



Sufra NW London

Young Person and Child Protection Safeguarding Policy

Policy Owner:	Programmes Manager	To be approved by:	Board of Trustees
Last reviewed by policy owner on:	30/04/2025	Approved on:	04/06/2025
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1 Introduction and Statement

Sufra NW London recognises its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts' 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

Sufra NW London is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children and taking all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and protect children from harm, abuse and neglect.

Sufra NW London acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards anyone working on its behalf, or towards any disclosures or suspicion of abuse.

Sufra NW London believes that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation and /or identity, have the right to equal protection from harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

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

Everyone who participates in activities at Sufra NW London is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Sufra NW London has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when given responsibility for children, young people and volunteers, we provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

Sufra NW London is committed to implementing policies that ensure that all responsible persons accept their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of Sufra NW London and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Effectively safeguard children and promote their rights and welfare;
- Provide all staff and volunteers with clear rules to follow;
- Make all staff and volunteers aware of what is expected of them in terms of their approach, behaviour, and actions; and
- Provide evidence to Sufra NW London users, parents and carers, the local community, partner organisations, the Local Authority, and funding and commissioning bodies that it is committed to safeguarding.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all associated with Sufra NW London staff and volunteers, including trustees, sessional workers, contractors and consultants, students on work placements, and anyone working on behalf of the organisation in a position of trust.

Copies of this policy will be made available to all of the above and to others upon request.

4 Definitions

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by 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 others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. See section **7 below**.

A **child** is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, or in custody in a secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

5 Basic principles

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- Safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of everyone.
- All children and young people have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their race, ethnicity, immigration status, religion or belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.
- This includes unborn children and children aged 0-18 years.
- All allegations and suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. They must not be ignored.
- If somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm, they should always refer the concern to Children's Social Care or the Police.
- All voluntary, community, faith and private organisations/service providers working with children/young people and their families must take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children and young people are minimised.

6 Legislative framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016

7 Types and indicators of abuse

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. As well as

e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating or drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a child or young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a child or young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child or young person frightened or withdrawn. Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Sexual abuse: 'involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually

inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)' (HM Government, 2015).

Neglect: occurs when an adult fails to meet the child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Online abuse: is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online, such as: social media, text messaging, emails, online chats, online gaming and live streaming sites.

8 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent;
- The child or young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them;
- Another child or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a child or young person;
- Unexplained changes in a child or young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
- Inappropriate sexual awareness;
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- Distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- Difficulty in making friends;

- Being prevented from socialising with others;
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
- Losing weight for no apparent reason; and/or
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful or emotionally up and down;
- An unexplained drop off in performance;
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes; and/or
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in Sufra NW London to decide that child abuse is occurring or investigate a matter. It **IS** Sufra NW London's responsibility to act on any concerns.

9 Reporting procedure and best practise supporting children

All professionals have a responsibility to report concerns to Children's Social Care under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, if they believe or suspect that the child:

- Has suffered significant harm
- Is likely to suffer significant harm;
- Has a disability, developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the child's parent) under the Children Act 1989;
- Is a Child in Need whose development would be likely to be impaired without provision of service

If staff or volunteers think a child or young person is at risk of significant harm or suffered significant harm, they must report this to the Nominated Safeguarding Person or Deputy immediately and then they will agree on the best course of action, such as reporting the matter to:

- Brent Family Front Door on 020 8937 4300; or

- If outside office hours, Brent Emergency Duty Team on 020 8863 5250.

If the Nominated Safeguarding Person and Deputy are unavailable, the individual raising the concern should contact one of the above her/himself.

If a staff member or volunteer thinks the matter is an emergency, they must contact the **police** on **999** immediately.

When a staff member or volunteer contacts the above numbers, she/he should provide the following details:

- Name of the individual raising concern;
- That individual's address and a telephone number at which she/he can be contacted in case they require other information or to follow up;
- The child or young person's name, and any other details, if known (parent's name, address, school, etc.).
- Relevant information about the circumstances of the concerns what a staff member or volunteer has seen, heard, or suspected to be happening about an individual child and young person; and
- Concerns relating to activities a staff member or volunteer sees, hears, or suspects to be happening about the premise or linked to the premises, e.g. if a staff member or volunteer suspects that a member of staff is selling alcohol to young people who are underage or they believe that children are at risk of sexual exploitation (prostitution or internet pornography).

