

Safeguarding Children Policy

Date:	June 2023
Review Date:	June 2025

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

Storyy Homes supports and works with children within an OFSTED registered service within the Wokingham Borough, Storyy Homes is part of the Storry Group where we also work with young people, and young adults as part of its activities. The safeguarding of children is of the greatest importance to us, and we take our responsibilities regarding safeguarding as a priority.

This policy sets out our approach to keeping children safe and outlines our processes to ensure we do this.

Definition of Safeguarding

Storyy Homes safeguarding policy and procedure ensure we are safeguarding our children and promoting their welfare which means the following:

- Protecting our children from abuse or maltreatment.
- Promoting children's health and development and thus ensuring there are no barriers to this.
- ensuring that our children live in a safe and homely environment receiving effective and nurturing care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes and opportunities.

Purpose

The overall purpose of this policy and procedure is to protect the welfare of all children using and receiving the services Storyy Homes provide. This includes responding to direct concerns of safeguarding raised by children or any other parties.

Our safeguarding policy and procedure aim to achieve the following three objectives:

- Create a culture where children are valued and their right to safety and security is paramount.
- Effective risk management to minimise any circumstances where children using Storyy Homes services may suffer harm or abuse.
- We will Work collaboratively with other organisations to ensure that all children are safeguarded and protected.

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Scope

These policies and procedures are applied across all teams within Storyy Homes to ensure that all staff, and other workers paid or otherwise are clear about their roles and responsibilities in responding to any safeguarding concerns regarding children using our services.

Everyone employed by Storyy Homes has a duty to safeguard and promote our children's welfare and safety, we also have a duty to recognise, respond and share concerns about potential abuse or harm in a transparent and timely fashion, ensuring our duty of candour is followed at all times.

Staff at Storyy Homes will be supported to make decisions on how to proceed in a way that is in the best interests and safety of the child, within the senior management team our Associate Director, Debbie Smith has many years of experience as Head of Safeguarding for local authorities and will support and advise any safeguarding concerns.

Storyy Group Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures must be followed alongside local inter-agency procedures, protocols & arrangements devised by our Local Safeguarding Team / Children Boards/Regional (Berkshire) Safeguarding Children Protocol.

Our Values

At Storyy Homes our children are our priority – no matter what trauma they have suffered or what their personal story is. Our purpose is to transform the lives of the most vulnerable children in society and to give them a home where they can flourish and be nurtured. Our vision is to offer our children a home they can be proud of and here they can grow and develop into adulthood in a holistic manner, whether that transition be into foster care or supported living we will always work tirelessly to promote the welfare of each individual child and to protect them from harm or abuse.

Our Safeguarding Children's policy and procedure reinforce our values, ethos and statutory responsibilities, within this policy and procedure we will underpin our compliance with UK legislation and other policy guidance and good practice, we will ensure that our staff are trained to understand their role and responsibilities to safeguard our children's welfare.

Our approach to safeguarding is underpinned by Storyy Homes core values:

- Respecting the unique worthiness of every Child as an individual.
- Encouraging our Children to fulfil their potential.
- Working with our children to attain their outcomes in a positive and holistic manner.
- Ensuring our homes meet the needs of our children and that they live in a homely and nurturing environment.

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Our Approach to Safeguarding

Storyy Homes are committed to the very highest standards towards Safeguarding, believing that Safeguarding is everyone's business and that there can be no exceptions to this.

Management Responsibilities

There is a Safeguarding lead (registered Manager) who is responsible to the Associate Director and the Board of Directors for safeguarding across Storyy Homes

The Safeguarding Lead will work in line with national legislation and guidance.

Storyy Home Directors are supported by the Associate Director and the organisations Safeguarding Lead and Operations Manager to promote safer working practices and oversight of allegations of serious incidents, case reviews, and appropriate training.

Corporate Audit and Inspection

Storyy Homes has in place a programme of internal audit and reviews that enables continuous improvement and learning, across all levels.

Procedures and Practice

Storyy Homes has clearly defined procedures for identifying and taking action where there are safeguarding concerns about actual or suspected incidents or abuse.

Safeguarding Leads

Our registered home has a registered manager and designated individuals who are competent to advise staff who can respond to safeguarding concerns immediately, thus ensuring that actions are always professional and based on what we know to be good practice.

Safe Recruitment and Safe Practice procedures

Storyy Homes has a rigorous safer recruitment policy and procedure in place to ensure that we appoint staff that are appropriately qualified with the skills and knowledge to effectively support our children.

Recruitment is undertaken in line with Storyy Homes's robust recruitment principles (safer recruitment), these include references spanning 5 years, disclosure and Enhanced Disclosure checks (DBS) for all positions working with children, DBS checks are re-checked periodically every three years.

All those who work for or on behalf of Storyy Homes are required to sign and abide by the organisation's Code of Conduct policy and procedure.

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Learning Development & Training

All staff are required to complete a mandatory e-learning safeguarding module prior to commencing employment. Within the first year, they are also required to attend a face-to-face Safeguarding training. During their induction a new staff member will also be required to undertake FGM and Prevent training.

