

# **NOTTINGHAM FOREST COMMUNITY TRUST**

**Safeguarding Children Policy Framework**

**CHLOE BINGHAM – SAFEGUARDING & RISK MANAGER**

## Introduction and Scope:

At Nottingham Forest Community Trust (NFCT), we are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all individuals participating in all our activities. The safety and well-being of all our participants is at the forefront of everything we do, and we aim to maintain an environment that promotes the welfare of all our participants.

We recognise that safeguarding is a responsibility shared by everyone involved in our activities, including volunteers, coaches, and participants. As such, we have developed a comprehensive safeguarding policy framework that sets out our commitment to protecting children from any form of abuse or harm.

The aim of the Policy is to provide information regarding how NFCT will:

**Safeguard** children who engage with programmes run by NFCT.

**Ensure** that all delivery staff, volunteers, and all others employed by NFCT who engage with children understand their obligations and responsibilities regarding Safeguarding.

**Deliver** training to all delivery staff, volunteers, and all others employed with relevant, effective, and up to date training on the current legislations regarding children, this will also include signs and indicators of all forms abuse.

**Provide** appropriate protection for children when they are accessing support or programme delivery by NFCT.

**Demonstrate** best practice at all times regarding Safeguarding children.

## Definition of a child:

The term "**child**" is generally defined as an individual under the age of 18. This definition aligns with the legal framework outlined in the **Children Act 1989 and 2004**, which defines a child as a person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This definition is used within the UK, including within policies and practices related to child protection and safeguarding. The age of 18 is the standard definition for a child in the context of safeguarding and child protection in the UK.

## Six Principles of Safeguarding children:

**Empowerment** with supporting individuals to make their own decisions and providing the necessary support for those who lack capacity to make independent decisions on a single occasion.

**Prevention** is the responsibility of all staff to take actions that prevent harm and empower individuals to protect themselves.

**Proportionality** where the response to safeguarding concerns should be proportionate to the level of risk and the individual's needs.

**Protection** and intervening as early as possible to prevent abuse or neglect and promoting the best interests of the child.

**Partnership** and collaborating with other agencies and professionals to provide effective and coordinated support.

**Accountability** and ensuring that all individuals and organisations are accountable for the quality of care and support they provide.



**Reporting and response process:**

NFCT encourages all staff, volunteers, and partners to be vigilant and report any concerns related to the abuse of a child promptly. Reporting should be directed to **Chloe Bingham** – Safeguarding & Risk Manager, who serves as the designated point of contact for safeguarding. In her absence, the Safeguarding Team, consisting of **Liam Searle, Laura Campbell and Leanne McDonagh** should be contacted. All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will be addressed promptly through established safeguarding procedures.

Should a concern of abuse be identified, NFCT has a clear and concise reporting and recording process to ensure all reports are managed in a timely manner which ensures that the child can have access to support at the earliest opportunity, should this be required. All employees are trained regarding the processes of reporting concerns and have access to the designated reporting forms, which are completed using MyConcern which are sent directly to **Chloe Bingham**. Upon receipt of the report any necessary referrals to external agencies are then completed.

All reports of abuse are then reported to the Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL) for the Board of Trustees for NFCT for transparency and their input on any additional support required. This is then reported to the wider Board of Trustees via a quarterly report.

**NFCT Safeguarding Team:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Email address</b>
<b>Chloe Bingham</b>	Safeguarding & Risk Manager	07534327002	<a href="mailto:chloe.bingham@nottinghamforest.co.uk">chloe.bingham@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>
<b>Liam Searle Laura Campbell Leanne McDonagh</b>	Head of Operations Deputy Facilities Manager Education Tutor	07301244822 07494001455	<a href="mailto:liam.searle@nottinghamforest.co.uk">liam.searle@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:laura.campbell@nottinghamforest.co.uk">laura.campbell@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:leanne.mcdonagh@nottinghamforest.co.uk">leanne.mcdonagh@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>

