



ESCAPE Family Support

Safeguarding Children Policy

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Approved 22nd August 2025

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Section 1: Introduction

Overarching Principles

ESCAPE Family Support abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidelines and complies with best practice requirements.

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) highlights that even if a child has reached the age of 16 and lives independently, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, their status and entitlement to services and protection is unchanged.

We recognise that the welfare of the children we work with is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.

All children and young people regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm and abuse. Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.

Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

ESCAPE believes everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England within the Department for Education’s Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). A summary of the key legislation is available from nspcc.org.uk/learning in line with Charity Commission recommendations. NSPCC Learning (last updated 28/02/2022) has been utilised in the development of this policy and procedures.

Purpose

ESCAPE Family Support will protect children and young people who receive ESCAPE Family Support's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.

ESCAPE accepts its responsibility to implement a policy and procedures to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people, and to protect them from harm.

ESCAPE Family Support will provide Board of trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers agency staff and students as well as children, young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of ESCAPE Family Support, including senior managers and the board of Trustees, paid staff volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Failure to comply with this policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

The policy is also intended to help employees (employees includes volunteers and student placements for the purposes of this policy) minimise the risk of being accused of improper conduct towards children and young people with whom they come into contact during their work, and to set out the procedure that will be followed if an allegation or complaint is made.

The policy has been prepared in line with the Children Act 2004, (Section 11, pages 58-74).

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (sections 51-70) as:

- 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This policy, procedures and practice will be reviewed annually.

Responsibilities

ESCAPE will:

Listen to children and young people and respect and promote their rights, wishes and feelings.

Appoint a nominated child protection lead and a member of the trustee board who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation.

Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from harm, and themselves against false allegations.

This requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and take action
- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert, concern, or risk.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children or young people.
- Have knowledge of ESCAPE's Safeguarding Children Policy and procedures.

Northumberland County Council provides free safeguarding training for ESCAPE's employees and volunteers online through their Learning Pool.- (a learning portal online) -to log on to)

Require employees and volunteers to adopt and abide by this policy and recommended procedures and undergo any necessary safeguards and checks.

Ensure employees are aware that it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns of bad practice or harm immediately to their designated safeguarding lead.

Respond to any allegations appropriately and swiftly and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures as necessary.

Board member – Trustee Alice Park oversees and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and can be contacted on alice.park@escapefamilysupport.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding lead [angie.turnbull@escapefamilysupport](mailto:angie.turnbull@escapefamilysupport.org.uk) .org.uk

Principles underpinning our responsibilities

The guidance given in these procedures is based on the following principles:

This policy recognises and builds on legal and statutory definitions of a young person. The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practice in the delivery and management of ESCAPE a young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children Act 1989 definition).

An adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody, and control of any young person under the age of 18 under their supervision.

The welfare of young people is the primary concern.

All young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, sex, gender reassignment language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from harm.

All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

It is the responsibility of the child protection experts (Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO) to determine whether harm has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.

A useful link to further information below: What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Harmed.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Commitments

In order to implement this policy ESCAPE Family Support will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with ESCAPE Family Support is aware of the safeguarding children procedures and know what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an child.
- Any concern that an child is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with ESCAPE Family Support's Safeguarding Childrens Policy and Procedures. We will support and where possible secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.
- The well-being of the child will actively be supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- ESCAPE Family Support acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from Northumberland County Council Safeguarding Board, NSPCC, BACP, NCVO, Charity Commission, National Bodies.
- ESCAPE Family Support will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard a child.
- ESCAPE Family Support uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of staff, volunteers and student placements to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation. DBS checks are undertaken for Trustees, staff, volunteers, student placements and employees that have access to or work with children.

- When planning services, activities and events ESCAPE Family Support includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all adults and children from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and senior management team on a quarterly basis.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Children Procedures are reviewed on an annual basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board, BACP or National Bodies , Children Act 1989, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and as a result of any other significant change or event.