Staff and managers working directly with our children are also required to attend bespoke safeguarding training courses in line with their specific roles and responsibilities and must attend updated programmes every three years and it is the responsibility of the registered manager to ensure mandatory training is completed and regularly updated.

Team and other meetings have a standing item of Safeguarding within the agenda and will be used to discuss any safeguarding issues, changes in regulation and best practice.

The Associate director and board of directors' agenda for their monthly meetings include safeguarding cases arising and within this trends and learning is discussed and shared with Operation Managers and Registered Managers.

This policy should be used in conjunction with our Behaviour Management Policy in relation to physical intervention (PRICE training and implementation) and safeguarding around this.

Supervision and One-to-one Meetings

There is an expectation that all Supervision and one-to-one meeting will have Safeguarding as a standard item. This ensures that Safeguarding as it relates to each role is discussed and embedded in all staff supervisions as a priority.

Managing Risk

Storry Group has an effective procedure for assessment and management of risks with regards to safeguarding children. The organisation has a procedure in place for reporting, recording and reviewing allegations and significant incidents.

These reports and the learning that informs good practice, the risk assessment and revision informs changes to management procedures.

Records

Well-kept records are essential in situations where it is suspected or believed that a child may be at risk of harm. The organisation has a clear policy on the management of records, confidentiality, and sharing of information, which adhere to the requirements of GDPR, and the Data Protection Act 2018 therefore staff are clear about what information can be shared with relevant people within and outside of the organisation on a need-to-know basis.

Links with other Policies

This safeguarding policy and procedure are supported by other policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy working practices.

These include but are not exhaustive to:

- Whistleblowing policy and procedure.
- Missing Children policy and procedure.
- Duty of Candour policy and procedure.
- Staff conduct policy and procedure.
- Disciplinary policy and procedure

The Directors and Associate Director of Storyy Homes have a duty of care, which includes taking necessary steps to safeguard and protect children. They will always act in children's best interests and ensure that they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them.

Directors and the Associate Director have the duty to manage risk and to protect Storyy Homes assets and reputation.

The Board of Directors and Associate Director are the accountable senior managers responsible for the management of serious safeguarding incidents.

The registered Manager is the safeguarding lead for Storyy Homes.

Line managers and staff are responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding and child protection concerns are addressed through respective line management structures in accordance with this Policy and Procedure.

The Safeguarding lead (registered manager) is responsible for providing advice and support to Directors and other senior managers on best practice in adhering to this Policy and Procedure, safer working practices and oversight of allegations, serious incidents, and significant case reviews.

Safeguarding Leads provide additional Safeguarding advice and support in their services and in ensuring that Policy and Procedures are adhered to and in ensuring that there is oversight of all Serious Safeguarding Incidents, Allegations and Serious Case Review or Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews in England) /Child Practice Reviews/Significant Case Reviews in their area of responsibility.

Storyy Homes registered children's homes

Are subject to Ofsted Registration must identify a registered manager in the home who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding children and liaison with local statutory Children's Services agencies. This will include liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and should also include communication with the Nominated Individual for OFSTED and it is the registered person who leads on Safeguarding.

Duty of Line Managers:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of this Policy & Procedure and any relevant codes and practices.
- Ensure local contact numbers are displayed in an accessible place for staff and volunteers to include, as relevant:
- Local Authority/Duty Teams (children and adults), Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) in England.
- Ensure all staff members are directed to access the local LSCB website in England and familiarise themselves with the local arrangements and procedures.

Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

The Code of Conduct policy and procedure supports staff and volunteers by making clear what is expected of them in terms of their conduct and behaviour, it will empower them to raise concerns without fear of recrimination and reduce the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations being made against them.

Responsibility: All Staff/Volunteers

- Ensure that you have read, fully understand, signed and agreed the content of the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- It is your responsibility to speak to your line manager if you are not clear or require further clarification.

Responsibility: Line Managers

Ensure all staff and volunteers have fully understood and accepted the terms of the safeguarding policies and procedures along with the staff conduct policies and procedures.

Professional Boundaries

Responsibility: All Staff

- Professional Boundaries must be an integral part of supervision. It is an opportunity to reflect on the quality of the professional relationship established with children and the nature of the work to ensure that any challenges in maintaining professional boundaries can be addressed in an appropriate manner.
- Do not visit service users outside of planned working hours; do not invite them to your home or to be part of your family or social network. Any exceptions to this must be discussed and agreed with your line managers.
- Ensure that if you live and work within your own community, you are clear about professional boundaries when any of your own family or children has friendships with children receiving care and support from Storyy Homes and this is discussed with your line manager.
- Inform your line manager if you have had a previous professional or personal relationship with a child or their family in order to agree how best to manage confidentiality and manage risk.
- Ensure that you operate in accordance with Storyy Homes Policies and Procedures.
- Bring any risk of potential breakdown of professional boundaries, however unintentional, to the attention of your line manager.
- Do not give out your personal mobile or home telephone numbers except in exceptional circumstances or emergencies and with the agreement of your line manager following a robust risk assessment.
- Never agree to be part of a child or their family's social networking sites or agree to be e-friends, unless this is an agreed part of the work and has been risk assessed by your line managers (exceptions apply when they are also your family members).
- Do not share personal blog addresses or other modes of personal communication, with children with whom you are working.
- Ensure you adjust privacy settings on your own personal social networking sites to prevent inappropriate content being shared with our children.
- You must not approach Children in any social setting if they do not instigate the contact especially where their behaviour indicates that they do not want to be recognised or indeed identified as a child using Storyy Homes services.

