

Policy Name: Children and Young Person (CYP) Safeguarding Policy and Procedure	
Version	3
Date when last reviewed	April 2025
Date when next review due	April 2026
Author	Paul Reeve, amended by Jon Gladstone with guidance from MQM Policy Checklist
This policy is for:	Staff, Volunteers, Trustees, contractors, agency workers, trainees, whether or not they work with CYP.
Date ratified by the Board	Checked by Senior Management Team and sent to Trustees May 2025
Policy implementation (Explains how relevant parties will be made aware of and have access to the policy. For example, induction, training (and refresh), shared drive (SharePoint/Drop Box/etc).	Induction training, mandatory training, supervision, Shared Learning Workshops. Policy accessible through SharePoint.
Related policies and procedures	• Recruitment and Selection Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • Recruitment of ex-offenders Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Confidentiality Policy • Information Sharing Policy • Professional Boundaries Policy and Workbook • Photography and sharing images guidance. • Complaints Policy and Procedures • Learning and Development Policy

Change History

Version	Changed by	Change Summary	Date
2	Jon Gladstone	Some sections expanded. Now following MQM policy checklist – CYP Safeguarding Policy. Updated local authority contact details	February 2024
3	Jon Gladstone	Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance has been updated in 2023	April 2025

Equality Impact Assessment		
Who does the policy affect?	Staff, Volunteers, Trustees, contracted third parties	
	Positive or Yes	Negative or No
Will the policy have a positive or negative impact on discrimination, equality of opportunity or relations between groups?	Positive	
Is the communication of the policy accessible to all groups?	Yes	
Do the procedures and behaviours outlined in this policy proactively address the inclusion of marginalised or excluded groups?	Yes	
Will there be a positive benefit to the users or workforce as a result of the proposed policy?	Yes	
Were the relevant groups (i.e. staff, volunteers, those with lived experience) involved in the development and review of the policy?		No (not vols or people with lived experience)
Detail any other consideration specific to this policy		

Environmental Impact Assessment			
Who does the policy affect?	Staff, Volunteers, Trustees, Contracted third parties. General public.		
	Yes	N/A	No
Does the policy encourage use of climate friendly travel i.e. public transport, car sharing?		n/a	
Does the policy consider the environmental impact where considering suppliers, products, digital footprint, printing documents linked to the implementation of this policy?	Yes		
Does the policy recommend monitoring and measuring the activities to understand the environmental impact where appropriate i.e. carbon footprint		n/a	
Should the policy make specific reference to the Environmental Policy?			No
Does the policy require a more detailed Environmental Impact Assessment?		No	

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive Cornwall Mind's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have 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

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of 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, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

We will seek to keep children and young people keep safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy, and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision,
- support, training, and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made

- recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: [ico.org.uk/for- organisations](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations)]
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people, and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

2. Background and scope

Best practice suggests that we should have separate Adult and Children and Young Persons Safeguarding Policies. This is mainly because different legislation applies, and the reporting frameworks are different. For the purpose of legislation and guidance this policy covers children and young people from age 0 to 18. Young people over the age of 18 are supported by the adult safeguarding legislation and guidance (see separate policy).

Whilst Cornwall Mind does not currently offer services to anyone under the age of 18, by the nature of the work that we undertake we will come into indirect contact with children through their families and friends. People who use our services may raise concerns about their own children or others that they know, or you may be concerned about how a person may talk about a child in their home environment.

3. Legislation/policy/guidance

In England, child safeguarding legislation is covered by three main acts:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Together, these provide the framework for child protection and safeguarding.

Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. Key principles established by the Act include:

- the paramount nature of the child's welfare
- the expectations and requirements around duties of care to children

Children Act 2004

This is strengthened by the Children Act 2004, which encourages partnerships between agencies and creates more accountability, by:

- placing a duty on local authorities to appoint children's services members who are ultimately accountable for the delivery of services
- placing a duty on local authorities and their partners to co-operate in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amends both the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 and received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017.

Policy and Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children Act 2023 - Statutory guidance outlining how all those working with children should be working together, including multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Local safeguarding partners are responsible for child protection policy, procedure, and guidance at a local level.