Section 2: Supporting Information

Implementation

ESCAPE Family Support is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures. In order to do so the following will be in place:

1. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all children and young people .
2. A Designated Safeguarding Lead
3. A delegated Safeguarding Lead for satellite service delivery/events and trips (trained designated lead – service manager/deputy CEO is responsible for delegating a safeguarding lead, as all staff are trained in safeguarding annually)
4. A standing Case Management Group with an appointed Chair (Deputy CEO/Service Manager - Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for clear Terms of Reference.
5. Regular management reports to the Operations, Policy & Safeguarding (OPS)and the Board detailing how risks to adult safeguarding are being addressed and how any reported incidents have been addressed.
6. Safeguarding procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice.
7. A process for forming a Case Management Group on a case-by-case basis within clear terms of reference.
8. Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information.
9. Codes of conduct for Board members, Staff, Volunteers, Student Placements, Beneficiaries and other relevant individuals that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
10. Risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of children.
11. Policies and procedures that address the following areas and which are consistent with this Safeguarding children's policy are located in the Staff Handbook.

a. Children Safeguarding	d. Electronic Information and
b. Harassment & Bullying	Communications Systems Policy
c. Social Media	e. Equality, Equity, Diversity and
	Inclusion Policy

- f. Risk register
- g. Risk assessments
- h. Code of Conducts and a process for breach of these – Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, Student Placements
- i. Disciplinary Rules and Procedures
- j. Grievance Procedure
- k. Concerns, Complaints and Compliments
- l. Whistleblowing
- m. Recruitment policy - safe recruitment and selection of Trustees, Staff, Volunteers, Student placements)
- n. Contract compliance
- o. Confidentiality, Record Keeping, Data Protection, and Information Sharing Policies

Promoting Good Practice

All employees, volunteers and student placements will be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Code of Behaviour

The code of behaviour dictates the following good practices:

When working with children or young people, always work in a publicly open environment. Avoid private or unobserved situations.

When working with children or young people in groups there must be a ratio of one adult to 10 children for those aged 13-18 years as recommended by NSPCC.

Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity.

Always put the welfare of each young person first. Where these are contradictory or in conflict, seek assistance in resolving the conflict.

Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with young people.

Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making.

Ensure that, if any form of manual/physical support is required, it is provided openly and appropriately.

Be a good role model.

Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Practice to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are **unavoidable** they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a Manager or the parent/guardian/carer - for example, if an individual has sustained an injury and needs to go to hospital.

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid transporting individuals in your car.
- Avoid placing yourself in one-to-one situations, especially with adolescents

where intentions may be misconstrued.

- Avoid physical contact, including well-intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on a shoulder or arm.

Practices never to be sanctioned

Individual must **never**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Share a room with a child.

Photography

It is a legal requirement that parental permission must be obtained before any photographs or videos which include children can be published. ESCAPE also has a commitment to ensure that such photo and video opportunities are appropriate, and that any child and their parents are happy that they participate. It is therefore a requirement that anyone organising an event or activity on behalf of ESCAPE ensure that written permission is obtained and retained in line with our GDPR policies

Online Safety within ESCAPE

Children and young people are not permitted to access online material unsupervised within ESCAPE's premises or service provision.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) within ESCAPE

ESCAPE recognises the rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) along with its potential benefits and risks. Despite the absence of AI in any of ESCAPE's direct service delivery, or activities involving children, young persons, or their families, staff should still be aware of its use in any work-related contexts:

- **Sharing data:** Under no circumstances must any personal, confidential, or identifiable information concerning a beneficiary be entered into public or third-party AI platforms. This action constitutes a data breach and a violation of policy.
- **Accountability:** All Board of trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students must be able to take full accountability for their work and upholding safeguarding and data protection duties. human judgement must remain the basis for all actions and activities.

Incidents

If any of the following incidents should occur, you must report them immediately to your Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will also inform the Chief Executive:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or young person.
- If a child or young person seems unduly distressed in any manner.
- If an individual misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Recognition of Poor Practice and Types of Harm

ESCAPE recognises the need for our employees and volunteers to pay close attention to a child's wellbeing and to always follow the guiding principle that the welfare of the child is of paramount concern. It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of ESCAPE in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not harm to a child has taken place. However, there is a responsibility for all employees and volunteers to report any concerns that they may have about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child)

towards a child in order that the appropriate agencies (NCC LADO) can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person. ESCAPE therefore encourages and expects employees and volunteers to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a person immediately with their Designated Safeguarding Lead

The main different forms of harm are:

Physical harm - such as hitting, pushing, shaking, exposure to heat or cold, giving too much medicine or causing physical harm.

