

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

September 2023

Our Strategic objectives relating to young people with high learning potential, their parents and carers, and their schools

- *Empowering Young People*
- *Empowering Parents*
- *Creating a Community*
- *Advocating for Needs and Rights*
- *Strengthening our sustainability and effectiveness*

Potential Plus UK is the operating name of the National Association for Gifted Children

www.potentialplusuk.org Charity registration 31318 Company limited by guarantee 905037

The Open University, Vaughan Harley Building, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA

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Key Potential Plus UK contacts

Potential Plus UK

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Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (Senior DSL)

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1. Purpose of the Safeguarding Policy

This policy provides aims to provide protection for the children and young people supported by Potential Plus UK, providing staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures to follow in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all permanent and temporary staff, casual workers, trustees, volunteers, and anyone working with or volunteering on behalf of Potential Plus UK.

Where there is a child protection concern involving a member of staff or a volunteer, this **MUST** be referred using appropriate procedures as laid out in this policy.

Potential Plus UK is committed to delivering good outcomes for children and young people by providing a safe environment that promotes their welfare and helps them to develop educationally, socially and emotionally, so that they can make the most of their life chances.

In line with the Education Act 2002, Potential Plus UK will ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by:

- providing a safe environment that helps them to develop to their full potential
- safeguarding their welfare, particularly those children and young people who are most disadvantaged
- ensuring a safeguarding culture throughout the organisation
- ensuring safe recruitment practices for both staff and volunteers
- ensuring staff and volunteers are skilled in recognising and referring welfare or concerns and know who to contact for support
- raising awareness amongst staff and volunteers of child protection and safeguarding issues, including local issues, and ensuring staff and volunteers are equipped to deal with concerns in line with best practice
- promoting partnership working with parents and other professionals.

2. Scope of the Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of young people and protect them from harm, and it is everyone's responsibility. For Potential Plus UK this means the trustees, staff (employees and casual workers), volunteers, and anyone working with or volunteering on behalf of Potential Plus UK.

Safeguarding covers a broad agenda and aims to achieve the following:

- protect children from maltreatment
- prevent impairment of children's health or development
- ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- take swift action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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2.1 The role of Potential Plus UK

Potential Plus UK recognises that children and young people may face many barriers in their learning and development that may affect their prospects in later life. Potential Plus UK will safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare by focusing on preventative actions.

Positive safeguarding outcomes for children and young people are that they are **safe** and Potential Plus UK will take reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people are safe and feel safe.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm; it includes issues such as:

- Health and safety
- Referring for early help
- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Internet safety
- Racist abuse, harassment and discrimination
- Use of physical intervention
- Meeting the needs of children and young people with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Drug and substance misuse
- Intimate care (e.g. taking children to the toilet)
- Site security
- Female genital mutilation
- Sexual exploitation
- Managing allegations against staff
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse

2.2 Potential Plus UK's services

The trustees, staff, casual workers and volunteers at Potential Plus UK believe that the services and support provided by the organisation to parents/carers, professionals and the children themselves can aid the safeguarding of the young people. They aim to ensure that services, such as assessments, and events help young people to develop their:

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- Self-esteem
- Self-identity
- Sense of belonging
- Resilience
- Skills, such as teamwork and communication
- Independence

2.3 Supporting children and young people with additional needs

Potential Plus UK will support, as appropriate, all children and young people who have been assessed as having extra needs, such as those with a special education need or disability.

2.4 Use of cameras and photographic images

Videos and photographs of children and young people are often used by Potential Plus UK to raise awareness and promote its services and support. Whenever the organisation takes photographs and videos it will always nominate and make known to families who the 'official' photographer is, ensure this individual is a staff member, casual worker, trustee or volunteer with a valid DBS certificate and always secure the written consent of a child's parent/carer before taking an image of a child. If the 'official' photographer is using a personal device to record images this individual must inform the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL in advance and receive written permission. A member of staff will oversee the removal of images from the device once they are uploaded to the charity's secure area. Potential Plus UK will also ensure any name tags are blurred and that images do not promote abuse or exploitation i.e. the inappropriateness of images of children in night wear or swim wear.

2.5 Working with parents and carers

Potential Plus UK recognises the importance of working in positive partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of children and young people.

Potential Plus UK will:

- make parents/carers aware of the charity's role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, including its duty to refer children and young people on if there is a concern about the child's welfare. This duty of care is communicated with parents and carers by making all of its policies available on its website and on request
- provide opportunities for parents and carers to discuss their concerns, including those around safeguarding, with staff during telephone advisory appointments and at other times as appropriate
- ensure a robust complaints system is in place to deal with issues raised by parents, carers and young people
- provide advice and signpost parents and carers to other services and resources where children and young people need extra or specialist support
- inform parents and carers when a referral will be made. However, the safety and welfare of the child always takes priority. If contacting parents might lead to a situation where the child is in danger of harm, referrals will be made without contacting the parents.

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2.6 Inter-agency working

Potential Plus UK recognises its duty under the Children Act 2004 to work in partnership with other professionals and agencies within the children's workforce to deliver integrated services that focus on prevention.

To achieve this, Potential Plus UK is legally required to share information with agencies in order to ensure children and young people receive appropriate services. This information could relate to trustees, staff, casual workers, volunteers or others working with the charity. There may also be occasions when the sharing of information relates to the family itself or others connected to the family.