**NFFC Safeguarding Team:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Email address</b>
<b>Lou Gibson</b>	Head of Safeguarding	07729 094817	<a href="mailto:lou.gibson@nottinghamforest.co.uk">lou.gibson@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>
<b>Reece Stephenson</b>	Forest Women's Player Care & Safeguarding Officer	07468689409	<a href="mailto:reece.stephenson@nottinghamforest.co.uk">reece.stephenson@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>
<b>Zofia Campbell</b>	Academy Player Care & Safeguarding Officer	07468698416	<a href="mailto:zofia.campbell@nottinghamforest.co.uk">zofia.campbell@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>
<b>Alex Bailey</b>	Academy Player Care & Wellbeing Lead		<a href="mailto:alex.bailey@nottinghamforest.co.uk">alex.bailey@nottinghamforest.co.uk</a>

### **Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks:**

It's important to note that the eligibility for each type of DBS check is determined by the nature of the role and the level of contact an individual will have with vulnerable groups. Additionally, NFCT must ensure when requesting DBS checks that we have a legal basis for doing so which complies with our data protection regulations. This process is also in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines. Employees involved within recruitment at NFCT have attended Safer Recruitment training with the NSPCC. The categories of DBS checks carried out by NFCT are:

#### **Basic DBS Check:**

- Provides details of an individual's unspent convictions and conditional cautions.
- Available to anyone, including individuals, employers, and licensing bodies.
- Typically used for roles that do not involve regular contact with vulnerable groups.

#### **Standard DBS Check:**

- Includes details of both spent and unspent convictions, as well as cautions, reprimands, and final warnings.
- Suitable for roles that involve regular contact with vulnerable groups, such as healthcare professionals or those working in educational institutions.

#### **Enhanced DBS Check:**

- Provides the most comprehensive information, including spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, and final warnings.
- Also includes information from local police records and may reveal relevant information held by police that is considered relevant to the specific role.
- Required for positions that involve close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups, such as working with children or vulnerable adults.

### **Legislation and Key Terminology:**

NFCT adhere to key legislations within the UK, including the **Children Act 1989** and **2004**, the **Care Act 2014**, **Sexual Offences Act 2003**, and the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. These legislations guide our commitment to safeguarding children.

#### **Children Act 1989 and 2004:**

The Children Act 1989 and its successive amendment, Children Act 2004, are key pieces of legislation in the United Kingdom that provide the legal framework for the protection and welfare of children.

#### **Children Act 1989:**

- Legislated in England and Wales.
- This Act establishes the legal framework for the protection and welfare of children.
- It emphasises the utmost importance of the child's welfare and the principle that the court should consider the best interests of the child in any decision-making process.
- Key provisions include defining parental responsibility, the role of local authorities in protecting children, and the establishment of the court's authority in matters concerning children.

#### **Children Act 2004:**

- An amendment to the Children Act 1989.
- This Act was introduced in response from a Serious Care Review and aims to improve the way child protection is handled in the UK.
- Key features include the establishment of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), which bring together local agencies to work collaboratively on safeguarding issues, and the introduction of the Children's Commissioner for England to promote and protect the rights of children.

Both Acts, collectively, provide the legal foundation for child protection, welfare, and the promotion of children's best interests within the UK. They have been fundamental in shaping the policies and practices related to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children and young people.

### **Care Act 2014:**

The Care Act 2014 emphasises the duty to prevent, identify, and respond to abuse which aims to reform the way social care is provided and regulated. Legislated on April 1, 2015, the Care Act represents a comprehensive approach to the well-being of individuals requiring care and support. The key principles and provisions of the Care Act 2014 include:

- **Promoting Well-being**
- **Prevention of abuse or neglect**
- **A person-centred care approach to support**
- **Assessment and eligibility**
- **Care and support plans**
- **Integration with Health and Social Care**
- **Safeguarding Adults at Risk**
- **Recognition of carers**
- **Financial assessments**
- **Information and advice from Local authorities**
- **Smoother transition from Children – Adults services.**

### **Sexual Offences Act 2003:**

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 in the United Kingdom is a comprehensive piece of legislation that addresses various aspects of sexual offenses, including those involving children. In the context of safeguarding children, the act contains specific provisions to protect minors from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harm.

