**HF Mencap**

**Child Protection Policy and Procedure   
(Safeguarding)**

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# 1. Introduction

This document covers safeguarding individuals under the age of 18, which is known as Child Protection. Please refer to HF Mencap Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure (Safeguarding) when dealing with anyone over 18.

# 2. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy and supporting procedure is to ensure that:

* We always promote the well-being and welfare of the children and young people who use our services or come into contact with us and help prevent them from coming to harm, abuse or neglect.
* We will always listen to a child or young person who discloses abuse; we will take this seriously and take appropriate action. We will also take appropriate action if we observe or have concerns about abuse or neglect.
* We will comply with our legal, regulatory, contractual and internal requirements.

It applies to children and young people under 18 and all staff and volunteers (including Trustees) who work within HF Mencap.

# 3. HF Mencap’s Approach to Safeguarding:

The needs and welfare of any child or young person supported by HF Mencap are paramount. As per the **Children’s Act of 1989**, we must consider their wishes and feelings as much as possible when making decisions about their support.

It is vital to remember that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are more likely to be victims of abuse, and additional barriers to safeguarding can exist, such as:

* Not recognising that their experiences are harmful,
* Being more prone to peer group isolation,
* Communication barriers**,**
* Feeling embarrassed or threatened and not feeling able or knowing how to tell someone they are being abused,
* Children or young people who are part of the LGBTQ+ community can be targeted by their peers. For some individuals, a child or young person may be perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ+ and can be just as vulnerable as those who identify as LGBTQ+.

We must reduce any additional barriers and provide a safe space for them to speak or share concerns.

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.

**HF Mencap shows this commitment by:**

* Making sure our approach is child-centred,
* Ensuring a child, young person, carer, parent, or staff member feels safe to express concerns without fear,
* Having a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment**,**
* Responding quickly and effectively if concerns are raised or identified within or outside an HF Mencap setting,
* Reporting any concerns to statutory agencies as soon as possible – *Note: Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent us from sharing information to keep vulnerable individuals safe,*
* Making sure staff and trustees have appropriate training and recruitment checks for their roles,
* Providing staff with training, regular supervision, team meetings, having easy access to policy and procedures,
* Training our volunteers on HF Mencap’s safeguarding policy and procedures,
* Ensuring individuals know and understand how to whistle blow,
* Having a complaints procedure in place that is available to everyone,
* Encouraging colleagues to feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, or, on reflection, believe they have behaved in a way that falls below our expected behaviour.

At HF Mencap, the named individuals with designated responsibility for safeguarding children and young people can be found on the HF Mencap Safeguarding Poster, along with their contact details.

*The Safeguarding Poster is displayed in the HF Mencap activity centre/office, BrightHR, and on the HF Mencap website.*

Our designated children and young people safeguarding leads are available to support with any concerns and will liaise closely with other services, such as the children’s social care team.

The designated safeguarding leads ensure the right processes to manage safeguarding activity by reviewing serious incidents, organisational performance, and effectiveness. We will learn from safeguarding incidents and produce relevant reports to ensure we meet our duty of care for children and young people.

# 4. Definitions

**Abuse:** Anything which individuals, institutions, or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children and young people or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood. Children and young people may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting by those known or, more rarely, by others unknown. They may be abused by an adult, adults or by another child or children.

**Child protection:** the procedures and activities that are undertaken to prevent or in response to suspected child abuse and neglect.

**Parental responsibility** refers to the rights of the parents concerning their child. Significant adults may share this responsibility with one or both parents. Parents retain parental responsibility even if Social Services are looking after their child. We are obligated to share information about the child with all parents/carers who hold parental responsibility. Parental responsibility can only be determined by the court.

**Consent:** having the freedom and capacity to choose.

Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another. It can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time the activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity.