- You must not enter a partner relationship with members of our children's families. This constitutes a breach of professional boundaries and relevant codes of conduct. If you become aware that the above situation has occurred in relation to a colleague, you must bring this to the attention of your line manager.
- The organisation recognises that it is possible that the friends and family of staff members may become one of the children using Storyy Homes services, It is incumbent on staff members speak to their Line Manager about such situations to avoid any conflicts of interest, breaches of confidentiality or professional boundary issues.

Responsibility: Line Managers

Discuss any potential challenges or blurring of boundaries, which may arise for any staff member who lives and works within the same community. Agree how any such difficulties will be addressed should they arise.

- Ensure that if staff require regular telephone contact with children using Storyy Homes services. that this is done through appropriate use of Storyy Homes issued equipment.
- Agree clear boundaries about the nature of an individual's work and their relationship to children using Storyy Homes services.
- Use the supervision process to help staff reflect on their professional relationship with children and identify if there are any warning signs that professional boundaries may be in danger of being compromised.
- Work through with staff members sensitively, but honestly, the implications and issues where they or a member of their family have a child requiring Storyy Homes services.

Personal Relationships and contact with service users outside of work.

Action: Staff

- Declare any personal relationships if any children known to you begin to receive Storyy Homes services.

Responsibility: Line Managers

- It is usually inappropriate for Storyy Homes staff to deliver a service or become the key workers to a child of a friend or family member. If this situation occurs, arrangements should be made for another staff member to take over the case or key worker role. You must agree any exceptions to this with your line manager.

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Self -disclosure of personal experiences

Responsibility: Staff

- It is not usually acceptable for a member of staff to self-disclose their personal experiences to a child using Storyy Homes Services. There may be occasional exceptions to this where some self-disclosure is appropriate and professional judgement should be exercised. Boundaries relating to this must be discussed with your line manager.

Responsibility: Line Manager

- Ensure that you discuss issues of self-disclosure with staff, so they are clear of the professional boundaries around this in relation to their role.

Continuing a relationship after the service or piece of work is complete.

Responsibility: Staff

- It is not normally acceptable for a member of staff to have contact with a child in a personal capacity once the service or piece of work you have been involved in is complete. Any exceptions to this must be agreed with line management and identify why continued contact does not compromise professional boundaries in any way.

Gifts and Hospitality

Responsibility: Staff

- You must not use a relationship with a child or their family for personal gain. Gift-giving and accepting presents should only take place in line with Storyy Homes Policy and should be agreed with your line manager and should never exceed £5.00.

Concern about a breach/potential breach of professional boundaries

Responsibility: Staff

- Concerns about a breach or potential breach of professional boundaries by you or a colleague or external agency must be shared with your line manager. This should happen regardless of whether the breach of professional boundaries was due to initial intentions being well meaning. A breach of the Professional Boundaries may place a child at risk of harm, and you have a duty to act upon your concerns to safeguard children and families.
- Where you feel unable to report the concern/s to your line manager, you should refer them to your manager's manager.

- If you cannot raise issues through your line management or you consider the breach of professional boundaries not to have been dealt with appropriately, you should report under the organisations whistleblowing policy and procedure.

Responsibility: Line Manager

All potential breaches of professional boundaries must be taken seriously. The breach may not be a single event but a series of events and interactions, which together cause the individual to cross the boundary between what would be considered a professional relationship to a non-professional relationship.

Staff must be supported to address any concern about a breach of professional boundaries without the automatic risk of disciplinary proceedings. However, staff must be made aware of all possible consequences depending on the severity and nature of the breach including possible disciplinary action; dismissal; referral to Regulatory bodies, relevant Local Authorities, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or the police as appropriate. In these cases, an investigation will be conducted under Storyy Homes disciplinary policy and procedure.

All breaches of professional boundaries are to be recorded on individual staff files including any outcome of action taken. In cases where there is found to be 'no case to answer' the outcome should still be recorded.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

If a child discloses information to you about abuse or harm that they are experiencing (in person or via third party reporting), through the observation of signs/symptoms of abuse, neglect or unmet needs the following should take place:

Responsibility: Person receiving the information

- Always offer reassurance, listen to, and take seriously, what they are saying. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the child or family not to act if you are worried that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm.
- It is not your job to investigate or to verify what is being said or examine the child; this is the statutory responsibility of the local authority/child protection services and/or the Police.
- However, it is important to ascertain relevant information and it may be necessary to undertake some enquiries before making a referral, including full name, age, mobile number, email address and any involvement with Storyy Homes services and a brief outline of what happened to them.
- Explain the process to the child: that you will need to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why and possible actions.

