the Trustees

5.1 The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient safeguarding measures in place within the Charity.

5.2 In particular the Trustees must ensure that:

- the Charity's Safeguarding policy and procedures are kept up to date;
- the Charity follows safe recruitment procedures;
- the Charity appoints a Lead DSO and Deputy DSO at all times;
- relevant safeguarding training is carried out by all staff, volunteers and trustees in accordance with the principles set out in clause 3 "*Safeguarding Policy*" above
- any safeguarding allegation is managed effectively and safely;
- any deficiencies and weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay; and
- the safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually.

5.3 Further guidance for trustees is available on the Charity Commission's website Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees> and the safeguarding infographic trustee actions document

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/756636/10_safeguarding_actions_for_charity_trustees_infographic.pdf

6. Safeguarding Procedures

6.1 If any member of staff, volunteer or trustee is concerned about a child he or she must follow the Charity's safeguarding procedure in accordance with the principles set out in this clause 6 of the Charity's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6.1.1 Where the contact with the child or young person is within a school or similar setting, and a child or young person makes either a direct safeguarding allegation or refers to an allegation about which you have underlying concerns or the school indicates that they are already aware of the incident, any member of staff or volunteer must:

- record any concerns on a School Notification Form (Appendix 3)
- raise the concern verbally with an appropriate member of school staff before leaving the school (Classroom Teacher/Head teacher/Deputy Head teacher/Pastoral Head/Year Head etc);
- ensure the school representative is given a copy of the completed SNF before leaving the school;
- inform the Charity Lead DSO or deputy DSO of any concerns and action taken as soon as possible;
- ensure that a copy of the SNF is given to the Charity Lead DSO or Deputy DSO as soon as possible

6.1.2 Where the contact with the child or young person is directly with the Charity, any member of staff or volunteer must:

- record any concerns on a Safeguarding Report Form immediately (Appendix 2);
- inform the Charity Lead DSO or deputy DSO of any concerns and action taken as soon as possible;
- ensure that a copy of the SRF is given to the Charity Lead DSO or Deputy DSO as soon as possible.

6.2 It is the responsibility of the Lead DSO or Deputy DSO to contact the school as soon as possible to ensure that either the SRF or the SNF has been received by them and to discuss any further action that may need to be taken.

6.3 All SRF and SNF reports must be logged in a clear and precise manner, giving a full and factual account of any observations or disclosures.

6.4 It is the responsibility of the Lead DSO or Deputy DSO to decide whether the concerns should be referred to Social Care after discussion with any or all of the Deputy DSO, the Lead Trustee DSO or the Deputy Trustee DSO, as well as, where appropriate, the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher at the child's school. If it is decided to make a referral, this will be done with prior discussion with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

6.5 Where a concern is with regard to FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) there is a statutory duty on health care professionals and teaching staff to report directly to the police where they discover (through disclosure by the victim or other evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 or is at risk of being carried out. Where a member of Charity staff or volunteer has concerns about matters pertaining to FGM, they should report these to school staff in the manner required for all safeguarding concerns using the Charity's Safeguarding Notification Form.

7. **When to be concerned**

7.1 All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm.

Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:

- appear frightened of the parent/s or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside the home
- act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development
- display insufficient sense of boundaries, lack of stranger awareness, or
- appear wary of adults and display 'frozen watchfulness'.

7.2 Appendix 5 below '*Children at Possible Risk of Abuse*' sets out more information to help identify when a child may be at risk of abuse/safeguarding issues.

7.3 Further guidance for safeguarding children is available in the NSPCC website standards <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2017/nspcc-safeguarding-standards-and-guidance-england/> and resources <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/>

8. Responding to a Direct Disclosure of Abuse

If a child makes a direct disclosure that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff, trustee or volunteer should:

- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- accept what is being said
- allow the child to talk freely following the TED rules – tell me, explain to me, describe to me
- reassure the child, but not make promises which might not be possible to keep
- not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to refer the matter to Social Care
- reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault
- stress that it was the right thing to tell
- not ask direct or leading questions
- not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- if appropriate, give the child the phone number for Childline – 0800 111
- ensure that the child is currently safe, and
- explain, in language that is appropriate for the age/understanding of the child, what has to be done next and who has to be told.

9. Helping a child in immediate danger

9.1 If a child is in immediate danger and with you, keep the child with you and contact the police.

9.2 If the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them. The police should be contacted on either 999 if there is immediate danger (press 55 if you are unable to speak but need help) or 101 if the danger is imminent but not immediate.