**Sexual harassment:** the unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. This can include sexual comments and physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone and displaying pictures of a sexual nature. We should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

**County lines:** a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK. Children, young people and vulnerable adults can be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

# 5. Types of Child Abuse

**Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a child or young person’s basic physical and psychological needs. The four main types of neglect are:

* Physical neglect: not meeting a child or young person’s basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter; not supervising a child or young person adequately or providing their safety.
* Educational neglect: not ensuring a child or young person receives an education.
* Emotional neglect: not meeting a child or young person’s needs for nurture and stimulation.
* Medical needs: not providing appropriate health care (including dental care), refusing care or ignoring medical recommendations.

**Physical abuse:** deliberately hurting a child or young person and causing bodily harm. It includes injuries such as bruises, broken bones and cuts and can be done through hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or suffocating a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person, which has a severe and persistent negative effect on their emotional development. It is also known as psychological abuse and may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, not giving the child opportunities to express their views or deliberately silencing them.

**Child sexual abuse:** A child or young person is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact (e.g. rape, assault by penetration, masturbation, kissing, rubbing or touching outside of clothing) or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline (e.g. flashing at a child, making or viewing or distributing child abuse images).

**Child on-child abuse:** Children and young people can abuse their peers. This can take on many forms, including bullying and cyberbullying, sexual violence, and sexual harassment, sexting. It should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, we should make an immediate risk and needs assessment, which covers the following:

* The victims, especially their protection and support.
* The alleged perpetrator,
* Any other children and, if appropriate, other adults and staff.

Young people should understand that the law is there to protect them rather than criminalise them.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** – a type of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. CSE can take place in person or online, or it can be done using a combination of both.

**Child criminal exploitation (CCE)**: a child or young person is manipulated, coerced, or deceived into committing crimes. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power in exchange for something the child or young person needs or wants and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating the abuse and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

Examples of CCE include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), being forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or threatening other young people.

**Child trafficking and modern slavery**: recruiting, moving, receiving, and harbouring children for exploitation (e.g. CSE, criminal activity, forced marriage, domestic servitude). Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism- [**Statutory guidance Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims)

**Harmful sexual behaviour:** developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which children and young people display. It is also known as sexualised behaviour. It can occur online and/or face-to-face.

**Grooming:** a process by which a person prepares a child or young person, significant adults and the environment for the abuse of a child.

**Honour-based abuse:** this encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. It includes female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

**Female genital mutilation**: the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It’s also known as female circumcision or cutting. Incidents of FGM must be reported to the police. Information on when and how to report can be found in the [**Mandatory Reporting of female genital mutilation procedural**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)**.**

**Domestic abuse:** an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, psychological, physical, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse by a partner, ex-partner, or family member. Anyone can see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and it can take place inside or outside of the home.

**Bullying:** individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. It can happen anywhere —at home, school or using digital technologies (cyberbullying).

**Online abuse:** any abuse that happens on the internet, facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices.

**Cybercrime is a criminal activity that targets or uses a computer, computer network, or networked device. Children or young people with a particular skill or interest in this area may inadvertently or deliberately engage in** cyber-dependent crime.

If we have concerns, we should consider referring to the [Cyber Choices Programme, led by the National Crime Agency.](https://www.met.police.uk/cyberchoices)

**Radicalization**: radicalization is defined in the Prevent Strategy as “the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism”.

**Community safety incidents:** if these occur in the vicinity of a college or service, they can raise concerns amongst children and young people, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children and young people in conversation. It is essential that children and young people are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe.

# 6. Indicators of Abuse

Children and young people who have been or are being abused may not always feel able to tell anyone what is happening to them. Sometimes, children and young people do not even realise that what is happening to them is abuse. Therefore, observations regarding specific behavioural patterns may indicate abuse.

We should not automatically assume abuse as there may be another explanation, but any changes in a child or young person’s behaviour must always be explored.

**Indicators and signs may 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 that cover their body.
* Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless.

**Possible signs of FGM may include:**

* + Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
  + Spending longer in the bathroom/toilet.
  + Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.
  + Acting differently after an absence from the service.
  + Reluctance to go to the doctors to have routine medical examinations.
  + Reluctance to get undressed after having a toilet accident.