- Consult with your line manager or other responsible manager, as soon as possible and certainly the same day, you must agree the course of action but do not delay if this would place a child at increased risk.
- You must record the incident in detail as soon as possible, or at least within 24 hours of being made aware (as little delay as possible).
- If the child is present and is at immediate risk of harm, take the appropriate course of action to secure the immediate safety of the child unless to do so would put you or others at risk.

This could include:

- Calming angry or upset children or adults.
- Contacting 999 emergency services, if necessary, on their behalf. (Police, Ambulance)
- Contacting local child protection/Duty Team/MASH/Children's Services immediately.
- Seek vital medical assistance if required.
- Contact your Safeguarding Lead Manager or Head Office during normal office hours and the out of hours duty outside of office hours.

If you receive a telephone call from a child please take as much detail as possible, including full name, age/date of birth, contact details, email address, mobile number, any involvement with Storyy Homes services and if they say they are being harmed a brief outline of what is happening to them. If the child is in immediate danger, advise them to call the Police; you must also contact the Police to check that the child has referred the concern to them. If the child is not in agreement with this/not able to do this, you have a duty to call the police and pass on any information you have.

Responsibility: Line Manager

If we are aware that the child is subject to a Care Order or an ongoing Child Protection Investigation, is named on the child protection register or has a child protection plan, any new incident must be referred to the lead professional/allocated social worker/local child protection services and information shared accordingly.

England and Wales

In England and Wales, if you are concerned that the child is, or may be at risk of, being trafficked, or a victim of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, you must adhere to local inter agency protocols and liaise with the local children's social care/ duty service or Police to discuss whether a referral to the is required.

If the child is not known to Storyy Homes services, you must make a clear assessment of whether the information received is deemed to be a child protection referral i.e., the child is at risk of significant harm. If you are unsure of the course of action you should take, you must seek guidance through your line management structure.

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If your assessment is that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral must be made to the local children's social care duty team/local child protection, and you must call the police.

If your assessment is that a referral is not needed, you must identify what course of action is to be taken to respond to the concerns identified and ensure that all decisions and the reasons for them are recorded on the child's Where there is some form of assessed need refer to relevant services, using agreed local protocols.

If there is a disagreement between the Storyy Homes responsible manager and responsible member of staff about the need to report concerns to child protection services, the Operations Manager and Associate Director must be consulted to make a final decision.

- Ensure all decisions and agreed actions are recorded on Storyy Homes recording form.
- Ensure you are aware of the local referring processes for Children in Need of Protection in your area.

Working with Children/Young People where there are existing safeguarding and protection concerns.

Responsibility: Line Manager

If it is known that a child/young person is subject to a Child Protection Plan, is on the Child Protection Register, or deemed to be in a high-risk situation (e.g., at risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking or missing); you must consider and record any risks/potential risks to the child and identify any actions required on the child's recording paperwork.

Recording must be undertaken in accordance with the Service's Local Recording Protocol.

Referring a Child Protection Concern

Responsibility: All Staff

In accordance with a child's need for protection it must always be the primary concern.

Decisions to inform the child and parent/carer about any referral will be informed by local inter-agency protocols; an assessment of any increased risk of harm to the child; and the possibility of prejudicing any subsequent police investigation. If in doubt about the decision and timing of informing a child and their family, seek advice from the line manager or local child protection services. In any event you must speak to your line manager as soon as possible and the same day.

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Following consideration of the above, if you assess there is a risk, tell the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and parent/carer, that the referral will be made.

Contact must be made with the appropriate child protection services or police following local inter-agency procedures.

Share with child protection services any other relevant information or known risks about the child and family within the context of their wider family and environment.

Agree with child protection services what the child and parents/carers will be told about the next steps, by whom and when and actions which need to be taken.

Referrals of suspected child abuse must always be confirmed by encrypted email or recorded delivery using local referral protocols to the MASH/Duty Team/local child protection services within 24 hours and give full information on whether the child is:

experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and as needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs).

There is also a duty for relevant partners of a local authority to report children at risk. If a partner has reasonable cause to suspect a child is at risk, it must inform the local authority of that fact.

When a child has been reported under Section 130 of the SSWBA 2014, the local authority shall make enquiries to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 i.e., practitioners will still need to use the Children Act 1989 section 47 in the same way as they do now when responding to safeguarding referrals.

Ensure you inform your line manager as soon as possible and certainly on the same day and record all actions and decisions, risk assessments, and contact in accordance with this policy and procedure.

If you become concerned that the situation has escalated, and it seems that the child or young person is at increased risk of significant harm you must immediately contact the police and local child protection services to seek guidance on what to do.

If you are not satisfied, that the child protection service's response adequately safeguards the child then you must inform your line manager, as soon as possible and certainly the same day, who can make representations on Storyy Homes behalf.