Potential Plus UK will liaise with Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – (01908) 253169/70 for safeguarding advice wherever there are any concerns or issues relating to safeguarding practice or individual child protection matters.

3. Child Protection

3.1 The role of Potential Plus UK

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and deals with specific concerns about harm to individual children and young people. There are clear statutory procedures to deal with child protection concerns and it is essential that any settings we work in and organisations we work with are familiar with these and able to implement them.

Potential Plus UK will refer to and use resources on Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/>

Potential Plus UK will carry out the following:

- Identify any child protection concerns (where a child may be suffering or at risk of significant harm) and refer that child on via the Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – (01908) 253169/70
- Ensure that Potential Plus UK has a senior member of staff who is designated to take on lead responsibility for child protection issues
- Ensure staff, trustees, casual workers and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and receive adequate training to enable them to carry these out

3.2 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads

The Chief Executive is appointed to the role of Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead to take responsibility for child protection issues, with another designated senior member of staff deputising in her absence (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead).

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Their role is to:

- record and refer cases appropriately to relevant agencies
- provide advice and guidance for staff and volunteers on child protection issues
- take the lead in developing, monitoring and reviewing Potential Plus UK's child protection policy and procedures
- oversee child protection procedures within Potential Plus UK, including management of records and provision of information to other agencies
- link with and report to the nominated trustee for child protection on the board of Potential Plus UK
- provide a link between Potential Plus UK and other agencies, particularly Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/> as Potential Plus UK's head office is located in Milton Keynes
- provide a link between Potential Plus UK and other agencies, particularly any Local Safeguarding Children Board in a geographical area that a child may come from
- ensure staff and volunteers are aware of Potential Plus UK's policies and that they are kept informed and involved
- attend Designated Lead safeguarding training every two years.

3.3 Child protection procedures

The following procedures set out what actions Potential Plus UK will take where there are child protection concerns regarding children and young people.

3.3.1 Recognition

- All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to identify those children who are suffering from abuse or neglect and to ensure that any concerns about the welfare of a child/children are reported to the Senior DSL and/or Deputy DSL.
- Staff and volunteers should refer to the appendix for a full definition of significant harm and the specific indicators that *may* suggest a child may be at risk of suffering significant harm.
- Any concerns held by staff or volunteers should be discussed in the first instance with the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL and advice sought on what action should be taken.

3.3.2 Dealing with disclosures

If a child discloses to a member of staff or a volunteer that they are being abused or are at risk of abuse, the member of staff, casual worker, trustee or volunteer must:

- Listen to what is said without displaying shock or disbelief and take seriously what the child is saying.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child but not make promises that it may not be possible to keep, or promise confidentiality, as a referral may have to be made via Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – (01908) 253169/70

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- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they were right to tell someone.
- Not ask direct questions but allow the child to tell their story.
- Not pass judgement or criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what will happen next and who has to be told.
- Make a formal record and pass this on to the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL.

3.3.2 Referral

A decision on whether or not to refer a child via Milton Keynes MASH should be made by the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL following a discussion with the member of staff or volunteer who has raised concern and the trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding.

3.3.3 Attendance at child protection conferences and core groups

The DSL will liaise with Milton Keynes MASH or that of another Local Authority to ensure that all relevant information held by Potential Plus UK is provided during any child protection investigation.

The DSL will ensure that Potential Plus UK is represented at child protection conferences and core group meetings:

- Where possible, a member of staff or volunteer who knows the child best, such as a regular activity organiser, will be nominated to attend
- Failing that, the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL will attend
- If no-one from Potential Plus UK can attend, the DSLs will ensure that a report is made available to the conference or meeting

3.4 Monitoring

Where a child is the subject of a Child Protection Plan and Potential Plus UK is asked to monitor their participation and welfare, for example at events or branch activities, as part of this plan:

- Monitoring will be carried out by the relevant staff member or volunteer branch committee officer in conjunction with the DSL
- All information will be recorded and shared at each conference and core group meeting
- Potential Plus UK will open a secure file for the child and the recorded information will be kept on this confidential file and copies made available to all conferences and core group meetings.

3.4.1 Records

- Child protection records relating to the children and young people are highly confidential and will be kept in a designated welfare file. These records will be securely held within Potential

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Plus UK. Electronic records must be protected/access restricted to the DSLs and trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding.

- The DSL is responsible for ensuring that records are accurate, up to date and that any recording is of a high standard.
- Any incidents, disclosures or signs of neglect or abuse should be fully recorded with dates, times and locations. Records should also include a note of any action taken.
- The DSL is responsible for keeping central records of child protection and welfare concerns which should be recorded, and all records should be signed and dated.
- The DSL should be vigilant for patterns emerging and any repeated incidents.

Potential Plus UK will follow the MK Together recommendation that child protection records will be kept until the child leaves education or for a period of at least 10 years from the date of any incident/last incident if that is longer. Files can be scanned and saved electronically. Records should then be disposed of securely as confidential waste.