**Possible signs of child sexual exploitation may include:**

* Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour.
* Being secretive.
* Being frightened of some people, places or situations.
* Having money or things they cannot or will not explain.
* Alcohol or drug misuse.
* Sexually transmitted infections.
* Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.
* Pregnancy.

**Possible signs of radicalisation include:**

* Having increasingly extreme views regarding another section of society or government policy.
* Becoming increasingly intolerant of more moderate views.
* Expressing a desire/intent to take part in or support extremist activity.
* Downloading, viewing or sharing extremist propaganda from the internet.
* Becoming withdrawn and focused on one ideology.
* Changes to their appearance, their health may suffer (including mental health), and they may become isolated from family, friends, peers or social groups.

For additional indicators of any of the abuse and neglect categories, please [visit NSPCC – types of abuse.](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/)

It is important to remember that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

In addition, we should all be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If we have a mental health concern about a child or young person that is also a safeguarding concern, we should speak with a designated safeguarding lead immediately.

[**The Think Family Approach**](https://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2008-0058/DEP2008-0058.pdf) to safeguarding: **Think Family** means securing better outcomes for adults, children and families (particularly those experiencing multiple and complex problems) by coordinating the support and delivery of services from all organisations.

Neither adults nor children exist in isolation, and **Think Family** aims to promote the importance of a whole-family approach.

Therefore, where safeguarding concerns lie within a family, we must consider the safety of any children (and any vulnerable adults) who may be at risk and make a referral to children’s services as appropriate.

# 7. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

**7.1 External**

**Local Safeguarding Children Partnership**

The LSCP brings together local agencies that work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people up to the age of 18.

**Contact and assessment service**

All councils have a legal duty to investigate if any child is suspected to be at risk of significant harm. If substantial concerns are raised, they will be forwarded to the contact and assessment service to assess the problems.

Although all concerns are taken seriously, it may be that the concerns are unfounded and that no further action is necessary.

Suppose some intervention or further support is needed. In that case, the family will be referred to the family support and child protection service, which works with the borough's most vulnerable children and families to help protect them from neglect and abuse.

These families often need a lot of support. In some cases, a child protection case conference may be necessary to ensure that all the agencies involved with a family share information and develop a plan to protect the child.  
  
**7.2 Internal**  
HF Mencap has an internal framework to promote a culture of protection and manage any safeguarding concerns that arise, reporting externally where appropriate.

HF Mencap has both **Service Leads** and **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).**  
The Service Leads are those who directly oversee service provision. Currently, they are the MyLife Supervisors and the Youth Coordinator.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are members of the Senior Management Team. They are currently the MyLife Service Manager, Senior Manager, and HR and Business Development Manager.

All those fulfilling the roles above complete the following training on an annual basis:   
**Designated Safeguarding Lead (Adults) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (Children)** training produced by vitalskills.com   
  
Work schedules plan for a DSL to always be available when the organisation is active. If one of the DSLs has an unplanned absence, they will inform the CEO.

The CEO will then inform staff of the correct person to contact in their absence.

The CEO is the final internal point of escalation in dealing with a safeguarding concern (or HF Mencap’s Chair of Trustees if the matter relates directly to the CEO).

**7.2.1 The Service Leads are responsible for:**

* Supporting the implementation of this Policy and Procedure through, for example, team meetings and supervision.
* Offering consultation and support to those with a safeguarding concern.
* Ensuring an internal safeguarding report is completed when a concern arises. (Appendix 2)  
  Inform a DSL of any safeguarding concern immediately and provide them with the written report.
* The DSL will confirm if contact with the relevant protection agency is required or provide further advice.

**7.2.2 The DSLs are responsible for:**

* Offering consultation and support to staff, volunteers or trustees with safeguarding concerns.
* Liaising with other organisations on individual cases of suspected or identified abuse as soon as possible.
* Acting as a key contact for HF Mencap.
* Coordinate action within HF Mencap on protection or safeguarding issues.
* Liaising with staff and volunteers on a need-to-know basis so that the child’s right to privacy is protected.
* Ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of this Policy and Procedure.
* Raising awareness about Adults at Risk through arranging training for staff and volunteers.
* Keeping the CEO informed of any reports or concerns to allow monitoring.