An individual raising concern may not have all the details about a child or young person, or the activity but the staff member or volunteer should still refer.

If a staff member or volunteer has concern about a child/family but it is not an immediate safeguarding concern, you should refer to the Threshold of Needs matrix which can be found at

www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/files/threshold.pdf

This tool is designed to support professionals to make decisions as to whether contact should be made with Children's Social Care. If after consulting the Threshold of Need, a staff member or volunteer still has concerns that do not require an immediate safeguarding response, following discussion with all those involved, the (deputy) Nominated Safeguarding Person may contact Family Front Door (020 8937 4300) for general advice and request a 'no names' consultation (meaning the child's name is not

given). They will then discuss the situation with them and then Family Front Door Brent will advise on what to do next. If a referral needs to be made they will advise of this.

10 Supporting a child during disclosure

If/when a child reports they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect or have caused or are causing physical or sexual harm to others, the initial response from all professionals should be to listen carefully to what the child says and to observe the child's behaviour and circumstances. It is best practise to:

- Remain calm, accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully without interrupting or asking leading questions;
- Communicate with the child/young person in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference;
- Be aware of the non-verbal messages she/he is giving;
- Make it clear that she/he is taking the child seriously;
- Acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to tell;
- Reassure them that they should not feel guilty and say that she/he is sorry that this has happened to them;
- Let them know that she/he is going to do everything she/he can to help them and what may happen as a result; and
- Make a note of what was said and who was present, using the child/young person's actual words wherever possible.

It is important to remember that the child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality, as this could prejudice police investigations, especially in cases of sexual abuse. If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to children's social care, they should be asked for their views. It should be explained to the child that whilst their view will be taken into account, the professional has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the child's safety and the safety of other children

The person responding to a child should NEVER:

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children/young people;

- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive, or react with shock, anger, horror, etc.;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest, or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child/young person) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what she/he has been told; or
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person.

11 Incident recording

All incidents and concerns relating to the safeguarding of children must be recorded by person raising the concern via the online [Safeguarding Incident form](#), (**see Appendix A for an example**).

12 Supporting those working with children

Sufra NW London recognises those in a position of trust as emotionally “safe”. It is important that all staff supporting children are able to discuss safeguarding concerns with the Nominated Safeguarding Person and with their Line Manager in regular supervision.

13 Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP)

The Nominated Safeguarding Person has a specific responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters within the organisation. The NSP’s role includes:

- Overseeing the preparation and implementation of the safeguarding policy and ensuring that it is regularly reviewed, and that the policies and procedures are followed;
- Liaising with Brent Council and other child protection agencies (i.e. police) and making referrals;
- Reporting any concerns to Children’s Services or the police (urgent concerns must be reported immediately even if the NSP is not available);
- Acting as the lead person in circumstances where an allegation has been made against a member of staff/volunteer within the organisation;

- Acting as a source of advice on all child protection matters within their organisation and seeking further advice and guidance from other agencies as needed;
- Ensuring that confidential records (Safeguarding Incident Log) are kept of any concerns about a child or young person and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies;
- Ensuring that any such records are kept safely and securely;
- Making sure that staff/volunteers receive adequate child protection training;
- Promoting the needs of children and young people in the workplace and keeping the staff and volunteers informed on good practice; and
- Attending meetings following disclosures or investigations, including case conferences, giving either support to a child or family members (not both at the same time).

The NSP at Sufra NW London is the Programmes Manager, Jo Kay. She may be contacted on 020 3441 1335 or via email (jo@sufra-nwlondon.org.uk).

The Deputy Safeguarding Person is the Deputy Director, Gill Carter she may be contacted on 020 3441 1335 or via email (gill@sufra-nwlondon.org.uk).