3.4.2 Confidentiality and information sharing

- All information obtained by Potential Plus UK staff, casual workers, trustees or volunteers about a child and their family is confidential and can only be shared with other professionals and agencies with the family's consent or when there are concerns about the child's safety.
- If the child is under 12, consent to share information about them must be obtained from their parents or carers. Young people aged 12 to 15 may give their own consent to information sharing if they have sufficient understanding of the issues. Young people aged 16 and over are able to give their own consent.
- Where a child is at risk of suffering significant harm, organisations have a legal duty to share this information with MASH and make appropriate referrals.
- Where appropriate, parental consent to making a child protection referral should be sought but if withheld, the referral must still be made, and parents made aware of this.
- Parental consent to a referral need not be sought if seeking consent is likely to cause further harm to the child, or if the child is a flight risk. Before taking this step, organisations should consider the proportionality of disclosure against non-disclosure: is the duty of confidentiality overridden by the need to safeguard the child? Safeguarding ALWAYS overrides confidentiality: the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Only relevant information should be disclosed, and only to those professionals who need to know. Staff and volunteers should consider the purpose of the disclosure and remind recipients that the information is confidential and only to be used for the stated purpose.
- In the event that a child makes a disclosure of neglect or abuse, staff and volunteers must not guarantee them confidentiality, but must explain why they have to pass the information on, to whom and what will happen next. Parents should also be made aware of Potential Plus UK's duty to share information.
- Staff, casual workers, trustees and volunteers should discuss any concerns or difficulties around confidentiality or information sharing with the DS seek advice from their local MASH.

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3.5 Safe environment

3.5.1 Safe recruitment

Potential Plus UK recognises that safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children and will ensure that staff and volunteers working for and with Potential Plus UK are suitable to do so and do not pose any kind of risk.

- We will therefore carry out extensive enquiries on applicants for all positions, including voluntary and support roles. No staff member, casual worker coming into contact with children, branch committee officer or trustee will be allowed to take up posts until all relevant checks and enquiries have been satisfactorily completed. This includes the receipt of at least 2 references and investigation of any gaps in employment history.
- All new members of staff and casual workers coming into contact with children will be recruited by Potential Plus UK by a panel that includes at least one member who has completed safer recruitment training and whose training was completed successfully within the last 5 years. Refresher training is an ongoing requirement of safe recruitment.
- We ensure that all employees, casual workers coming into contact with children, trustees and volunteers in the branches who have regular or unsupervised contact with children (e.g. the branch committee officers) have been subject to an enhanced Children's Barred List DBS check within the last 3 years.
- On an ongoing 3 yearly basis we confirm the status of all staff, casual workers coming into contact with children, trustees and volunteers in the branches who have regular or unsupervised contact with children and young people (e.g. the branch committee officers) via the enhanced DBS check; we encourage all staff and volunteers to register for the update service to enable this.
- We also ensure that all activity providers at our events and in the branches, who have regular or unsupervised contact with children and young people have been subject to an enhanced Children's Barred List DBS check within the last 3 years. Where possible and relevant we make use of the DBS update service to check this. If the individual does not hold an enhanced DBS check, then for one-off activity providers at our events and in the branches we ensure that an individual is accompanied by a staff member, casual worker, trustee or volunteer with an enhanced Children's Barred List DBS check
- Although the Chief Executive will have day-to-day responsibility for the recruitment of staff and casual workers, the nominated trustee for safer recruitment will maintain an overview of recruitment systems in order to scrutinise practice and ensure all necessary checks are carried out.
- The recruitment process will include at least one safeguarding question.
- The Chief Executive will ensure that a single central record of all staff, relevant casual workers, trustees and relevant branch committee officers that includes details of all checks carried out and the outcome of these checks is maintained for Potential Plus UK.

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Where activity leaders or professional advisers working for Potential Plus UK are sourced by a third party provider e.g. an activity organisation, the Chief Executive (or their nominated representative) must obtain written confirmation from the organisation that the same safer recruitment checks which are required for Potential Plus UK's own staff and volunteers, have been completed for these persons. In relation to DBS Disclosures the written confirmation from the organisation must confirm that relevant DBS Disclosures have been requested for an individual, whether or not the Disclosure has been received, and if received, whether it included any disclosure information. Where there is disclosed information, Potential Plus UK must see a copy of the DBS Disclosure from the organisation and make a note of the reference number and date before the individual carries out their work for Potential Plus UK.

3.5.2 Current practice

We maintain a single central record of all staff, relevant casual workers, trustees and volunteers who come into regular contact with children and young people (e.g. branch committee officers) which must include the following information:

- Identity checks against a photo ID completed
- If the individual already holds a valid DBS certificate a check is made to establish that the person is not barred from regulated activity relating to children (the enhanced DBS check currently includes this Children's Barred List)
- If the individual does not hold a valid DBS certificate, an enhanced Children's Barred List criminal record certificate is obtained in respect of the person
- Checks to establish that the person meets the requirements with respect to any essential qualifications
- The date on which each such check was completed, or the certificate obtained
- Further checks made if a person has lived outside the United Kingdom i.e. a Certificate of Good Conduct.

In addition, for staff:

- A check is made to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

When recruiting staff from overseas, we would:

- check, copy, validate and keep on file the applicant's identity and immigration status i.e. the right to work in the UK from their passport
- make enquiries in the country of origin, as far as possible
- make extensive enquiries of referees, including previous and recent employers.

3.6 Volunteers

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The Chief Executive will ensure that unpaid volunteers are recruited using safer recruitment practices and that they:

- are subject to a DBS check if unsupervised or in a position of trust (e.g. branch committee officer or trustee)
- undergo a recruitment process, such as reference checks and interviews that are appropriate to the duties assigned to them
- are competent to carry out the duties assigned to them
- are only assigned duties that are suitable to their qualifications and experience
- are provided with appropriate access to support from Potential Plus UK head office
- are fully inducted in relation to all relevant Potential Plus UK policies and procedures.

There is no requirement to carry out DBS checks in relation to parents and carers who only accompany their own children to activities or who only help at specific one-off events e.g. the BIG Family Weekend and are not left unsupervised with children.

Volunteers in contact with children at events and elsewhere must be DBS checked unless supervised by a member of Potential Plus UK staff, casual worker, trustee or another volunteer or activity leader who is appropriately DBS checked.

3.7 Staff

3.7.1 Induction and training

The Chief Executive will ensure that all staff are fully inducted, are made aware of Potential Plus UK's Safeguarding Policy and procedures and that staff are fully aware of their role in implementing these.

The Chief Executive will ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training on an annual basis in line with MK Together guidance on basic single agency safeguarding training specification. Principal elements of specific training should include the following:

- Identification of the signs and symptoms of abuse and risk factors
- Relevant legislation and guidance, and national and locally agreed procedures
- Potential Plus UK's own procedures
- Managing disclosures
- Information sharing and confidentiality
- Recording and keeping safe records – transfer of information
- Referral processes
- Thresholds for referral
- Working with parents
- Multi agency assessments
- Child protection conference processes
- Local safeguarding issues

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The DSLs will receive Designated Safeguarding Lead training every two years

3.7.2 Conduct and safe practice

Potential Plus UK expects staff and volunteers to set a good example to children and young people through their own conduct and behaviour and aims to protect them from the risk of allegations being made against them by ensuring they maintain high standards of professionalism and maintain appropriate boundaries.

All employees, casual workers and volunteers will receive an information sheet summarising their role and responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection with information of action to take if any concerns arise, the contact details and photos of the DSL and Deputy DSL and steps to maintain appropriate boundaries both face to face and online. A signature to confirm receipt will be required before working or volunteering.

3.7.3 Restrictive physical intervention

It is Potential Plus UK's policy to use restrictive physical intervention only in line with MK Together's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy.

<http://mkscb.procedures.org.uk/ykpyp/assessing-need-and-providing-help/additional-practice-guidance/restrictive-physical-intervention-policy>

3.8 Allegations against staff and volunteers

In the event that an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, Potential Plus UK will follow procedural guidance from MK Together <https://mkscb.procedures.org.uk/> These procedures relate to the management of allegations against people who work with children and young people in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, volunteers, casual, via an organisation or self-employed. This includes where the allegation concerned is against the Chief Executive (Senior DSL). An allegation against the Chief Executive should be made directly to the nominated trustee with responsibility for safeguarding and safe recruitment,

Statutory guidance requires that the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted when an allegation is made against anyone who is in the position of trusted adult with children or young people.

The LADO role also covers people who may have significant contact with children or young people, but are not employed directly to work with them, such as helpers at an event or caretakers in a setting.

The guidance should also be followed if it becomes known that an individual who is involved with children in any of the above capacities has, in their personal life, acted in a way that may have caused harm to a child. This is important as it may raise potential concerns about them in their professional capacity.

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The LADO **must** be contacted in all cases where it is suspected or alleged that a person who works with children 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, or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

The LADO is responsible for the following:

- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers and recommending a referral as appropriate.
- Convening and chairing a Strategy Meeting should the allegation require investigation by police and/or social care.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.

If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of any concerns or allegations in respect of the above, they must notify the LADO and their designated line support for safeguarding without delay and within one working day.

Contact for the Milton LADO is <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/children-s-social-care/the-role-of-the-lado-local-authority-designated-officer>

If the LADO is not available, refer to the Milton Keynes MASH <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/milton-keynes-multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash> on 01908 253169/3170.

The LADO will decide whether there is a need for a **Strategy Discussion** if there are sufficient grounds to believe a child has suffered or is likely to have suffered significant harm. The Strategy Discussion will decide whether enquiries should be made under the s47 Children Act 1989. The Strategy Discussion would usually be in the form of a meeting but may take place by telephone where appropriate (e.g. expediency).

There may be three strands of enquiry in the consideration of an allegation:

- A police investigation of any possible criminal offence.
- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action with respect to the individual.

It is important to note that, whilst the LADO (or MASH) will always provide advice, immediate **management action to ensure the protection of child(ren) from harm rests with the Chief Executive / Chair of Trustees** and does not have to wait until a Strategy Meeting. This may include temporarily removing the alleged perpetrator/named adult from their role, through suspension if necessary.

The LADO (or MASH if the LADO is unavailable) can be consulted to discuss any issues in relation to managing allegations against people who work with children and to assist if you are uncertain whether the criteria for LADO involvement are met.

(See contact details in Appendix 3 below).

3.9 Whistleblowing

At Potential Plus UK we recognise that there may be circumstances where staff, volunteers and young people feel unable to raise concerns about incidents of malpractice within the organisational environment as there is reasonable doubt that these would be dealt with adequately. All staff and volunteers have a legal duty to raise concerns where they feel individuals or organisations are failing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Where it is not possible to raise concerns within Potential Plus UK, staff and volunteers may discuss and report concerns via MK Together

(See key contacts in Appendix 3 below).

3.10 E-Safety

All safeguarding and child protection strategies in this document apply equally to online safety. The DSL will keep up-to-date with e-safety issues and provide advice and support to staff, volunteers and families accessing Potential Plus UK's services and events online.

Online workshops and discussions must be via invite only, using a waiting room to control access. If the online platform has a chat facility, the profanity block must be in use.

Facilitators and participants should minimise the risk of providing images or information which might identify the whereabouts of the young person, e.g. wearing a school uniform or being in a location which is easy to identify. It is the facilitator's and/or host's role to ensure the background is appropriate when using video and to identify and rectify inappropriate backgrounds of participants.

Permission to record must be sought in the same way as for face-to-face recordings and photography.

4. Monitoring and Reporting

To monitor and report compliance with this policy, Potential Plus UK will follow these steps:

- This policy is reviewed by the DSL and nominated safeguarding trustee annually and referred to the full board of trustees for agreement and adoption

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- All volunteers, Trustees and staff acting on behalf of Potential Plus UK will be issued with this policy and any accompanying short procedure summaries annually and required to sign a declaration that they have read the policy, sought clarification if required and feel confident they know the steps to take should a concern arise.
- The induction process for new staff, casual workers, trustees and volunteers will assess and deliver training needs in relation to this policy promptly.
- The Single Central Record will monitor the compliance with safe recruitment practices, DBS checks and Barred List checks.
- The DSL will monitor referrals and quality assure actions taken and reports written, keeping a record of all incidents coming to their attention and ensuring that appropriate action has been taken.
- This policy is readily available on the Potential Plus UK website and any other online sites that it has responsibility for.
- This policy is shared with all families taking up services, such as assessments, activities and events (face-to-face or online), and at branch activities and events (face-to-face or online)
- The DSL holds a confidential record of any safeguarding or child protection concerns or incidents
- Information on each concern or incident will be shared between the DLS and designated safeguarding volunteers as appropriate
- Information on each concern or incident will be shared with the nominated trustee with responsibility for safeguarding
- A report is made to the board of trustees on safeguarding at every board meeting (usually every 2 months)
- Lessons learnt are shared and reported to key stakeholders (e.g. DSLs and volunteers)
- Concerns are scrutinised by the board of trustees to identify any problems or weaknesses around this safeguarding policy and to make amendments to the policy and procedures as necessary

5. Training

As outlined elsewhere in this policy the following training is required:

- Child protection training every 2 years – DSL and deputy DSL
- Child protection and safeguarding training annually– all employees of Potential Plus UK, casual workers, trustees and volunteers coming into contact with children or children’s data
- Safer recruitment training every 5 years – at least one member of the recruitment panel, usually the Chief Executive and/or the Senior DSL and/or the Deputy DSL.

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It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure that appropriate training is carried out and within the above time frame. The Chief Executive maintains a record of all employee training.

6. Roles and Responsibilities.

Milton Keynes Children and Families Services

As an organisation with its head office in Milton Keynes, but with branches, events and casual workers around England, we develop policies and procedures in line with guidance from Milton Keynes Council and Families Services. It is Milton Keynes Council and Families Services that we would turn to:

- for support and queries that we might have about a child, regardless of where that child might be living or where we have come into contact with that child
- for guidance if dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers, regardless of whether that is in Milton Keynes or elsewhere
- to alert them to our concerns about a child who might live in a different part of the country and about whom we might need to deal with another council and/or families services.

At the same time, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) at the Local Authority relevant to the family would also be alerted as appropriate.

Board of Trustees

The board of trustees will ensure that:

- safeguarding policies and procedures are consistent with those of Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board – MK Together <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/> - and that these are regularly monitored, reviewed and updated where necessary
- there is a nominated Safeguarding Trustee and a Senior DSL who reports directly to the board of trustees on the implementation of safeguarding and child protection policies
- parents/carers and schools are made aware of Potential Plus UK's safeguarding policies and procedures
- we have appropriate procedures in place to ensure safe recruitment practices and to deal with allegations against staff or volunteers
- all staff and volunteers receive safeguarding information as part of their induction
- all staff and adults who work or volunteer with children must undertake appropriate safeguarding training, relevant to their position, and should be kept up to date by refreshing training annually
- action is taken where any weaknesses in child protection or safeguarding policy and practice are apparent within Potential Plus UK
- other adults or organisations working with Potential Plus UK and coming into contact with children and young people on our behalf have appropriate safeguarding, child protection policies and procedures in place to complement those of Potential Plus UK
- any person who interviews a candidate for a paid or volunteer post or, if there is a selection panel, at least one panel member has completed the safer recruitment training.

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Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will ensure that:

- staff, casual workers, trustees and volunteers are fully aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies and that these policies are fully implemented
- Sufficient time, resources and support is given to the Senior DSL and Deputy DSL to carry out their responsibilities
- staff are released to attend safeguarding conferences and professional meetings to discuss potential safeguarding issues concerning children and young people coming into contact with Potential Plus UK
- safe recruitment practice is followed in all cases whenever recruiting paid staff and casual workers or unpaid volunteer posts
- Potential Plus UK offers a safe environment for staff, casual workers, trustees, volunteers, parents and children and young people to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice
- appropriate action is taken, whenever an allegation is made against a member of staff, casual worker, trustee or a volunteer. Allegations should be referred to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within one working day of Potential Plus UK being made aware of the concern.

Further information is available here:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/children-s-social-care/the-role-of-the-lado-local-authority-designated-officer>

- contact is also made with the LADO at the Local Safeguarding Children Board at the relevant Local Authority, if the staff member or volunteer is not based in Milton Keynes.

Staff and Volunteers

Safeguarding is a responsibility for everyone coming into contact with young people. All Potential Plus UK staff and volunteers will ensure that:

- this safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures are read and understood, and that this is confirmed in writing
- appropriate action is taken whenever an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer
- appropriate action is taken if they have a concern about a child or young person

7. Related Standards, Policies and Processes

Relevant standards, policies or processes include:

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MK Together Partnership Handbook 2020/21 <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/MK-Partnerships-Handbook-2020-FINAL.pdf>

Department for Education Working Together to Safeguard Children
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

8. Revision History

List all changes made to the document including version number, date approved etc. using the below table.

Version:	Date Approved:	Approved by:	Owner:	Author:	Summary of Change:	Review Date:
20200922	22 Sept 2020	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Julie Taplin & Joy Morgan	Updates on use of cameras & photographic images; training requirements; safe recruitment; e-safety; application of the policy to online activities.	September 2021
20210928	28 Sept 2021	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Julie Taplin & Joy Morgan	Casual workers and trustees included at all points	September 2022
20210929	20 Sept 2022	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Julie Taplin & Joy Morgan	Deputy DSL Tracy Morsbach; new report form	September 2023
20230919	19 Sept 2023	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Julie Taplin & Joy Morgan	Deputy DSL Olivia Smith; removal of Greater Manchester branch; inclusion of company details	September 2024

Appendix 1: CHILD PROTECTION – DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Types of abuse and neglect

All Potential Plus UK employees, casual workers coming into contact with children, trustees and regular volunteers coming into contact with children should be aware 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.

Abuse: 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 by another child or children.

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

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

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

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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). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Possible indicators of abuse and neglect N.B this is not an exhaustive list

Signs and Symptoms

<p>Neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate or inappropriate clothing • Appears underweight and unwell and seems constantly hungry • Failure to thrive physically and appears tired and listless • Dirty or unhygienic appearance • Frequent unexplained absences from school/setting • Lack of parental supervision
<p>Physical abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns or fractures where the explanation given is inconsistent with the injury • Injuries in unexpected places or that are not typical of normal childhood injuries or accidents • High frequency of injuries • Parents seem unconcerned or fail to seek adequate medical treatment
<p>Sexual abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual knowledge or behaviour that is unusually explicit or inappropriate for the child’s age/stage of development • Sexual risk-taking behaviour including involvement in sexual exploitation/older boyfriend • Continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation • Physical symptoms such as injuries to genital or anal area or bruising, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy • Unwillingness to undress for sports
<p>Emotional abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental delay • Attachment difficulties with parents and others • Withdrawal and low self-esteem
<p>Indirect indicators of abuse and neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden changes in behaviour • Withdrawal and low self-esteem • Eating disorders • Aggressive behaviour towards others • Sudden unexplained absences from school/setting • Drug/alcohol misuse

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running away/going missing
Parental attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misusing drugs and/or alcohol • Physical/mental health or learning difficulties • Domestic violence • Avoiding contact with school/setting and other professionals

Appendix 2: SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION REPORT FORM

The form to complete for any safeguarding or child protection concern can be found here <https://potentialplusuk.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/Shared%20Documents/Policies/Safeguarding/Record%20of%20Safeguarding%20Concerns%20Master%20to%20Use.docx?d=w804004df79f64a319ccab0d57d81d4ba&csf=1&web=1&e=mu9TUD>

Appendix 3 – KEY LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTACTS

NAME	ORGANISATION	E-MAIL & TEL NO.
Jo Clifford	Milton Keynes Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	jo.clifford@milton-keynes.gov.uk 01908 254306 lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk 01908 254300
MASH	Milton Keynes Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub MASH	Monday to Thurs 9-5pm and Fri 9-4.30pm 01908 253169/70 Emergency Social Work Team (out of hours) 01908 265545 children@milton-keynes.gov.uk
CAIU (Child Abuse Investigation Unit)	Thames Valley Police	CAIU (Child Abuse Investigation Unit) 01908 276140

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Appendix 4 – IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS AT RISK OF RADICALISATION

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to help children understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of the terrorist ideology and learn how to challenge these ideas. The 2014 Government extremism task force identified risks around radicalisation within educational institutions and Prevent is actively employed at Potential Plus UK to protect children from harm and ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and British values.

Staff have a responsibility to:

- assess the risk of any child being drawn into terrorism and report any incidents or indication that a child may be at risk from radicalisation (including topics such as hate crime, racism, bullying, online safety and extreme political views)
- record and report any suspicions to the Chief Executive
- ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet at events and branch activities.

Introduction

Although Potential Plus UK is not a school and does not have a statutory duty placed on it by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent children from being drawn into extremism, safeguarding children from all risks of harm is an important part of the organisation's work and protecting them from extremism is one aspect of that.

Ethos

Potential Plus UK has a zero-tolerance approach to extremist behaviour for all members of its community. We rely on our strong values to steer our work and ensure the pastoral care of our children protects them from exposure to negative influences.