**7.2.3 The CEO is responsible for:**

* Supporting other DSLs in undertaking their role.
* Monitoring cases, ensuring that actions are undertaken promptly.
* Managing safeguarding reviews.
* Being available to investigate any safeguarding concerns around other DSLs.
* Ensuring that Trustees are appropriately trained.
* Escalating any major safeguarding issues to the Chair of the Trustee Board.

**7.2.4 The responsibility of individual staff, volunteers or Trustees:**

* Everybody involved with HF Mencap has a responsibility when it comes to the prevention of abuse and the reporting of incidents of abuse.
* Everybody has a duty of care to report any incidents, suspicions, or concerns of abuse. Someone does not have to be known to the local authority for alleged abuse to be reported.
* Clear evidence of abuse may not be present, so raising concerns about possible abuse is significant.
* No one who is involved with HF Mencap should ever prevent or persuade another person not to raise concerns, suspicions or present evidence.
* There may be occasions when people feel it is appropriate to raise their concerns confidentially. An example would be when there are concerns about a senior manager and they are concerned about reprisals from an alleged perpetrator. In this case, HF Mencap’s Whistleblowing procedure should be used.
* People should never use the Child Protection Policy and Procedure
* (Safeguarding) or the Whistleblowing procedure for malicious purposes.
* Failure to report possible abuse or preventing someone from reporting possible abuse amounts to gross misconduct. Subject to internal review findings, staff could be dismissed for this, and volunteers could no longer volunteer for HF Mencap.

# 8. Supporting Procedure for responding to potential abuse or neglect (Appendix 1 – Flowchart)

If we witness or see signs/suspicions of abuse or abuse disclosed to us, we must safeguard the individual.

This means making sure they are safe and, as far as possible, protected from further abuse.

**Immediate risk of harm**

If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm or abuse, and a criminal offence is taking place, you must:

* **Contact the police on 999 without delay.**
* **Inform a DSL**

The National Police Chief's Council's guidance provides further information on when calling the police is appropriate.

**Complete an Internal safeguarding report (appendix 2).**

Throughout the whole process, we must keep the child or young person's circumstances

under review and re-refer if appropriate.

It is good practice to inform the child or young person's parents/carers that we have identified a possible safeguarding concern unless this will put the child or young person at more risk. The CEO will complete this process.

**The organisation will notify the appropriate regulator if required (Charity Commission and**  **Disclosure and Barring Service).**

The CEO leads this process.

**There is NO immediate risk of harm.**

If you're worried about a child or young person but they are not in immediate danger, you must still share your concerns as soon as possible:

* **Report your concerns**

If staff have any concerns about any actual or potential harm to a child or young at risk, they must, in the first instance, contact the Service Lead on duty immediately to discuss the matter.

**Next steps**

The Service Lead will contact a DSL who will advise on the appropriate course of action; if they are not available, staff should contact the CEO.

A safeguarding referral should be made under the child or young person’s local child protection service (in the area where the child or young person is living) on the same day where harm or risk of damage has been identified (no later than 24 hours).

**Concerns over another staff member**

* If a staff member discloses concerns about another member of staff, it is essential that this is referred immediately to a DSL.
* If the concern is about a DSL, then it should be escalated to the CEO.
* If a concern relates to the CEO, the Chair of Trustees is to be contacted.

**If deemed appropriate, contact the police via 111**

The National Police Chief's Council's guidance provides further information on when calling the police is appropriate.

**Complete an internal safeguarding report (appendix 2)**

It is good practice to inform the child or young person's parents/carers that we have identified a possible safeguarding concern unless this will put the child or young person at more risk. The CEO will complete this process.

Throughout the process, we must review the child or young person's circumstances and re-refer if appropriate.