Alternatively, contact the Chair of Board of Trustees', Susan Crane via email (susanfcrane@gmail.com).

14 Allegations against staff and volunteers

An allegation of abuse can be made against any staff member or volunteer at any time and it can be very challenging to believe that a trusted member of the team could cause harm to a child.

It is for this purpose that the process below has been established and must be followed when there is an allegation or concern raised about any person who works with children, in connection with her/his employment or voluntary activity.

The NSP must **contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately** if an allegation or concern has been made about a staff member/volunteer who has:

- Behaved in a way that has **harmed** a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly **committed a criminal offence** against or related to a child; and/or

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are **unsuitable to work with children**.

If the NSP feels that the allegation does not meet the above criteria, she/he should carefully record why this is so that, along with any decisions she/he has made regarding any further action needed. The person about whom the allegation has been made should be kept informed, as well as the child/young person's parents and the child/young person themselves. If the NSP is unsure about this, she/he should discuss the case with the LADO to consider how to move forward.

There will be occasions when urgent action is needed to safeguard the child/children (e.g. police contact in an emergency situation or medical attention for the child following an incident). In all cases, however, the LADO must be contacted without delay and all decisions should be made in consultation with the LADO.

Steps must be taken to fully support anyone who, in good faith, reports her/his concerns about a colleague and every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality for all parties whilst the allegation is considered.

15 Managing the staff member / volunteer against whom the allegation is made

It may be necessary to suspend or remove from duties involving children/young people, the person about whom the allegations have been made. This decision should be made in liaison with the LADO and a Senior manager (where available). Refer to the Disciplinary Policy where applicable.

Remember that those being accused must be treated fairly and with an open mind during any investigations.

Where suspension is the next step, it will usually be necessary to tell the person why they are being suspended. Details of the allegation should not be shared until this is agreed by the LADO as part of the investigation process. It is enough simply to say that an allegation has been made.

16 Confidentiality

Children have a right to confidentiality under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It's important to respect the wishes of a child or any person who doesn't consent to share confidential information.

If you're not given consent to share information, you may still lawfully go ahead if the child is experiencing, or is at risk of, significant harm.

Child protection concerns, disclosures from children or safeguarding allegations made against a person in a position of trust must not be discussed across the workforce as a whole.

Personal information which is shared by the child or young person on a 1:1 level, such as sexual orientation or gender identification, should not be disclosed to the workforce as a whole. If staff and volunteers wish to discuss situations with colleagues to gain a wider perspective, this should be done on an anonymous basis with names and other identifying information relating to the child and their family remaining strictly confidential.

17 Information sharing

Sufra NW London requires all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, Sufra NW London does not share information if not required.

Regarding the welfare of children and young people, information sharing is key to enabling early intervention and preventative work.

What are the Seven golden rules for information sharing?

The individual raising the concern should:

- 1) Remember that the Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately (see the Data Protection Policy);
- 2) Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how, and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so;
- 3) Seek advice if in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible;
- 4) Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. She/he may still share information without consent if, in her/his judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. She/he will need to base judgement on the facts of the case;

- 5) Consider safety and well-being: base information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions;
- 6) Ensure that the information shared is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely, and secure, i.e. the information a staff member or volunteer shares is necessary for the purpose for which the staff member or volunteer is sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely; and
 - Keep a record of her/his decision and the reasons for it—whether it is to share information or not. If the staff member or volunteer decides to share, then record what has been shared, with whom. and for what purpose.

18 E-safety

It is essential that all risks are recognised, identified, and mitigated when children are in an environment with ICT facilities available. Please see the Data Protection Policy for more information on safe and secure use of the organisation's ICT assets and systems.

All staff and volunteers have the responsibility to support children and young people to stay safe and use the internet responsibly by:

- Educating children and young people about potential risks and ways of avoiding/mitigating them;
- Raising awareness of issues such as grooming, bullying, ICT-based sexual exploitation, and pornography;
- Providing children and young people with information about expert organisations and sources of help and advice; and
- Supporting parents and carers to effectively monitor their children's access to and use of internet and help their children stay safe online.