Sexual harm – sexual activity where a child or young person cannot or does not give their consent, or where they have been pressurised into consenting.

Emotional or psychological harm – such as the use of verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, or bribes to deny an individual's choices and wishes. Using discriminatory language or comments due to a person's colour, age, sex, language, religion, nationality/culture, sexuality or disability. Preventing someone from enjoying activities, meeting friends or from receiving services or support.

Neglect – when a child or young person suffers because their health or physical needs are being neglected by a parent/carer. It could include failure to keep someone warm, clean and well nourished, or neglecting to give the prescribed medication.

Harm Outside the Home

In line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), ESCAPE recognises that children can be at risk of significant harm beyond their family environment.

It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these categories, they are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Trafficking
- Domestic Abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Grooming
- Historical Abuse
- Online Abuse

The Prevent duty (Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015) highlights the importance of identifying vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.

- **Radicalisation:** is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.
- **Extremism:** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Responding to a disclosure, suspicions and allegations

The following guidance is intended to help you to respond to a disclosure, suspicions and allegations of harm to help protect the vulnerable. If you are in any doubt or are not sure what to do, you can obtain expert advice by contacting the organisations detailed at the end of this policy.

Responding to suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for ESCAPE to decide whether or not harm is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to report any suspicions to your Designated Safeguarding Lead who will inform the appropriate agencies to allow them to make enquiries and take any necessary action.

Responding to a disclosure

If an individual discloses information to you, you should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Tell the child he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in language

- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- Reassure the individual but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible

False allegations of harm do occur, but are unusual. If a young person indicates that he/she is being harmed, or information is obtained which gives concern that a young person is being harmed, you should react immediately and inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will contact Children's Services or other relevant agencies i.e., Police, Health Service etc.

Actions to avoid

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator
- Approach the alleged perpetrator
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets

Allegations against an employee or volunteer or against a child or young person

Harm to a child can and does occur outside the family setting. Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, harm to a child has occurred within institutions and may occur within other settings (e.g., sport or other social activities). It is crucial that those involved with ESCAPE are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken. It is important that any concerns for the welfare of a child arising from harm or harassment by a member of staff or a volunteer will be reported immediately to your Designated safeguarding Lead

Harm to others may also be perpetrated by a child or young person against another child, young person

or adult. There are different ways that a child or young person may be abusive towards others, and they might not realise they are doing so:

- [bullying or cyberbullying](#)
- [emotional abuse](#)
- [online abuse](#)
- [physical abuse](#)
- [sexting](#)
- [sexual abuse](#).

When a child abuses another child, it is sometimes called 'peer-on-peer abuse'. Sometimes children might also display abusive behaviour towards adults.

Concerns might be raised in several ways.

- A child or adult might make a direct allegation of abuse by a child or young person.
- A child or adult might tell you they are uncomfortable with a child or young person's behaviour. They may not realise the behaviour is abusive.
- A member of staff or volunteer might observe behaviour that gives cause for concern and make a report under ESCAPE's safeguarding procedures.
- ESCAPE may be informed that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation.
- A child or young person might tell you they have harmed someone else or are at risk of doing so or have behaved abusively towards someone else.
- If a child or young person tells you directly that they have harmed or behaved abusively towards someone else.

You should talk to them calmly and remember that they need support:

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you about it.
- Listen carefully to the child and let them tell their whole story. Do not try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure you understand what they are saying.
- Use non-judgmental language.
- Tell them that you now have to do what you can to keep them, and the other children involved safe.
- Never promise to keep what a child tells you a secret. Explain that you will need to speak to other people who can help.

- Reassure the child that they can get help to change their behaviour and move forward with their life
- You may want to suggest the child contacts [Childline](#) for support.
- Any disclosure must be documented immediately and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If allegations have been made against a child you should speak to your nominated child protection lead immediately, who can advise you on the best way to proceed. Do not talk to the accused child about the allegations before taking advice as it may make the situation worse.