Escalation of Child Protection Concerns where there are professional disagreements.

Responsibility: Person Making Referral

If the decision of the child protection service does not agree with Storyy Homes's assessment of the level of concern, this must be recorded within the child's file and escalated to managers.

Discuss with your line manager to clarify what action needs to be taken. If your line manager is not available, you must refer your concerns up the line management chain until you are able to speak to a manager.

If you disagree with your manager's decision and have evidence to suggest that the child is not adequately safeguarded you should seek advice from the Associate director or Directors of Storyy Homes and the Safeguarding Lead, you should do this with your direct line manager's agreement, if possible, but you have the right to raise your concerns regardless of your line manager's consent. This should also be recorded on the file. In this event the **whistleblowing policy and procedure** may be used.

Responsibility: Line Manager

All notes of discussion/disagreement must be recorded in line with policies and procedures.

If you disagree with the decision made by the Local Authority/Child Protection Services, you must contact the local authority manager for discussion. Follow up your concerns in writing within 24 hours.

Further, inform your line manager and/or Associate Director and discuss possible actions and options available.

Responsibility: Associate director

If the response is still not deemed satisfactory, contact your equivalent level manager in the statutory agency to discuss your concerns.

Follow up your concerns in writing with the statutory agency within 24 hours.

If agreement is still not reached through this route, then discuss next steps with your Manager / Director to consider making representation to the relevant director in the local authority or trust; or Local Children's Safeguarding Board/Multi Agency or Child Protection Committee/Safeguarding Panel.

Many areas have locally agreed Escalation/Conflict Resolution Procedures, and you must familiarise yourself with this and follow this.

If intervention at this level still fails to resolve the concerns discuss with the Head of Corporate Safeguarding or the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Historical Abuse.

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Responding to Safeguarding Allegations Against Adults who work for or on behalf of Storyy Homes

A safeguarding allegation is one where information comes to light from any source, which suggests that an adult working for or on behalf of Storyy Homes has or may have:

- Caused significant harm or abuse to a child.
- Committed a criminal offence against a child.
- Behaved in such a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- This includes historical information about abuse an adult may have experienced as a child whilst in receipt of services from Storyy Homes.
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The management of an allegation of abuse may involve one or all the following:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child needs protection or in need of services.
- consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Action: from member of staff who has a concern about an adult working for or on behalf of Storyy Homes who works with or is in contact with a child.

- Inform your line manager or other responsible manager and the relevant senior manager or associate director immediately. Action must have been taken and recorded within 24 hours (including weekends and bank holidays).
- If the allegation involves a staff member in any part of Storyy Homes immediately alert the Associate Director.
- It is not your job to investigate the allegation. Your job is to listen, ensure you have the basic details so you can record what was said, and respond appropriately.
- If for any reason you do not feel able to alert a line manager then the Whistleblowing policy and procedure must be followed.

Responsibility: Responsible Safeguarding lead

Upon receiving information, ensure the safety of any child or young person. If a crime has clearly been committed, police and the Local Authority Child Protection Services/Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will need to be contacted as a matter of some urgency and usually within 24 hours. If there are other children who could be at risk (e.g., other children the service) these details must also be shared.

Advice and guidance should be sought from the Safeguarding Lead or Associate Director who in turn can refer the case for Safeguarding and Historical Abuse assessment.

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The relevant Human Resources Team should be advised of the allegation. In consultation with the LADO/local child protection services, a risk assessment should be conducted within 24hrs to decide whether the person concerned can continue in their role or whether a period of suspension is required, or a temporary redeployment is appropriate.

This must be confirmed in writing but do not inform the member of staff against whom the concern/allegation has been made of the nature of the allegation until consultation has been undertaken with the relevant local authority and where necessary police.

The Associate Director for Storyy Homes must ratify any decision making.

If the allegation involves harm or risk of harm to a child using a Storyy Homes service then you must consider whether the child's record should be sealed and the relevant human resources account manager, be requested to arrange this.

Consult with human resources to agree next steps regarding the member of staff.

Any officer, tasked with undertaking further enquiries or investigating under disciplinary procedures must be competent in child protection matters and be of sufficient seniority to enter discussions with external agencies.

Any action must be agreed with the Associate Director and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Social/Health Care as appropriate. These procedures must be followed in conjunction with Storyy Homes disciplinary policies and procedures.

Consideration must be given as to whether the allegations represent a possible crime that needs to be reported to the Police; discussions will need to take place regarding the requirement of a police investigation and the impact on internal timescales for subsequent investigation, etc.

As soon as possible, agree with the Health/Social Care/Child Protection Agency who will ensure that parents/carers or children are kept informed about the allegation and how they will be kept updated on any progress of the case and its outcome.

Any other local authority with responsibility for the child and any relevant partner agencies must also be notified of the allegation and/or investigation within 24hrs. In some circumstances, the Local Authority or Health and Social Care services where the Storyy Homes staff may become involved if the allegations have implications for the care of their own children.

Ensure that an allegation of abuse form has been completed and signed off by the Senior Manager (Associate Director or above), as soon as possible (always within 24 hours) and sent to those named in the circulation list.