Potential Plus UK is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the children and young people it supports and works with. At Potential Plus UK all staff and volunteers are expected to uphold and promote the fundamental principles of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

At Potential Plus UK we ensure that through our vision, values, relationships and work we promote tolerance and respect. The Board of Trustees ensures that this ethos is reflected and implemented effectively through policy and practice and that there are policies in place to safeguard and promote the general welfare of the children with whom we work.

All members of the organisation's community have the right to learn and work in safety. We do not tolerate bullying of any kind and will challenge derogatory language and behaviour towards others.

Related Policies

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Potential Plus UK Policy: Safeguarding

- E-Safety and Internet Use Policy
- Equality Opportunities Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy

Definitions

Extremism is defined in the 2011 Prevent strategy as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

British Values are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Legal Framework / Statutory Duties

The duty to prevent children and young people being radicalised is set out in the following documents:

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Trustees

It is the role of the Board of Trustees to ensure that Potential Plus UK safeguards the children and young people it works with, including keeping them safe from harm with regards to radicalisation.

Chief Executive

It is the role of the Chief Executive is to ensure that staff and volunteer conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation and to ensure that all staff and volunteers understand the issues of radicalisation and that they have had access to appropriate training as required in order to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer any concerns.

The Senior DSL will receive safeguarding concerns about children who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation. They will make referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation and will liaise with partners including WBC and police. Any incidents will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

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Staff and Volunteers

It is the role of all staff and volunteers to access appropriate training in order to develop an understanding of the issues of radicalisation and to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation. All staff have a responsibility to know how to refer any concerns and to carry out an appropriate referral to the Senior DSL or Deputy DSL at head office or the Safeguarding Volunteer in the branches.

Internet Safety

The internet provides children and young people S access to a wide range of content, some of which is harmful. Extremists use the internet, including social media, to share their messages. We will include guidance in our E-Safety policy about what action to take if staff or volunteers have any concerns about this.

Staff Training

Staff and volunteers will be given access to appropriate training to help them understand the issues of radicalisation, so that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns.

Safer Recruitment

We ensure that the staff we appoint and the volunteers we engage are suitable to work with children and young people and that our recruitment procedures follow vetting and barring checks.

Signs of vulnerability

There are no known definitive indicators that a young person is vulnerable to radicalisation but there are number of signs that together increase the risk. All staff and volunteers will receive training on signs of vulnerability and how to spot them as well how to recognise signs of extremism.

Signs of vulnerability include:

- underachievement
- being in possession of extremist literature
- poverty
- social exclusion
- traumatic events
- global or national events
- religious conversion
- change in behaviour
- extremist influences
- conflict with family over lifestyle
- confused identify

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- victim or witness to race or hate crimes
- rejection by peers, family, social groups or faith

Recognising extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others.

Referral Process

Staff and volunteers must refer all concerns about children who show signs of vulnerability or radicalisation to the Chief Executive using the agreed methods for reporting safeguarding concerns. When there are significant concerns about a young person, the Chief Executive will make a referral to the appropriate body.

As Potential Plus UK is within the Thames Valley Police area, we would report incidents or indications of radicalisation to the Prevent Team (Rachel Mahon) at Thames Valley Police:

PreventReferrals@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Appendix 5 – FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM (also known as cutting) is a cultural practice which has been recognised as being harmful to the person who has undergone the practice. There is no religious justification for the procedure, although communities who practise it will often state that they do it for religious reasons.

The definition is quite clear and covers any deliberate injury of alteration of the genital organs for non-medical reasons.

The procedure has no health benefits and there is no medical reason for this procedure to be undertaken. It is not the same as male circumcision which is often undertaken for clear medical reasons or for religious reasons, as the act of female circumcision has implications in terms of life threatening complications both at the time of FGM and afterwards.

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The psychological trauma that girls go through during mutilation often stays with them for the rest of their lives. This may lead to post traumatic stress, feelings of incompleteness, confusion, betrayal and depression.

However, the types of FGM practised is different in each community. As people have migrated across the globe they have taken the practice with them but also adopted local practices so it has changed and continues to change over time. The practice also shows a deep rooted inequality between sexes and extreme discrimination. It is led and practised by the women within the society.

FGM violates a number of human rights principles, including the principles of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. It is considered as a form of violence against girls and women and a form of child abuse. It carries a strong message about the subordinate role of women and girls in society. FGM violates a person's rights to health, security and physical integrity; the right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; and the right to life when procedure results in death.

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

- It is illegal for it to happen within the UK
- It is illegal to take a British citizen abroad to have it happen
- It is illegal to assist in the process or to enable a girl to do it to herself

Indicators are difficult in situations that do not cover regular attendance or meetings (as with Potential Plus UK), but some indications that FGM has happened could include:

- A child may spend long periods of time in the toilets during the day with bladder or menstrual problems
- Emotional and psychological issues e.g. withdrawal, depression etc
- That a child may confide in a professional
- That a child may ask for help.