For more advice, contact the NSPCC helpline on [0808 800 5000](tel:0808 800 5000) or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

Records and Information

ESCAPE Family Support expects all employees, volunteers, student placements and trustees to maintain the confidentiality of its service users and adhering to the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information will only be shared in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and Data Protection. However, our primary duty is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as such, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child or young person is deemed to be at risk of harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding, see ESCAPE's Confidentiality and Information Sharing policies. Information passed to social services, or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern.

Information should include the following:

- The nature of the allegation
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The individual's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Witnesses to the incident(s)
- Decisions made and why they were made
- Any times, dates or other relevant information

- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations. See ESCAPE's Record Keeping Policy for details.

Reporting the matter to the police or Children's Services should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to Children's Services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

A record should also be made of the name and designation of the Children's Services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Information will be shared with other statutory bodies only, in line with the local Information Sharing Protocol adopted by ESCAPE on October 22nd 2008.

Action if There Are Concerns

All concerns, suspicions or disclosures should be reported to your Designated Safeguarding Lead who will take such steps as are considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any others who may be at risk, and who will refer the allegation to the Northumberland Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, if you are in any doubt you can report concerns direct to Children's Services or the police. Managers must be informed of situations where there is uncertainty about whether the allegation constitutes harm or not, and where it is unclear about what action to take. There may also be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than harm. In all such cases, advice will be sought from the Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP) as it may be that the incident is just one of a series which, put together, may cause concern. If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about inappropriate behaviour by someone working for or on behalf of ESCAPE rather than harm, this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

Investigation

If there is a complaint of harm against a member of staff there may be a criminal investigation, Children's Services investigation and/or an internal disciplinary investigation.

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the person/family of the person who alleged the harm.

The results of the police and social service investigation may well influence the ESCAPE's disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Suspension

The Chief Executive will decide whether any individual accused of harm should be temporarily suspended pending further police, social services or internal enquiries.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated in line with ESCAPE's information sharing policy.

Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g., that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Information Sharing Protocol

The Children Act 2004 places requirements on district councils as statutory partners in relation to the protection of children from harm. Section 10 of the Act places a duty on district councils to co-operate with the Children's Services authority, whilst Section 11 places a duty on district councils to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. ESCAPE has adopted the Northumberland Information Sharing Protocol as guidance to the process and procedures which should be invoked when sharing information is essential to protect a child from harm.

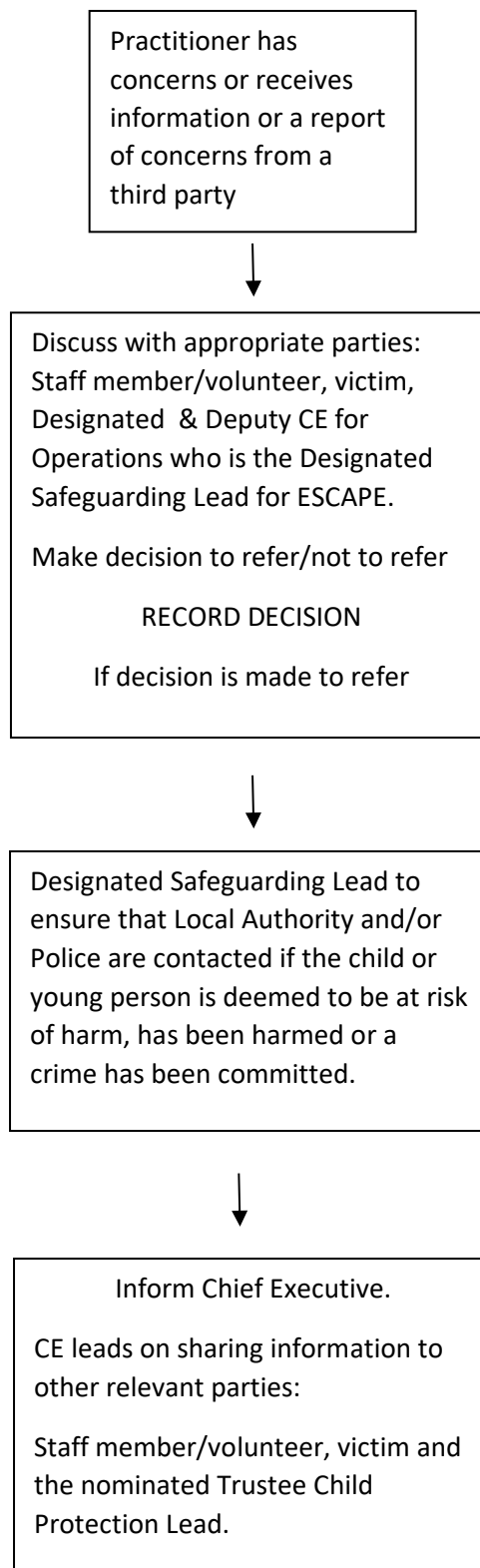
Procedure for reporting allegations or suspicions of harm