In addition, all staff and volunteers should adhere to the following:

- Do not take photographs of children on your mobile phone or personal camera;
- Do not accept or invite children as 'friends' or contacts on social networking sites;
- Ensure your personal profile on websites such as Facebook is not visible to 'strangers' and that it does not contain any inappropriate content (e.g. pictures of an employee while drunk or wearing revealing clothing); and

- Make all children and young people aware of the meaning and importance of professional boundaries and how they impact on the child/young person-professional relationship.

19 Staff and volunteer recruitment and training

19.1 Interview and induction

Safe recruitment is central to the safeguarding of vulnerable children. All organisations which employ people to work with vulnerable children in a position of trust have a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes ensuring that the organisation adopts safe recruitment and selection procedures which prevent unsuitable persons from gaining access to vulnerable children.

All employees and volunteers will be required to undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive a formal or an informal induction during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures;
- Their qualifications should be substantiated;
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified;
- They should sign up to the charity's Code of Conduct; and
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are explained and training needs identified such as level 1 safeguarding training.

All staff will require submission of two references.

19.2 Enhanced DBS for all staff and unsupervised volunteers

All staff and volunteers who are in contact with children and young people without supervision will require an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.

19.3 Good practice

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- Make the experience of recreation and learning fun and enjoyable: promote fairness and confront all forms of bullying;

- Treat all children and young people equally and with respect and dignity;
- Always put the welfare of the child or young person first;
- Maintain a safe and appropriate space with children or young people (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them);
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children and young people (Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child or young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child or young person's consent has been given.);
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible, encouraging parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure that staff work in pairs;
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements;
- Act as an excellent role model in the company of children or young people;
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the child or young person and do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for other outcomes;
- Secure written parental consent for the service to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises; and
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

The following should be regarded as poor practice and avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others;
- Taking children or young people alone in a car on journeys, however short;
- Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you;
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun;

- Reducing a child or young person to tears as a form of control;
- Allow allegations made by a child or young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon; and
- Do things of a personal nature that the child or young person can do for themselves.

20 Complaints procedure

Sufra NW London promotes transparency and honesty when things go wrong. All staff and volunteers should apologise and be honest with service users and other relevant people when things go wrong. If a staff or volunteer or any other member of the organisation is unhappy with Sufra NW London's decision about the safeguarding concern, refer them to the complaints policy.

Sufra NW London is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

Appendix A – Safeguarding Incident Log

Details of the child and their parent/carer		
Name of child / young person:		
Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	Age:	Date of birth:
Parent's/carer's name(s):		
Home address:		
Your details		
Name:	Position:	Date and time of incident:
Your report		
Are you reporting your own concerns or those raised by somebody else?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns	<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by somebody else	

If responding to concerns raised by somebody else, please provide their name and position in the organisation, if applicable:

Please provide details of the incident/concern, including time, date, and any other relevant information (e.g. description of injuries, whether you are recording fact, opinion, hearsay):

The child / young person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how:

Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused the incident/injury, including where possible their name, address, and date of birth:

Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident:

Appendix B – ‘The 5 Rs’

RECOGNISE

- Be vigilant;
- Know the children a staff member or volunteer works with;
- Be familiar with the types and indicators of abuse

RESPOND

- Never ignore concerns, signs or reports related to children’s wellbeing and safety;
- Do not delay your response;
- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency service.

REPORT

- Always report your concerns to the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) or their Deputy;
- Ensure every member of staff/volunteer is aware of who the NSP and Deputy NSP are.

RECORD

- Always make a record of what happened – the incident or concern, the exact words of the child where possible (if they disclosed) and any immediate actions taken;
- Don’t delay it – record information as soon as possible;
- As far as possible, records should be written contemporaneously, dated and signed;
- All records about safeguarding concerns need to be kept confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personnel for accessing confidential information.

REFER

All cases where there is a concern about significant harm or risk thereof must be referred to **Brent Family Front Door** on **020 8937 4300**. This will be done by the NSP (or Deputy NSP) unless otherwise agreed with the staff member or volunteer raising the concern.

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