**Notify the appropriate regulator, if required (Charity Commission and DBS).**

The CEO leads this process.

# 9. Contact information

The names of the relevant internal and external safeguarding contacts are held in the **SAFEGUARDING POSTER.**

The poster is on BrightHR, the HF Mencap Website, and in the primary Activity Centre and office areas.

If a member of staff feels HF Mencap is not appropriately dealing with a reported concern, they should contact the local authority's designated officer for this purpose.

The following [link](https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council) will direct you to the contact numbers of the local children's social care service.

We must follow the local authorities and multi-disciplinary child protection procedures.

* [Hammersmith and Fulham](https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/local-safeguarding-children-partnership/training-and-resources/lscp-thresholds-need-guide#:~:text=In%20summary%3A,needs%20on%200208%20753%206600.)
* [Ealing](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201023/children_and_families_social_care/169/child_protection_and_safeguarding)
* [Hounslow](https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/20075/child_protection)
* [Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea](https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/children-and-family-services)

*If concerns arise outside of office hours, referrals must be made to the local authority of-hours service.*

# 10. Record keeping

All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing as soon as possible after the event. This includes any low-level concerns about a colleague.

The written record must be completed by the team member who reported the allegation(s), witnessed the event, or had suspicions**. It cannot be delegated to someone else.**

The following information must be included in all written records:

• Time(s).

• Date(s).

• Location(s).

• Witnesses.

• Signature and date.

• Noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.

• Be clear on what is factual and what is opinion —**avoid interpretations or**

**assumptions.**

In England, Scotland, and Wales, records should be kept until the child is 25 (seven years after they reach the school-leaving age) (Information and Records Management Society (IRMS), 2019).

# 11. Early Help

Also known as early intervention, it is when support is given to a family when a problem first emerges before the situation escalates. HF Mencap employees must recognise when a child or young person may benefit from an early help assessment from their Local Authority. Signs that a child or young person may benefit from early help include:

* Poor attendance at school / after-school clubs
* Poor physical or dental health
* Having trouble at home, e.g. domestic abuse, parental substance abuse or parental mental health problems.

# 12. Investigation of an Allegation

*We need to investigate any allegations of abuse.*   
How and when we can do this will depend on whether the local child protection service and/or the Police want to carry out their own investigation.

They may ask us not to do our own investigation until they have concluded theirs, or the child protection team may ask us to investigate on their behalf.

A criminal investigation by the Police will usually take priority over all other lines of enquiry. This means that before you proceed with any disciplinary investigation for an incident that has been reported to the Police, you must check with them that this will not compromise their investigation in any way.

The child or young person should only be interviewed in their educational setting in exceptional circumstances. They must be accompanied by an appropriate adult at the interview, and every effort should be made to inform the parent/carer.

If this is not possible, a colleague can be nominated as the appropriate person.

If the local child protection service decides that no action is needed, the CEO will decide whether we should complete our own internal investigation.

Our internal investigation needs to be done as quickly and efficiently as possible to avoid

Any unnecessary stress for the person, their family, the staff team and others.

# 13. Managing Allegations Made Against a Child

If a child or young person discloses that they have behaved abusively towards someone else, **we must never promise to keep what they have said a secret.**

We must explain to them that we need to talk to other people who can help keep them and the other children and young people safe.

It is important to remember that a child or young person who displays challenging behaviour may be doing so because they have been, or are, experiencing abuse or neglecting themselves.

# 14. Telling Parents/Carers That Their Child May Have Abused Someone Else

The child or young person's parent or carer should be told what has happened, as long as it does not increase the risk to the child or young person.

We can ask the child or young person how they would like their parent/carer to be told - for example, we could:

•Talk to the parent/carer first without the child there, then summarise everything with the child or young person present.

•Help the child or young person to tell their parent/carer in their own words with us present for support.

When we respond to an allegation of abuse made against a child or young person, we must consider the needs of everyone involved. It is essential to make sure parents/carers are offered appropriate support.