9.3 If a child needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance (999) and, whilst you are waiting for the ambulance to arrive, either call a first aider or do your best to help the child.

9.4 Report the incident as soon as practicable following the protocol set out in this document.

10. Record keeping in the case of direct disclosures of abuse or safeguarding concerns

10.1 When a child has made a direct disclosure, the member of staff, trustee or volunteer should:

- make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- attach the original notes to the SRF to be submitted to the DSO (original notes should not be destroyed in case they are needed in court)
- record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and words used by the child
- draw a simple diagram to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury
- record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
- comply with the Charity's safeguarding procedure as set out at paragraph 4 '*Safeguarding Procedures*' above.

10.2 All records need to be given to the Lead DSO/Deputy DSO promptly, together with the requisite SRF.

10.3 No copies of any documentation relating to a Safeguarding incident should be retained by the member of staff, trustee or volunteer.

11. Confidentiality

11.1 Child protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all Charity staff, trustees and volunteers.

11.2 All staff, trustees and volunteers have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies.

11.3 If a child confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept a secret, it is important that the member of staff or volunteer tell the child, in a manner appropriate to the child's age/level of understanding, that they cannot promise complete confidentiality. Instead, they must explain that they may need to pass the information on to other professionals in order to help keep the child or other children safe.

11.4 Staff or volunteers who receive information about a child or their family in the course of their work with the Charity, should only share that information within appropriate professional contexts.

11.5 In all other contexts, the confidentiality of the matter must be respected at all times, by all parties.

11.6 All safeguarding allegations should be dealt with in accordance with the 7 golden rules contained in the Government's guidance 'Information Sharing – Advice for Practitioners 2018.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information sharing advice practitioners safeguarding services.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)

12. Taking matters of concern or disclosures of abuse forward after they have been reported

12.1 Where the Lead or Deputy DSO or the Lead Trustee DSO or Deputy Trustee DSO are made aware of either a safeguarding concern or a disclosure of abuse, they will:

- comply with the guidance set out in the Government guidance documents listed below;
- where necessary, seek clarification and advice from the Police and/or Social Services;
- contact the relevant reporting agency as set out at Appendix 6 – Useful Contacts – in order to ensure that the child is kept safe and that matters are dealt with swiftly and efficiently with minimum disruption to the wellbeing of the child. Any reported matters would then be dealt with by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

12.2 For the purposes of this document, Government guidance documents include:

- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners*
<https://education.gov.uk/publications>
- *LSCB Information Sharing, Chapter 10 of LSCB procedures online – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers* <https://www.proceduresonline.com/bedford>
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)*
<https://publications.dcsf.gov.uk>
- *Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

13. Self-care

Dealing with a safeguarding issue or a direct disclosure from a child can be a stressful experience. Any volunteer, trustee or member of staff who feels that they have been affected by a disclosure should consider seeking support for him/herself and arrange a time to discuss this with a Charity DSO.

14. Safe working practice

In order to ensure the safety of Charity staff, trustees and volunteers, as well as the children and young people obtaining the support of the Charity's services, whilst working on behalf of the Charity, no member of staff, trustee or volunteer should be in a building alone with a child or young person.

15. Allegations involving Charity staff, trustees or volunteers – Whistleblowing Procedure

15.1 Whenever it is alleged that a member of staff, a trustee or a volunteer has, whether in the context of their work with the Charity or elsewhere:

- behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- committed a criminal offence against a child
- abused a child or
- behaved towards a child in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children

the person receiving that allegation must take it seriously and immediately carry out the following:

- make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present
- sign and date the record
- ensure that the record is immediately passed on to the Lead DSO or Deputy DSO
- fully inform the Lead DSO or Deputy DSO of the nature of the allegation
- observe full confidentiality in all aspects concerning the allegation.

15.2 It is the responsibility of the Lead DSO or Deputy DSO to discuss the matter at the earliest opportunity with the Lead Trustee DSO or Deputy Trustee DSO.

15.3 The Trustees will ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of the Charity's Whistleblowing Procedure as set out above.

15.4 Any Charity representative subject to such allegations will be immediately suspended from any role within the organisation pending a full investigation. Should they be found guilty of any misconduct, they will be immediately removed from post and barred from any further engagement with the Charity.