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in ESCAPE has concerns, a record should be made. Details must include, as far as practical:

- Name of child or young person
- Age
- Home Address (if known)

- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- Telephone numbers if available
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details
- What has prompted the concerns?
- Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- Has the child or young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Does the allegation name any third party? If so, record details.
- Who has the allegation been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken?
e.g., school, designated officer, social services etc?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details

Flowchart of key principles for information sharing



Similarly, employees and volunteers may encounter concerns about the safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk of abuse. For more information about adults safeguarding, refer to ESCAPE's Adults Safeguarding Policy.

Relevant Legislation

This document was prepared in line with the following legislation:

Local Government Act 2000

Local authorities have a corporate responsibility to address the needs of children and young people living in their area. The Local Government Act 2000 sets out a broad cross-government expectation that there should be a concerted aim to improve the well-being of people and communities. To achieve this, there should be effective joint working by education, social services, housing, and leisure, in partnership with health, police and other statutory services and the independent sector.

The Children Act 2004

Section 11 of this Act places a duty on all Local Authorities including District Councils to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area through membership of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and compliance with that LSCB's policies and procedures.

Working Together To Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)

What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused (PDF) (DfE, 2015).

The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679)

The Freedom of Information Act

The Children's and Family act 2014

[The Children and Families Act of 2014](#)

Vulnerable children often need better support from the care system as a result of separated parents or other instances.

[The Children and Families Act of 2014](#) created a new system to help these children – by helping the entire family. Among many aspects, it makes young and parent carer's rights to support from councils clearer and reforms children's residential care to make sure homes are safe and secure, improving the quality of care that vulnerable children receive

The Department for Education (DfE) published a new edition of its statutory guidance [Working together to safeguard children in December 2023](#).¹

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 as

- 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.

Useful resources

Northumberland Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnership

You can report abuse and neglect by completing the form at the links below, or use the numbers below:

[Report a concern about a child](#)

[Report a concern about an adult](#)

[Report a concern about Hate Crime Domestic Abuse or antisocial behaviour](#)

Non-emergency: If this is a new contact then please ring:- **Onecall : 01670 536400**

If you know a child already has a social worker then contact the social workers telephone number or ring **Onecall**. For the 14+ Team please ring **01670 622930**

Early Help Assessments

To make a referral to the Early Help Hubs please send your referral to :- earlyinterventionhub@northumberland.gov.uk

For enquiries about completion or registrations of [Early Help Assessments](#) please contact **One Call: 01670 536400**

If you are a professional who works with children, you should first discuss your concern with your manager or designated professional. If there are still concerns you should contact the numbers above.

- Alternatively call the NSPCC 24 hour child protection helpline on [0800 800 500](tel:0800800500)

Useful source of information regarding “What to do if you are worried a child is being harmed” and information sharing protocols:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Safeguarding/Safeguarding-children-information-for-professional.aspx>

Northumbria Police: 999 for emergencies or 101 for non-emergencies

ESCAPE Family Support Safeguarding Contacts:

Contact details of the designated officer/ child protection lead: Sarah Angie Turnbull
Email: angie.turnbull@escapefamilysupport.org.uk or Mobile Number: 07812 983 611

Contact Details Deputy: Please contact ESCAPE Helpline: 07702 833 944 and speak to the duty manager.

Trustee and Senior Organisation Lead: Alice Park on Email:
alice.park@escapefamilysupport.org.uk

Policy Last Reviewed on: 18th August 2025

Signature of Senior Lead: A. Turnbull
18/08/2025

Date: