

## 1.0 York Mind Safeguarding Young People Policy Statement

York Mind is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. York Mind acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

### 1.1. Aims

- To protect from emotional, physical, sexual and financial abuse any young person with whom we come into contact or about whom we receive information;
- To protect our staff and volunteers from misunderstandings and false allegations of abuse.

### 1.2. In implementing this child protection policy York Mind will:

- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's *Child Protection Procedures* and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection;
- Ensure that the named person understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Social Work);
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people;

- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's *Complaints Procedure*;
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people

**1.3. To undertake the recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers as follows:**

- Requiring the names and addresses of two referees and to always obtain two written references before making a formal offer of work
- Enclosing a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification with requests for written references
- Keeping copies of all written references in the applicant's file
- Enhanced CRB disclosures and checks will be undertaken for any posts (employees and volunteers) that involve one-to-one work with clients.
- For all posts (paid & volunteer) requiring face-to-face work with vulnerable persons, applicants are asked to provide details of any previous work with vulnerable persons and of any prior investigations or allegations against him/her with regard to abuse of vulnerable persons, as part of the interview process.
- An induction is carried out with all new employees and volunteers, to include information about all York Mind's policies and procedures, with on-going training available if required.
- All employees and volunteers have a line manager and receive regular supervision and, where appropriate, (e.g. mentors, counsellors) external supervision is available.
- All employees and volunteers appointed have a probationary period of three months.

**1.4. When working with clients away from York Mind's premises:**

- If meeting a client away from York Mind's premises, this should, where possible, take place in a public place.
- Although not encouraged, if there is a need for work to be undertaken at a client's home, this should be done in accordance with York Mind's **lone working policy**.

**1.5. Children Have Said That They Need:**

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 page 10)

- vigilance: to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- stability: to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- support: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family • advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
- protection: to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee

## 2.0. Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light in a variety of ways. For example:

- a child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- a third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;
- a report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

<http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/recognition-of-abuse.htm>

## 3.0. A Named Person(s) for Child Protection

York Mind has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with. The named persons for Child Protection within York Mind are;

**Named Person for Child Protection:** Alyson Scott  
Work telephone number: 01904 643364  
Emergency Number: Mobile Number

**Deputy contact person:** Vicky Blakey-Archer  
Work telephone number: 01904 66758  
Emergency Number: Mobile Number

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.

- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

#### **4.0. Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child**

York Mind recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However York Mind believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will:

##### **Stage 1**

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a Child/young person makes a disclosure;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
- Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection. In the event of the named person or deputy being unavailable, seek advice from an appropriate member of the management team.
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure, the person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated.
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

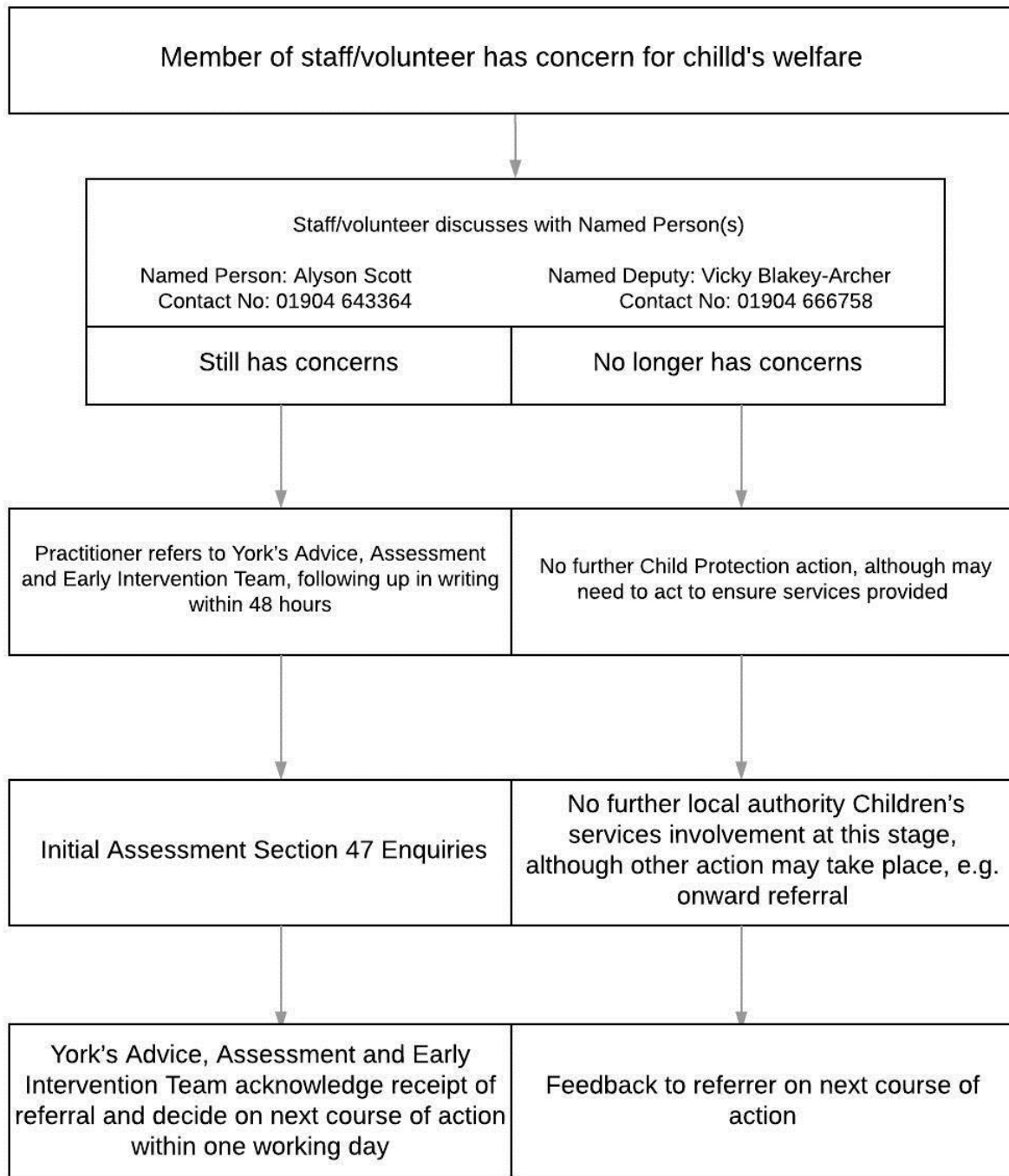
##### **Stage 2**

- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person/relevant practitioner will contact the police and/or York's Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention Team.

- To report concerns to York's Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention team:
  - By phone – one phone number for all concerns and enquiries: 01904 551900
  - By email – one email address: [childrensfrontdoor@york.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfrontdoor@york.gov.uk)
  - By letter – The Advice, Assessment & Early Intervention Team, 10-12 George Hudson Street, York, YO1 6ZE
  - Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays contact the emergency duty team tel: (0845) 0349417
  - If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999
- > The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through the NSPCC

24 hour National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

## Stages Flow Chart



## 5.0. Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

York Mind will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The named person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO - who is based at City of York Council) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation.
- If you wish to make an allegation or you have a concern about a professional working with children, young or vulnerable people, a referral should be sent to the Local Authority Designated Officer using the [LADO REFERRAL FORM](#) giving as much detail as possible. Completed LADO Referral Forms should be emailed using secure mail (e.g. gcsx, pnn, cjsm, nhs.net, etc.) to [lado@york.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:lado@york.gcsx.gov.uk) If you do not have secure email please contact 01904 551783 to make your referral or to seek advice.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, York Mind will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.



- More information about the LADO can be found by visiting:  
<http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/Downloads/Managing%20Allegations%20Against%20Staff%20Procedure%20and%20Practice%20Guidance%20Version%201%201%20a.pdf>

## 6.0. Recording and managing confidential information.

A pro-forma for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect is used in the form of the incident report form. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the form.

York Mind is committed to data protection principles, these can be viewed in the York Mind Data Protection Policy. All children and young people have a right to confidentiality unless the organisation considers that the child or young person could be at risk of abuse and/or harm. If there is considered to be a risk of abuse and/or harm to a child or young person then this must be acted upon as per the instructions within this policy.

### Further reading

This policy should be read alongside:

- York Mind's recruitment and selection policy
- York Mind Lone Working Policy
- York Mind Managing External Activities Policy
- York Mind Confidentiality Policy

## Appendix 1

Definitions of child abuse and neglect as cited on York Safeguarding Children Board  
<http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/recognition-of-abuse.htm>

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;

Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;

Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;

Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children;

Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is 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 a child is born, neglect may involve a parent 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);

Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Appendix 2

### Useful Contacts/Support Organisations

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

You need to ensure that you speak to the appropriate organisations who can listen to and record your concern, and then take appropriate action.

In York, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

To report concerns to Children's Front Door Team:

- By phone – one phone number for all concerns and enquiries: 01904 551900
- By email – one email address: [childrensfrontdoor@york.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfrontdoor@york.gov.uk)
- By Letter - The Children's Front Door, West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA
- Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays contact the emergency duty team tel: 01609 780780 If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999

### NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 - Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)