Signed: Lead DSO/Deputy DSO
(Delete as appropriate)

Name

Signed: Lead Trustee DSO/Deputy Trustee DSO
(Delete as appropriate)

Name

Date

Date of next review

Appendix 1

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
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- FGM Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation Guidance
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice 0-25years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers: HM Government 2018
- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018.

Appendix 2

Pro-forma Safeguarding Report Form (SRF)

Making Me - Charity Safeguarding Report Form	
Name of child:	
Age:	Gender:
School:	
Date of concern/disclosure:	
Name of adult to whom disclosure made (please print):	
Role within the Charity:	
Details of safeguarding concern/allegation of abuse (delete as necessary):	

Copy of completed form given to school: YES/NO

Date:

Signed by (insert name)on behalf of the school

Signature:

Date:

Copy of completed form given to the Charity: YES/NO

Date:

Signed by (insert name)on behalf of the Charity

Signature:

Date:

Matter raised with school by the Charity: YES/NO

By: Date:

Name and position of person contacted within school:

.....
....

Any further action required?

Safeguarding Report Form completed by (insert name)

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 3

Pro-forma School Notification Form (SNF)

Making Me School Notification Form
Name of child:
School:
Date:
<p>We would like to notify you that, during the course of a workshop being carried out by a representative of Making Me (the Charity), the above-named child mentioned matters that may be of a Safeguarding concern and that we consider should be highlighted to you. Brief details of the concern are indicated below.</p> <p>We would like to remind you that the formal reporting of any Safeguarding matters is the responsibility of the school and not the Charity.</p>
Copy of completed form given to school: YES/NO Date:
Signed by (insert name)on behalf of the school Name: Date:
Signed by (insert name)on behalf of the Charity Name: Date:

Appendix 4

Safeguarding Children Guidance

All volunteers and members of staff must recognise that the safety and wellbeing of children is our paramount concern.

Keeping Children Safe

We can all play a part in keeping children safe whilst working on behalf of, or otherwise representing Making Me (the Charity).

Keeping Ourselves Safe

We must also take steps to keep ourselves safe as our actions can sometimes be perceived in a way that was not intended. We want to promote safe working practices for everyone working for or representing the Charity, in whatever capacity.

To keep yourself and the children we are working with safe, please follow this advice....

Do...	Do Not...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wear your visitor badge at all times. ✓ Carry a copy of your DBS certificate, together with a form of ID whenever you are representing the Charity ✓ Be aware that verbal interaction with pupils may be interpreted by them as offensive or harassment, even if this was not your intention. ✓ Report any unacceptable behaviour from a pupil to the class teacher or alternatively to the Deputy Head teacher or the Head teacher. ✓ Stay within the areas that your visit requires you to. ✓ Sign in and out at the School Office. ✓ If you have any questions, please seek guidance from either the class teacher, the Deputy Head teacher or the Head teacher at any school in which you are representing the Charity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do not instigate verbal or physical contact with pupils (this applies both on and off site) unless it is appropriate and part of an agreed reason for your visit. ✓ Do not respond to verbal or physical contact from pupils. If this occurs, or you have any other concerns about pupil behaviour, then report it to the member of school staff who is working with you. ✓ Do not give any personal information to any pupil, for example your address, telephone number, email address or any social media details. ✓ Do not accept or respond to a student attempting to give you their personal information. ✓ Do not give or receive any gifts from a child ✓ Do not accept physical or verbal abuse from a pupil.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do not be in an unsupervised one to one situation with a pupil. ✓ Do not use your mobile phone within the school building.
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If a child discloses something of a personal nature to you.....

<p>Do...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do listen and reassure the child ✓ Do tell them you will have to inform a senior member of staff / the Designated Safeguarding Officer ✓ Do make a written account using the Charity's SNF form ✓ Do remember to report any awareness of FGM to school staff 	<p>Do not...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do not promise confidentiality ✓ Do not ask leading questions. ✓ Do not investigate.
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If you have any concerns about the behaviour or verbal communication of any child you meet in connection with your role at the Charity, you must report your concerns to a member of school staff before leaving the school.

As soon as possible thereafter, please report your concerns both verbally and in writing to the Charity's Designated Safeguarding Officers.