The reporting form must be monitored and regularly updated by the responsible Associate Director/Director/ Manager when there is significant new information, and/or reviewed quarterly and when the outcome of the investigation is known.

Ensure that staff involved with an investigation are aware of the support options available to them.

Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that any support offered is kept separate from the managers involved in the investigation.

Notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) authorities or senior managers in the relevant Local Authority of the conclusion of any internal investigation.

At the conclusion of a case all required regulatory referrals or notifications (OFSTED) must be made and a decision made and recorded by Children's Services and the People Team as to whether the person will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Reporting of Serious Safeguarding Incidents

A serious safeguarding incident is defined as:

- Unexpected or avoidable death of child in receipt of services from Storyy Homes.
- Serious harm to child at risk, where a life-threatening outcome required intervention by Storyy Homes staff.
- Actions which have caused death or serious injury / serious harm to another child.
- A 'Near Miss' where an unplanned event or incident did not result in serious injury, harm or illness, but had the potential to do so and only a fortunate/timely break in the chain of events prevented a serious outcome for the child.
- An incident likely to result in adverse media attention and/or potential reputational damage for Storyy Homes.
- An incident that is serious enough that it may lead to a Serious Case Review /Significant Case Review/Child Practice Review and/or any case which indicates organised crime or large-scale abuse.
- A safeguarding incident likely to raise concern about Storyy Homes policies or procedures.
- A safeguarding incident which raises concern about possible radicalisation of any member of staff or child in receipt of a Storyy Homes service.
- Where a registered provider (residential) is required to close by an external body following safeguarding concerns

Responsibility: Line Manager

- If a member of your team is involved in a serious safeguarding incident and/or any of the above situations apply, you must complete a detailed [safeguarding incident form](#), within 24 hours and send it to your manager or Associate director and to all those on the circulation list detailed on the form.
- If a Child has died, you must also complete a detailed and thorough serious incident form and send to all those on the circulation list detailed on the form immediately.
- If the incident also relates to Health and Safety, an **incident form** should be completed.
- Follow internal reporting procedures and line management structure as appropriate.
- Many of these processes have in-built reviews and senior management oversight that must be completed.

Safeguarding and social media

Social Media Guidance for staff working with children.

What do we mean by social media?

'Social media' means any electronic communication that enables people to stay in touch online. This includes apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Tic Tok etc. which you and others contribute to both shared and private conversations with organisations, communities and individuals.

Background

Social media has become an important part of everyday life. It is a way of engaging and keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as people, groups and brands beyond daily life.

Social media covers both private conversations (e.g., WhatsApp) and public conversations (e.g., Facebook). Although these are obviously very different types of communications, our safeguarding responsibilities apply to both cases.

Many of the children we have in our care expect to use social media as a primary method of communication even more than talking face to face or on the phone.

Most of us have started using social media more regularly, the number of stories about inappropriate use of technology, grooming behaviour and an inability to challenge colleagues has grown, which means that Storyy Homes's needs clear practice guidance for workers and organisations around safer working practice in this area.

Individuals who work with children must always keep their professional role in mind regardless of the method of communication with a child.

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All communications with a child, regardless of how they take place, should be considered to carry the same weight. As a professional supporting a child you should ensure you document online conversations, chats or interventions as well as you would through any other channel, for instance face-to-face or phone conversations. All communications with a child regardless of channel, must be recorded in their care notes.

What happens if a Storyy Homes staff member abuses their access to social media?

This guidance refers to best, safe and poor practice regarding the use social media. Storyy Homes code of conduct policy and procedure outlines the behaviour expected of all staff and treats any breach the same whether it is online or offline.

Inappropriate use of social media may breach Storyy Homes code of practice, and data protection policy and could put the lives or livelihoods of children at risk. Failure to use social media appropriately may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to, and including dismissal, or result in the termination of an individual's working agreement or involvement with Storyy Homes.

In certain circumstances breaches may also result in reports to regulatory bodies, relevant Local Authorities and/or the police, as appropriate.

Make sure you are confident in your use of social media before you begin, and never feel pressured to communicate with children, families or other professionals through any channel that you are not personally comfortable with. Advice on usage of any social media platform can be sought from the Safeguarding lead or Associate Director.

Missing Children

[A Child goes missing during a Storyy Homes activity.](#)

Responsibility: Responsible Staff Member

Risk Assessments should be completed for all activities in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures. Where there are additional concerns about an individual child, an individual Risk Assessment should be completed in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures and shared with relevant parties.

If a child goes missing, and after initial search still cannot be found, the staff member must consider with their line manager whether to notify the Police immediately or make further enquiries in relation to places where the child may have gone.

This judgement should be informed by the level of the child's vulnerability or an assessment of risk to themselves or others. If contacting the Police, details of the risk assessment must be shared along with the child's personal details.

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If a child is subject to a child protection (Section 47) enquiry or on a child protection plan, or child protection registers, or a supervision requirement, then the Local Authority must be informed immediately.