Similarly, if a member of staff or volunteer suspects that a child is about to be subjected to FGM or taken out of the country for this reason, the person should use the Safeguarding report form to outline their concerns. If the act is deemed to be imminent, the individual should follow the guidance as per for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Appendix 6: CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Five key indicators:

- Going missing
- Associating with older people to the exclusion of usual friends
- Not attending school
- Breaking away from family and friends
- Being in possession of new expensive items, e.g. mobile phones, laptops, clothing

MODELS OF EXPLOITATION:

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Boyfriend model

This is where the abuser develops a relationship with the young person. They will often be of a similar age. The young person believes they are entering a normal relationship. Usually the abuser will shower them with gifts moving onto alcohol and drugs before persuading the young person to 'do them a favour' as they owe money to an individual. The victim will be asked to pay this back using sex. Often there will be several victims who have no knowledge of each other.

Inappropriate relationship model

The abuser will have power over the victim. This might be age difference, money or the ability to access drugs or drink.

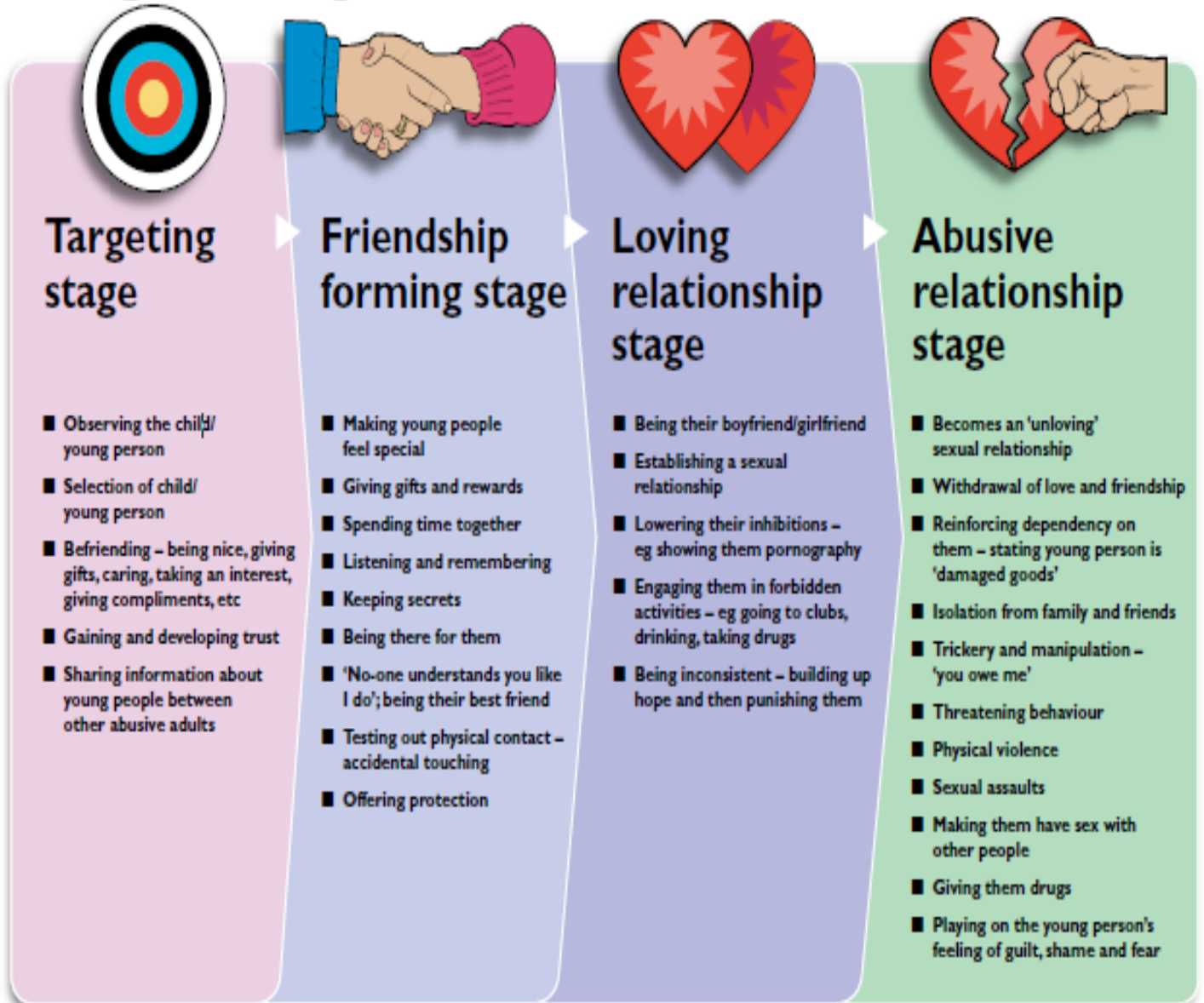
Organised model

This is organised/networked sexual exploitation or trafficking. Young people (often connected) are passed through networks, possibly over geographical distances, between towns and cities where they may be forced or coerced into sexual activity with multiple men. Often this occurs at 'sex parties', and young people who are involved may be used as agents to recruit others into the network. Some of this activity is described as serious organised crime and can involve the organised 'buying and selling' of young people by abusers.

Gang related

Gangs are groups of young people with a discernible structure, a recognised territory and distinctive beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours. Although the gang may offer inclusion, protection and success to some socially disadvantaged children and young people, it is primarily concerned with crime, not infrequently drug-related, and violence, often armed and occasionally lethal. While most gang affiliates are young men, young women may be involved, occasionally as 'soldiers', but more usually as partners of the young men or 'links' (someone with whom to have casual sex).

The grooming line



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