#### **Age of Consent (Section 9)**

- The act establishes the legal age of consent for sexual activities at 16 years.
- Any sexual activity with a person under this age is considered an offense.

#### **Child Sex Offenses (Sections 5-8)**

- Defines and criminalises specific sexual offenses involving children, such as engaging in sexual activity with a child, causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, and engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child.

#### **Grooming Offenses (Section 15)**

- Addresses the offense of meeting a child following sexual grooming, making it illegal to communicate with a child for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity.

#### **Abuse of Position of Trust (Section 16)**

- Criminalises sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust (e.g., teacher, care worker) and a person under 18 who is under their supervision or care.
- Recognises the potential for abuse due to the power imbalance in such relationships.

#### **Child Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation (Sections 57-59)**

- Outlines offenses related to trafficking children for sexual exploitation, covering activities such as recruitment, transportation, and harbouring of children for sexual purposes.

#### **Indecent Images of Children (Sections 1-7)**

- Criminalises the production, distribution, and possession of indecent images of children. Recognizes the harm caused by the creation and dissemination of such materials.

#### **Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (Sections 104-113)**

- Allows for the imposition of orders to manage and monitor individuals who pose a risk of sexual harm to children, restricting their activities and movements.

#### **Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (Sections 104-113)**

- Provides for orders to prevent sexual offenses, including those against children, by imposing restrictions on individuals' behaviour.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 is a crucial component of the legal framework aimed at safeguarding children in the UK. It emphasises the protection of minors from sexual exploitation, ensures accountability for offenders, and provides tools for managing and monitoring individuals who pose a risk to children. Professionals working with children, such as teachers, social workers, and emergency workers, play a vital role in enforcing these provisions to ensure the safety and well-being of young people.

### **The United Nations Convention on the Rights:**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provides a comprehensive framework for safeguarding children's rights in the United Kingdom. The CRC outlines various principles and provisions that are particularly relevant to safeguarding.

#### **Best Interests of the Child (Article 3)**

- The CRC emphasises that the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions and decisions that affect them.
- This principle underlines the importance of ensuring that any measures taken in the context of safeguarding prioritise the well-being and needs of the child.

#### **Right to Protection from Violence and Abuse (Article 19)**

- Children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, or abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment.
- This article reinforces the commitment to safeguarding children from harm.

#### **Right to be Heard (Article 12)**

- Children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
- In the context of safeguarding, this principle underscores the importance of listening to and respecting the perspectives of the child.

#### **Right to Education and Information (Articles 28 and 17)**

- Children have the right to education that promotes their social, cultural, and moral development.
- They have the right to access information that is important for their well-being.
- In the context of safeguarding, this includes providing education and information that empowers children to protect themselves.

#### **Right to Health (Article 25)**

- Children have the right to the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation.
- This provision is relevant to safeguarding by ensuring that children receive appropriate healthcare and support in cases of abuse or neglect affecting their health.

#### **Protection from Economic Exploitation and Harmful Work (Article 16)**

- Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with their education, or to be harmful to their health or development.
- This safeguards children from exploitation, including child labour.

The UK, as a signatory to the CRC, is obligated to ensure that its laws, policies, and practices align with the principles of the Convention to safeguard and promote the rights and well-being of children. The CRC provides a foundation for the development and implementation of safeguarding measures in the UK, emphasising a child-centred approach.

### Definition of Abuse:

Abuse is defined as any intentional or unintentional act, conduct, or behaviour that causes harm, distress, or significant risk of harm to a child. Abuse can take various forms and may occur in different settings, including domestic environments, care facilities, educational sites or community settings. It involves actions that violate a child's rights, dignity, well-being, or personal boundaries. These definitions of abuse are crucial for the identification, reporting, and prevention of abuse, and they form the basis for safeguarding measures and legal frameworks designed to protect children from harm. Various legislations, including the Care Act 2014 and Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including other specific regulations, provide the legal basis for addressing and preventing abuse across different settings and populations.

### Definition of Poor Practice:

In the context of Safeguarding at NFCT, poor practice refers to any behaviour, action, or decision that deviates from established safeguarding standards, policies, or guidelines. It represents a failure to uphold the principles of safeguarding, which are designed to protect and promote the well-being of adults at risk associated with all NFCT activities.

Examples of poor practice in the safeguarding context at NFCT may include:

**Failure to follow protocols** and not adhering to established safeguarding protocols and procedures when working with adults at risk.

**Inadequate risk assessment** resulting in not conducting sufficient risk assessments or neglecting to identify and address potential risks to the well-being of adults at risk.

**Lack of awareness and training** resulting in failure to stay informed about safeguarding principles or neglecting to undergo required training, resulting in an inability to recognise and respond to signs of abuse.

**Ignoring concerns or reports** and disregarding or not appropriately responding to concerns or reports related to the safety and well-being of adults at risk.

**Poor communication** which becomes ineffective and hinders the exchange of information regarding safeguarding matters among NFCT staff, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders.

**Insufficient supervision** meaning a lack of appropriate supervision, allowing situations that could pose risks to the safety of adults at risk to go unnoticed or unaddressed.

- **Addressing** poor practice within the context of safeguarding at NFCT is crucial to maintaining a safe and protective environment for adults at risk. It involves:
  - **Continuous** monitoring
  - **Regular** training,
  - **Commitment** to developing a culture of accountability and awareness among all individuals associated with NFCT.

### Contextual Safeguarding:

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding children and young people that recognises the broader social contexts and environments in which they live, beyond their immediate family or home setting. This approach acknowledges that risks to a child's well-being can arise from various sources, including their peer groups, schools, neighbourhoods, and online spaces. Contextual safeguarding aims to enhance child protection strategies by considering the impact of contextual factors on a child's safety.

In the UK, contextual safeguarding is particularly relevant in situations where children may be at risk of harm outside of their homes, and traditional child protection measures focused on the family environment may not adequately address these risks. Key elements of contextual safeguarding include:

**Expanding the Focus:**



- Beyond the family, contextual safeguarding expands the focus to include the various contexts in which children and young people live, recognising that risks can emerge from peer groups, schools, community spaces, and online platforms.

**Multi-Agency Collaboration:**

- Collaboration between different agencies and professionals, such as social services, education, law enforcement, and community organizations.
- This collaborative approach helps to address risks comprehensively.

**Prevention and Intervention:**

- The focus is not only on responding to incidents of abuse but also on preventing harm.
- Intervention strategies may involve working with communities and institutions to create safer environments for children.

**Understanding Social Dynamics:**

Understanding the social dynamics and power structures within different contexts that can contribute to risks for children.

This includes addressing issues such as peer pressure, bullying, and exploitation.

**Tailoring Interventions:**

- Interventions are tailored to the specific contextual risks identified.
- This may involve implementing measures within schools, local communities, or online spaces to reduce the potential for harm.

Contextual safeguarding is an evolving and innovative approach that aims to adapt child protection strategies to the complexities of modern society. It is being increasingly recognised and integrated into the practices of child welfare professionals and organisations in the UK to better protect children and young people from a range of risks beyond the home environment.

**Forms of Abuse - Definitions, Indicators, and Signs:**

Child abuse is broadly defined as any action or lack of action that results in harm or potential harm to a child's health, development, or well-being. Child abuse can take various forms, and these are generally categorised into four main types:

**Physical Abuse:**

**Definition:**

- Involves causing physical harm or injury to a child, such as hitting, punching, shaking, or other forms of physical violence.
- It can also include the inappropriate use of restraint.

**Signs / Indicators:**

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, fractures, or welts, especially if they appear in patterns or in areas not commonly injured accidentally.
- Frequent injuries or injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation provided.
- A child's fear of a particular person or a reluctance to go home.
- Unexplained or inconsistent delays in seeking medical attention for injuries.
- Aggressive or violent behaviour from the child, possibly as a learned response.

**Emotional Abuse:**

**Definition:**

- Encompasses behaviours that cause emotional harm, such as constant criticism, rejection, humiliation, or witnessing domestic violence.
- Emotional abuse can have lasting effects on a child's mental health and well-being.

**Signs / Indicators:**

- Withdrawn behaviour, depression, or a noticeable change in the child's demeanour.
- Low self-esteem, self-harming behaviours, or attempts at suicide.
- Extreme aggression or antisocial behaviour.
- Developmental delays or regression in behaviour.
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints or unexplained physical symptoms.

**Sexual Abuse:**



**Definition:**

- Involves forcing or enticing a child to engage in sexual activities or exposing a child to sexual content.
- This includes both physical acts and non-contact behaviours, such as grooming or showing explicit materials.

**Signs / Indicators:**

- Behavioural changes, including sudden withdrawal, aggression, or extreme compliance.
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviours for the child's age.
- Fear or reluctance to be alone with a specific person.
- Sexualised play or drawings that are not developmentally appropriate.
- Physical signs such as difficulty walking or sitting, pain, itching, or bleeding in the genital or anal area.

**Neglect:**

**Definition:**

- Occurs when a child's basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, medical care, or supervision are consistently not met, leading to the child's physical or emotional harm.
- Neglect can also include educational neglect.

**Signs / Indicators:**

- Poor personal hygiene, unwashed clothes, or consistently appearing undernourished.
- Frequent absences from school, lack of supervision, or consistently arriving at school hungry.
- Inappropriate clothing for the weather or unsuitable living conditions.
- Failure to thrive or significant developmental delays.
- Lack of access to medical care or untreated health issues.

The UK has a legal framework and safeguarding systems in place to address and prevent child abuse. **The Children Act 1989 and 2004**, along with other relevant legislation, set out the responsibilities of local authorities and agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Professionals working with children are required to be vigilant, report concerns, and work collaboratively to ensure the safety of children.

It's important to note that signs of abuse may vary, and professionals in various sectors, such as education, healthcare, and social services, are trained to recognise indicators of abuse and respond appropriately. Additionally, the emphasis is on early intervention and prevention to protect children from harm and provide support to families in need.

**Additional forms of child abuse:**

**Children Exposed to Domestic Abuse** is when a child has witnessed or is aware of domestic abuse within their homes. Exposure to such incidents can have detrimental effects on their well-being, causing emotional and psychological harm.

**Child on Child Abuse** involves abusive behaviours between children, where one child inflicts harm, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, on another child. This type of abuse can occur in various settings, such as schools or within local communities.

**Grooming** is a process where an individual builds a relationship and emotional connection with a child for the purpose of sexual exploitation, abuse, or trafficking. Groomers use manipulation and coercion to exploit the child.

**Child Criminal Exploitation**, the recruitment, coercion, or manipulation of children by criminal networks to engage in criminal activities such as drug trafficking, theft, or involvement in violent acts.

**Child Sexual Exploitation** involves manipulating or coercing a child into engaging in sexual activities for the benefit of others. This exploitation can include grooming, online abuse, or trafficking for sexual purposes.



**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for cultural or traditional reasons. FGM is a harmful practice that violates human rights and poses serious health risks.

**Forced Marriage** involves coercing or pressuring an individual, often through physical or emotional abuse, to enter a marriage against their will. Forced marriage is a violation of human rights.

**Radicalisation** is the process by which individuals, including children, are exposed to extreme ideologies or beliefs that may lead them to embrace radical views or engage in extremist activities. Counter-radicalisation efforts aim to prevent involvement in violent or extremist behaviour.

**Cyber Bullying** is shown as harassment, threats, or humiliation of individuals using digital communication tools such as social media. Cyberbullying can have severe psychological and emotional impacts on the victim.

**Bullying** is the repeated and intentional aggressive behaviour, whether physical, verbal, or social, directed towards an individual or group. Bullying can occur in various settings, including schools, and may have detrimental effects on the well-being of the victim.