If it is out of hours, the Duty/Out of Hours on call service should be contacted.

If a child or young person has particular vulnerabilities, or has gone missing on several occasions, and the situation could lead to serious harm, this should be recorded as a serious incident using the serious incident reporting form.

Staff should ensure that once the child or young person is found, parents, carers, and any other relevant agencies are notified immediately and that he/she is treated positively on their return.

All staff members should refer to the local procedures for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements or equivalent body regarding Missing Children in reporting such situations.

Unauthorised Absence or a looked after child from Storyy Homes Care.

Responsibility: Residential home staff/Line Managers

Ensure that all children cared for by Storyy Homes have a care plan based on a full assessment of the child's current and future needs, including any potential risk to self and others. Where it is assessed that there is a potential risk that the child might go 'missing', the Care Plan must identify specific procedures relating to individual children and responding to them missing from care.

If it is considered that a child is missing and there is no indication that the child will return in a short space of time, managers and staff should determine the level of a child's vulnerability and the potential danger to the child or the general public.

This assessment should take into consideration:

- Guidance and information contained in the child's Care Plan.
- The age, maturity, physical or cognitive disability of the child.
- The legal status of the child.
- Previous behaviour patterns, including whether the child is a risk to self or others, and the general vulnerability of the child.
- Whether the child is perceived as running to or from someone.
- The risk of offending or behaviour that may put the child at increased risk e.g., substance misuse.
- The risk of the child being targeted by organised groups, e.g., abduction for the purpose of trafficking or sexual exploitation and/or the risk of forced marriage.
- Environmental factors such as the weather, time of year, community events or tensions within the home.

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Any child or young person should be reported to the Police immediately, if:

- He/she is overdue for medication.
- He/she has an assessed disability that increases their level of vulnerability.
- He/she shows a high level of vulnerability from their risk assessment.
- He/she is under the age of eleven years or has special medical needs or who is considered a risk to themselves or others.

Where a decision is made not to contact the Police, this must be agreed with a line manager and the child's Social Worker should be contacted to agree a course of action including a risk assessment process.

If it is out of hours, inform the Out of Hours Duty Social Work service. Every attempt should be made to contact relevant others who may know where the child/young person may be.

A list of significant names and addresses, any known contacts or associates, 'bolt holes,' phone numbers etc., should be kept on the child's file and checked when a child is missing. (If the child is in a residential home) a full search of the property must be undertaken).

Ensure you provide all requested information to the Social Worker/Police and update them when you have any additional/new information.

You must also ensure a photograph is provided. The child's Social Worker/placing authority, in conjunction with the Police, retain responsibility for co-ordinating the plan of care and response to the missing episode, including any necessary media strategy. Full co-operation must be provided. If you have a concern regarding any action/lack of action being taken, this must be escalated to the placing authority manager through your line manager.

Where a child breaches their bail or remand conditions, provide statements, as required to the Police.

Responsibility - Manager of Storyy Homes Residential Service

Managers of children's residential units are expected to maintain records of each occasion when a child receiving Storyy Homes Services is identified as 'missing' or having taken 'unauthorised absence'. These records should be made available for inspection under the Children Act 1989. The records should include:

- Description of the child
- When and where the child was last seen and with whom
- A recent photograph
- Family addresses
- Known acquaintances.
- Any previous history of absconding and information about where they were found.

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- The name and address of the child's GP and Dentist
- The name and address of the child's school.
- Circumstances which increase the risk to a child should be drawn to the attention of the Police.
- Who has parental responsibility for the child.
- Full details and contact telephone numbers of parents, foster carers and social workers, including out of hours contact numbers.
- Managers must ensure that every service they are responsible for communicates the Policy & Procedure to all staff and carers and that each person knows who to contact in the case of any child going missing.
- This must be in line with local interagency protocols and strategic multi-agency collaborative framework.

Ensure Storyy Homes have a process in place to respond to a missing episode once the child returns. This must include a 'return interview', which may/may not be conducted by the placing authority. Return interviews are essential to the future safeguarding of the child and all staff should engage accordingly.

The manager must ensure that all children who go missing are reported to the police in line with local Missing Protocols/placing authority protocols alongside these procedures.

The likelihood of being missing must be included in the risk assessment in accordance with the Health & Safety Policy and Behaviour Management Policies.

If the child is missing from a school setting, then Educational statutory guidance must be adhered to.

Child Exploitation (CE)

Storry Home will identify children who are subject to or at risk of CE. However, some children may be at higher risk of this e.g., care leavers, homeless children. At times, children may lead chaotic lives, and some engage in risky behaviour. However, no child is ever responsible for the abuse to which they are subjected.

Responsibility: Staff / Managers

If staff who work in non-CE specialist services become aware of a child who may be at risk of CE, they should report this to their line manager in the first instance. Indicators may include:

- Missing from home for periods of time.
- Regularly missing school/education.
- Appearing with unexplained gifts.
- Associating with other people involved in CE.
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends.

Staff should refer to this Safeguarding Policy in conjunction with their Local Safeguarding Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements or equivalent policy and protocols.