The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- the local authority – Cornwall Council
- integrated care boards (ICB) – NHS Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly ICB
- the police – Devon and Cornwall Police

Working together with other relevant agencies, they must co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children, including deciding to identify and support children at risk of harm.

Mandatory reporting

It is mandatory for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England to report 'known cases' of female genital mutilation (FGM) in under 18s to the police (Home Office, 2016).

4. Responsibilities and reporting.

The Children and Young People's Safeguarding Lead for Cornwall Mind is the Operations Manager – Lorna Richardson contactable on 07821680583 or email lorna@cornwallmind.org

Cornwall Mind is committed to having the following in place:

- A Children's Safeguarding Lead to produce and disseminate guidance and resources to support the policy and procedures
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on promoting the welfare of all children and young people
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse or poor practice against members of staff and volunteers
- A Disciplinary Panel will be formed as required for a given incident, if appropriate and should a threshold be met
- Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including arrangements for sharing information
- Appropriate whistle blowing procedures and an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed
- All Cornwall Mind staff and volunteers will be briefed on the policy and must agree to apply it in practice. The policy is deemed to be incorporated in the contract of employment and it is a condition of service with Cornwall Mind that staff understand and operate the policy fully
- All staff and volunteers of Cornwall Mind will be given access to the Safeguarding Children policy, procedures and code of behaviour and practice. Those responsible for projects, in which Cornwall Mind is the lead organisation, are to have access to the procedures, with details of local contacts
- Mandatory Safeguarding Children training is completed as part of the Induction training for all new staff and volunteers. The training is to be updated every year. Staff are

offered regular supervision which is recorded. Volunteers are offered supervision either as part of a group or individually

The Safeguarding Lead will

- Be available for consultation in the absence of a manager
- Be responsible for the Children and Young Persons Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- ensure that the organisation is compliant with local and national safeguarding procedures
- review safeguarding practice within the organisation
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have adequate training and supervision to implement this policy effectively
- coordinate completed safeguarding cases and relevant paperwork

The Board of Trustees has oversight into all areas of safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring that the Senior Management team have the resources to fully implement all policies and procedures relating to safeguarding. There is a Trustee who is designated the Safeguarding Lead to the Board (who in most instances will cover both adults and children and young people).

How to report concerns about a child's welfare

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on **999**.

If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should record and share your concerns as outlined in Section 6.

- Follow the procedures set out in this policy.
- Cornwall Children's Social Care Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) 0300 1231 116 (email multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk)
- Cornwall Children's Social Care – out of hours 01208 251300
- Contact the police on 101 (non-emergency number).

5. Identifying safeguarding concerns.

What is Child Abuse? NSPCC states the following: -

'Child abuse is when a child is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual, or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect.'

Types of Abuse

Bullying & Cyberbullying

- Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening, or undermining someone
- Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming, and mobile phone

Sexual Exploitation

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of [sexual abuse](#). When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status, and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called [grooming](#). They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused
- Children and young people can be [trafficked](#) into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited
- Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them
- Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender, or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Many children and young people are trafficked into the UK from other countries like Vietnam, Albania, and Romania. Children are also trafficked around the UK. Trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced, or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work, or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- [sexual exploitation](#)
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare
- forced labour in factories or agriculture

- committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.¹

- **Peer group**
"A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context."
- **Street gang**
"Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."
- **Organised criminal gangs**
"A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation'."

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gangs' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation, and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:

- Airbnb and short term private rental properties
- budget hotels
- the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, which is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers

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

- kicking, hitting, punching, or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening another family member or pet

Emotional Abuse

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

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

Emotional abuse includes:

- humiliating or constantly criticising a child
- threatening, shouting at a child, or calling them names
- making the child the subject of jokes or using sarcasm to hurt a child
- blaming and scapegoating
- making a child perform degrading acts
- not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- exposing a child to upsetting events or situations, like [domestic abuse](#) or drug taking
- failing to promote a child's social development
- not allowing them to have friends
- persistently ignoring them
- being absent
- manipulating a child

- never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes
- never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect

Female Genital Mutilation (FGF)

FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK. We know:

- there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM
- it's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass, or razor blades
- children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained
- it's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:

- when a baby is new-born
- during childhood or as a teenager
- just before marriage
- during pregnancy

Signs FGM might happen.