# 15. Managing Allegations Made Against Staff, Volunteers (Including Trustees), Agency Staff and Contractors

Concerns relating to child abuse or neglect (actual or suspected) must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

The response to the allegation will depend on the situation; however, it may include:

* Informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead of low-level concerns.
* Sharing low-level concerns about agency staff or contractors with their employer.
* The Police are investigating a possible criminal offence.
* The local child protection service makes enquiries and assesses whether a child or young person is in need of support.
* Following our internal disciplinary procedures with individuals concerned.

We need to remember that at the point we are made aware of the allegation, we do not know if the person has committed abuse.   
  
**We need to support the team members throughout the process, as this can be a very stressful experience for them.** Unless the children's social care services or the Police object, the individual should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and explained the likely course of action.

It may be necessary to suspend a team member or change their place of work while an

an investigation is completed.

If an investigation finds a team member unsuitable for working with children and young people, we will refer the individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

# 16. Safer Recruitment

We have a robust recruitment process in place that ensures that the people who come to work for us, in any capacity, are suitable for working with children and young people.

This includes making sure that the people who are employed by us or who volunteer for us have an enhanced DBS and two written references.

Staff are not permitted to work alone until these documents have been provided to Human Resources.

# 17. Our Prevent duty

Preventing is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism and radicalization. It is one of the elements of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, published in 2011.

Radicalization can occur to a person from any section of society and is not particular to any racial, ethnic or social group.

We all must understand what it means and what we can do to protect people from radicalization and extremism.

At HF Mencap, we will:

* Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in everything we do.
* Promote fundamental [British values.](https://www.bucks.ac.uk/study/apprenticeships/safeguarding-student-welfare/examples-british-values)
* Not tolerate bullying.
* Provide support, advice and guidance to the people we support and staff who may be at risk of radicalisation.
* Ensure that staff and the people we support are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing radicalisation and extremism.

# 18. Channel Referrals

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremism or terrorism. It forms a vital part of the Prevent strategy. Members of a Channel panel include the police, social workers, local authorities, and community groups.

We must record and report any concerns regarding potential radicalization or involvement with violent extremism using our Internal Safeguarding Report. In addition, the relevant DSL will make a Channel referral to the local authority. HF Mencap will work in collaboration with the Channel panel on any referrals we make.

In all cases, we will liaise with the police for additional advice and guidance.

# 19. Recognising And Responding to Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours, which are often combined, including verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying can happen anywhere online that allows digital communication, such as:

* Social networks.
* Text messages and messaging apps.
* Email and private messaging.
* Online chats.
* Comments on live streaming sites.
* Voice chat in games.

Children and young people can also be groomed online. Perpetrators may use online platforms to build a trusting relationship with the child or young person in order to abuse them. This abuse may happen online, or the perpetrator may arrange to meet the child or young person in person with the intention of harming them.

Possible signs of bullying may include:

* Being reluctant to go to school.
* Being distressed or anxious.
* Losing confidence and becoming withdrawn.
* Having problems eating and sleeping.
* Having unexplained injuries.
* Changes in their appearance.
* Changes in performance and behaviour at school/college/HF Mencap

When responding to incidents or allegations of bullying, it is essential we:

* Listen to all the children and young people involved to establish what has happened.
* Record details of the incident and any actions taken.
* Inform a designated safeguarding lead.
* Inform parents and carers (unless doing so would put a child or young person at further risk of harm).
* Provide support to the child/children being bullied, children who witnessed the
* bullying and the child/children who have been accused of bullying.
* Ask the child/children who have been bullied what they would like to happen next.
* Consider appropriate sanctions for children or young people who carry out
* bullying.
* Continue to monitor the situation even if the situation has been resolved.

If bullying content has been circulated online, we must take action to contain it. If the content is illegal, we should contact the police, who will provide us with appropriate advice and guidance.

# 20. Online Safety

We should always emphasize the importance of a safe online environment for children and young people using our services. We should encourage parents and carers to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites.