The Charity's Designated Safeguarding Officers are:

Liz Fordham -

elizabethfordham@btinternet.com

Natalie Tillett -

natalie.tillett@gmail.com

The Charity's Trustee Designated Safeguarding Officers are:

Ginny Gilks -

pvmkgilks@yahoo.co.uk

Alexia Stenning -

alexiaستنning@sky.com

Appendix 5

Children at Possible Risk of Abuse

Set out below are guidelines issued by the NSPCC to help identify, and, where necessary, respond to, matters of safeguarding concern and abuse. All Charity staff, trustees and volunteers should be aware of the matters outlined in this guidance, which should be read in conjunction with the Charity's policy on Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Different types of abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects of the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or children to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Radicalisation

The Prevent Duty is the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of the nation. It can happen when a young person becomes influenced by someone they have met or if they have been exposed to propaganda. Warning signs could be that a young person might hold a strong conviction that their religion, culture or beliefs are under threat and that they are being treated unjustly. In addition, they may indicate that they believe conspiracy theories and distrust mainstream media or may have joined a group in which they have previously shown no interest. Other indicators may be that they are secretive about whom they have been talking to online and which websites they visit and/or that they are emotionally volatile when discussing issues of religion, culture or beliefs.

Neglect

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of material substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment and failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises of procedures which involve the partial or total removal of the external genitalia or injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reasons (World Health Organisation). It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

Other types of abuse

There are also emerging types and methods of child abuse, including:

- Sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Trafficking of children in order to exploit them sexually, financially, via domestic servitude, or via the involvement in activity such as the production and sale of illegal drugs
- Abuse linked to beliefs such as spirit possession or witchcraft
- Domestic violence (either witnessing violence between adult family members, or, in the case of older young people, being subjected to coercion or violence in an intimate relationship in the same way as an older person).

It should be remembered that abuse is not always obvious, and there are many reasons why children may not tell anyone that they are being abused. They might not even realise that what is happening to them is abusive.

It should also be remembered that any of the signs that suggest that abuse is occurring may also be caused by other issues. It is often the case, therefore, that investigating agencies need to build up a picture of a child's life by piecing together information held by different individuals and organisations.

It is also important to point out that children and young people can experience various types of abuse at the same time. For example, all abuse involves an element of emotional abuse, and neglect often occurs in contexts where children are also being subjected to physical or sexual abuse.

In terms of specific signs and indicators, sometimes there are physical signs such as;

- unexplained bruises, other injuries or health problems
- unexplained gifts or additional mobile devices
- poor appearance or hygiene
- recurring health problems that are not treated
- young children not meeting their developmental milestones (particularly if there is no disability)
- being left alone
- an unsuitable home environment eg cold, dirty, physically unsafe
- pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections or anal/vaginal soreness
- any signs that a child/young person is a risk of being subjected to forced marriage or Female Genital Mutilation

A child's behaviour can also help to indicate that they are being abused. It can be helpful to be aware of behaviour that you might normally associate with an older or younger child. In particular, the following signs may indicate that a child is unsettled or unhappy:

- withdrawn
- suddenly behave differently
- anxious
- clingy
- depressed
- aggressive
- problems sleeping
- eating disorders
- wets the bed
- soils clothes
- takes risks
- misses school
- changes in eating habits
- obsessive behaviour
- nightmares
- drugs
- alcohol
- self harm
- thoughts of suicide

Ways that abuse might be brought to your attention

- a direct disclosure by the child about him/herself or about another child
- the offer of information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
- other people may have observed behaviour by a child that is worrying or have concerns about a child's appearance, or the treatment of that child by a parent/carer
- a disclosure by a parent or carer about abuse that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering
- the offer of information by other people about a child that is worrying but not a direct disclosure

Appendix 6

Useful contacts

Bedford Borough children's social care team:

Integrated Front Door (formerly MASH) (during office hours) 01234 276693

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) 0300 300 8123

In the case of Prevent, Multi Agency Support Hub or in the case of an immediate emergency, Bedford Police

Local Authority Designated Officer – Sandeep Mohan – 01234 276560

Central Bedfordshire children's social care team:

Early Help Assessment Team via Access and Referral Hub (during office hours) 0300 300 8585/0300 300 4833

Social Care Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) 0300 300 8123

In the case of Prevent, Early Help Assessment Team who will signpost the referral through the Intake and Assessment Team:

cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk (tel. 0300 300 8585)

Local police: 999 (press 55 if unable to speak but need help) or 101 for non-emergency calls

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline: 0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222) or www.childline.org.uk

Bedfordshire Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit: 01234 866960