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school
- A girl struggles to keep up in school
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home

[Signs FGM might have taken place.](#)

- Having difficulty walking, standing, or sitting
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appearing quiet, anxious, or depressed
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations

- Asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed

Grooming

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

Children and young people who are groomed can be [sexually abused](#), [exploited](#) or [trafficked](#).

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

Types of grooming

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

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

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

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

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

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

- pretending to be younger

- giving advice or showing understanding
- buying gifts
- giving attention
- taking them on trips, outings, or holidays

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

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

Neglect

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

Types of neglect

Neglect can be a lot of different things, which can make it hard to spot. But broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.

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

Physical Abuse

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

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

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

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips, and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Sexual Abuse

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

There are 2 types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse. And sexual abuse can happen in person or online.

Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. This includes:

- sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they're clothed or not
- using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child
- forcing a child to take part in sexual activities
- making a child undress or touch someone else

Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.

Non-contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:

- exposing or flashing
- showing pornography
- exposing a child to sexual acts
- making them masturbate
- forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos
- making, viewing, or distributing child abuse images or videos
- forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone

Common Signs of Abuse

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends if any.
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body

6. Disclosure of Abuse and reporting.

There are lots of reasons why a child or young person might to tell someone they are being abused, including:

- realising the abuse is wrong
- not being able to cope any more
- the abuse getting worse
- wanting to protect other children
- wanting the abuser to be punished
- trusting someone enough to tell them
- someone asks them directly

It can be extremely hard for children to open about what's happened to them. They might be worried about the consequences or that nobody will believe them. They might have told someone before, and nothing was done to help them. Sometimes they might not know what is

happening to them is abuse and struggle to share what they're feeling. Some children don't reveal they're being abused for a long time, some never tell.

If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 straight away and contact the Safeguarding Lead (or Chief Executive).

What to say to a child and how to respond?

- Listen carefully to what they are saying
- Be patient and focus on what you are being told. Try not to express your own views and feelings. If you appear shocked or as if you do not believe them, it could make them stop talking and take back what they've said
- Give them the tools to talk
- If they are struggling to talk to you, show them Childline's letter builder tool. It uses simple prompts to help them share what is happening and how they're feeling
- Let them know they have done the right thing by telling you
- Reassurance can make a big impact. If they have kept the abuse a secret it can have a big impact knowing they've shared what's happened
- Tell them it is not their fault
- Abuse is never a child's fault. It's important they hear, and know, this
- Say you will take them seriously
- They may have kept the abuse secret because they were scared they would not be believed. Make sure they know they can trust you and you will listen and support them.
- Explain what you will do next
- For younger children, explain you are going to speak to someone who will be able to help. For older children, explain you will need to report the abuse to someone who can help
- Report as soon after you have been told about the abuse so the details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly. It can be helpful to take notes as soon after you have spoken to the child. Try to keep these as accurate as possible

What NOT to do if a child makes a disclosure

- Do not confront the alleged abuser, confronting the alleged abuser could make the situation worse for the child
- Pressurise the individual for more details
- Ignore what you have been told
- Promise to keep secrets - or make promises you cannot keep
- Do not contaminate or remove any evidence
- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading or probing questions

- Investigate
- Repeatedly question or ask the child to repeat the disclosure
- Discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know
- Delay in reporting the disclosure to the Safeguarding team
- Avoid communicating with shock, horror, or fear about anything said, even though what you are hearing is likely shocking and horrifying. The child may interpret your reaction as you are shocked and horrified by him or her and shut down

How to report child abuse and neglect.

If a child reveals abuse to you, it is important to take it seriously, listen and report. And it is vital you take the next steps to help keep them safe.

The 4rs of Safeguarding.

The 4Rs of Safeguarding Children is professional practice for how you can.

- Recognise
- Record
- Report
- Refer

If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 straight away.