# 21. Lost Or Missing Children/Young People

Given the vulnerability and specific needs of the young people we support, any child or young person who goes missing should be reported to the police by calling 999. This includes child abduction, which is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child or young person.

We must have the following information to hand:

* The circumstances around being unable to locate the child or young person.
* The age, basic details and description (including last known clothing).
* The possible reasons for the child or young person going missing and their likely intentions.
* Medical needs or need for urgent or ongoing medical treatment.
* Patterns of criminality or offending.
* Danger posed by the child or young person to themselves and others.
* General vulnerability of the child or young person.
* The influence of peer groups/family

# 

# 22. References and further reading:

Children Act 1989 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989>   
NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/right-safe-disabled-children-abuse-report.pdf>

[Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims)

[Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

[Types of Child Abuse & How to Prevent Them | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/)  
0808 800 5000   
Refuge runs a free National Domestic Abuse Helpline at 0808 2000 247

**Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Flowchart**

A screenshot of a page

Description automatically generated

# Appendix 2 - Internal safeguarding report

Please complete this as fully as possible if you have safeguarding concerns about a child, young person, or adult.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Section 1 – Details of the person you have concerns for | | | | | |
| Name of person | |  | | | |
| Address | |  | | | |
| Date of Birth or Age | |  | | | |
| Contact number | |  | | | |
| Emergency contact if known | |  | | | |
| Consent to share information with emergency contact? | |  | | | |
| Section 2 – Details of the person completing this form | | | | | |
| Name | |  | | | |
| Contact phone number(s) | |  | | | |
| Email address | |  | | | |
| Line manager or alternative  contact | |  | | | |
| Name of organisation | |  | | | |
| Your role in the organisation | |  | | | |
| Section 3 – Details of concern | | | | | |
| Please explain why you are concerned. Please give details about what you have seen/been told/heard that makes you believe the person is at risk of harm or is being abused or neglected (include dates/times/evidence from records/photos, etc.). | | | | | |
| Date/ Time | What happened | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| Section 5 – Details of the person thought to be causing harm (if known) | | | | | |
| Name | |  | | | |
| Address | |  | | | |
| Date of Birth or Age | |  | | | |
| Relationship/connection to individual | |  | | | |
| Role in organisation | |  | | | |
| Do they have contact with other adults or children at risk in another capacity, for example, in their work/family/as a volunteer? | |  | | | |
| Section 6 - Have you discussed your concerns with the person you have concerns for?  What are their views?  What have they stated about what they want to happen and what outcomes they want? | | | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| Section 6A – Reasons for not discussing with the person you have concerns for | | | | | |
| Discussion would put the person or others at risk. Please explain: | | | | |  |
| The person appears to lack mental capacity. Please explain: | | | | |  |
| A person is unable to communicate their views. Please explain: | | | | |  |
| Section 7 – Risk to others | | | | | |
| Are any adults at risk (e.g. vulnerable adults within the family)  Yes/No/Not known – delete as appropriate  If yes, please fill in another form completing sections 1-6 | | | | | |
| Are any children at risk? (e.g. children or young people within the family)  Yes/No/Not known - delete as appropriate  If yes, please fill in a safeguarding children referral form for the appropriate borough. | | | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| Section 8 – What action have you taken, if any, to reduce the risks? | | | | | |
| Actions by: e.g. person causing harm suspended, session times changed. | | | | | |
| Section 9: Other agencies contacted | | | Who contacted/reference number/contact details/advice gained/action being taken | | |
| Police | | |  | | |
| Ambulance | | |  | | |
| Other – please state who and why: | | | | | |
| Section 10: Contact with others within the organisation | | | | | |
| Who else has been informed of this issue? – and what was the reason for information sharing | | | | | |
| Consultation with Designated Safeguarding Lead | | | | Dates and times | |
|  | | | |  | |
|  | | | |  | |
|  | | | |  | |
|  | | | | | |
| Signed by the person completing the form: | | | | | |
| Date: | | | | | |
| Completed Form copied to Designated Safeguarding Lead Date and time: | | | | | |