Inform Cornwall Mind Children Safeguarding Lead: **Lorna Richardson contactable on 07821 680583 or email lorna@cornwallmind.org**

The Safeguarding Lead will then contact the local children's services for advice as detailed below:

- Cornwall Children's Social Care Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) 0300 1231 116 (email multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk)
- Cornwall Children's Social Care – out of hours 01208 251300
- Possibly contact the police on 101 (non-emergency number), dependent on advice from children's services

Recording and storage of information.

We are committed to keeping clear, accurate and up-to-date records of all contacts and actions relating to cases of alleged neglect and abuse. The records may need to be used to hold professionals/agencies to account for decisions and actions.

Following any safeguarding concern or incident an incident form should be completed and sent to the Safeguarding Lead (or the Chief Executive in their absence). These are stored on SharePoint in the Safeguarding folder.

A spreadsheet is compiled of all incidents each year to investigate trends and areas that may need further investigation. A report is compiled by the Safeguarding Lead and submitted to the Board for review once a year.

What you can do if you're not sure

If you think a child might be being abused but they have not said anything to you, there are things you can do which can help.

- **Talk to the child**

Most children who're being [abused](#) find it very difficult to talk about. Or might not have somebody in their life they trust. Keep talking to them to help build a positive, trusting relationship. They may come to you when they're ready to talk.

- **Keep a diary**

Keeping note of your concerns and how the child is behaving can help you spot [patterns of behaviour](#) and keep a track of what's been happening.

- **Speak to Safeguarding Lead within Cornwall Mind.**

- **Talk to NSPCC** - they are there to listen to your concerns and offer support and advice. You can contact them anonymously if it makes you feel more comfortable.

Why it's important to report child abuse and neglect.

There are lots of reasons why you might not want to report your concerns. You might be worried you are wrong. Or you do not want to get a friend or family member in trouble. You might be scared or worried you will not be believed.

There are lots of reasons why children and young people might keep abuse a secret.

- They might not understand what is happening to them is wrong or remember a time when the abuse wasn't happening. The abuse might be "normalised" by their abuser, or they may not have the words to describe it
- If a child does not have the language skills – because they're too young, have a disability or English isn't their first language – they need someone else to speak up for them
- Sometimes they might know what is happening to them is wrong but not tell someone. They might be afraid their abuser will find out, worried the abuse will get worse or may feel ashamed. They might feel there is no-one they can tell, or they won't be believed
- They may also have told someone, and no action was taken to protect them

But if you do not share your concerns, you risk a child being in danger and continuing being abused. By reporting it, you are taking the first step to helping keep them safe and getting the support they need. Every child and young person deserve to be safe.

All concerns should be raised immediately or within 1 working day wherever possible.

7. Concerns involving staff/volunteers.

Managers may need to take action in relation to the person or organisation alleged to have caused harm, including:

When the person is a member of staff or volunteer of Cornwall mind or another organisation:

- Ensure that any staff (or volunteers) who have caused harm are not in contact with the child and others who may be at risk
- Do not discuss the concern with the person alleged to have caused harm, unless the immediate welfare of the child at risk or other people makes this unavoidable
- If the person alleged to have caused harm is a member of staff and an immediate decision is required to suspend them, the person has a right to know in broad terms what allegations or concerns have been made about them. The names of the child or children raising concerns should not be given in order to prevent possible intimidation of that child or children. Fuller details can be given to the person alleged to have caused harm later in the organisations internal processes or criminal investigations
- Care however should be undertaken not to jeopardise any resulting police investigation
- If the allegation involves agency staff, the agency should also be notified of the safeguarding concern having been raised

If another adult in the same service: (e.g. a user of services)

- Action taken may include removing them from contact with the child at risk. In this situation arrangements must be put in place to ensure that the needs of the adult alleged to have caused harm are also met
- Liaise with the police regarding actions that may impact upon a subsequent criminal investigation, such as where the protective arrangements may forewarn the person alleged to have caused harm of an impending criminal investigation and potentially prejudice the collection of evidence

Safeguarding Children & Young People Flowchart Procedure

Dealing with Concerns, Suspicions or Disclosure