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On receipt of a referral, an initial assessment should be completed with the child. This will ascertain the background, level of risk and future planning for the child. If there are immediate concerns for a child, the Police/Social Care Department should be contacted.

In matters where there are increasing concerns that a child is involved in CE and may be experiencing significant harm, this should be reported as a serious safeguarding incident.

Fostering

Responsibility: Staff / Managers

If you suspect that a child is in a private fostering arrangement, you have a statutory duty to notify the relevant Local Authority in terms of ensuring their welfare and protection.

If such concerns arise, these should in the first place be raised with your line manager or other responsible manager and agree next steps.

FGM Female Genital Mutilation

Duty to report:

From 31 October 2015, there is a mandatory duty for regulated professionals to report cases of FGM in England and Wales. Storyy Homes Staff undertake FGM training within their induction.

This applies where the victim is under 18 years old and has disclosed FGM directly or the professional has seen something that possibly indicates the girl has been cut and should be reported to the Police and social care department.

This is a personal duty, which requires the employee who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred to anyone else. The only exception is if you know that another employee has already made a report. Therefore, there is no requirement to make a second referral.

Regulated Professions:

The duty only applies to staff that works in a regulated profession e.g., teachers, healthcare profession and social workers. It therefore covers:

- General Chiropractic Council
- General Dental Council
- General Medical Council
- General Optic Council
- General Osteopathic Council
- General Pharmaceutical Council

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- Health and Care Professions Council (whose role include the regulation of social workers in England)
- Nursery and Midwifery Council

If they are not under the duty, they should still report the incident as a safeguarding issue.

When the duty does not apply:

Women over the age of 18 years old

- The duty to report does not apply to cases of disclosure from women over the age of 18. In these instances, you must follow local adult safeguarding procedures or contact your local Safeguarding Lead.
-

Disclosure is from someone other than the child.

If other people disclose a possible case of FGM e.g., parent of friend, or you suspect that a child is at risk of FGM, the duty to report will not apply. However, this remains a safeguarding concern and must include a referral to the local Social Care Department and informing a local Safeguarding Lead.

Receiving a Disclosure or becoming aware of a FGM case

Responsibility: Staff Member

An staff member may become aware of a case of FGM if they are informed by a child under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or observe physical signs which appear to show an act of FGM has been carried out on a child under 18, they must always speak to their manager about their concerns at the earliest opportunity and certainly the same day they become concerned and staff members can also seek advice from the National FGM Centre.

Making a report

A report can be made in writing or orally to the Police and Social Care department. If calling the Police, use the non-emergency no. 101. This report must be completed no later than by the close of the following working day. Any reports should be discussed with your line manager in the first instance but should not delay the referral to the Police.

Staff in non-regulated posts but belong to one of the “professions” in accordance with the “2003 Act”, should familiarise themselves with the mandatory duty to report and they should contact their Region/Nation Safeguarding Lead to make a safeguarding referral.

You should be prepared to provide the call handler with the following information and explain that you are making a report under the FGM mandatory reporting duty.

Your details: Name Contact details (work telephone number and e-mail address) Place of work Details of your organisation’s designated safeguarding lead	The girl’s details: Name Age/date of birth Address
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You should update your Safeguarding Lead of the actions taken and identify whether other safeguarding actions are required, and how these will be taken forward.

Any reporting of an FGM concern should be reported internally, as a Serious Safeguarding Incident using the serious safeguarding reporting form. This should be sent to the entire list of named people on the form.

Consequences of a failure to Report.

If the staff member does not carry out their duty to report the case of FGM to the Police, this will be treated as a possible breach of their professional duty and may result in a disciplinary action and, where relevant, referral to the governing body for their profession and DBS service.

Recording.

Cases involving FGM should be recorded in the relevant case file of the individual concerned in accordance with policies and procedures for Storyy Homes.

Advice and Support

Further advice and support can be obtained from:

- Storyy Homes Safeguarding Lead
- Associate Director
- Operations Manager.
- Director of Care.
- Any Director within Storyy Group.

Prevent Policy

Radicalisation is comparable to other forms of exploitation and is therefore considered a safeguarding issue that all staff must be aware of. Prevent training is part of all Storyy Homes staff inductions.

The process for escalating concerns and procedures regarding how to make a referral to the relevant authorities on this specific matter follow below.

The emphasis is upon supporting vulnerable children and there is no expectation that Storyy Homes will take on a surveillance or enforcement role as a result of fulfilling our Prevent duty.

The Prevent Concern promotes a multiagency approach, and Storyy Homes will continue to work alongside Local Safeguarding Childrens and multi-agency boards.

A Prevent Concern does not have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt; it should be based on something that raises concerns, which is assessed by using professional judgement.

Extremism is defined in the Prevent Strategy 2011 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.

The Terrorism Act 2000 defines terrorism as an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system.

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

Radicalisation should be considered as an 'additional vulnerability' under Chapter 11 of the Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2010). There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.

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Indicators for vulnerability to radicalisation can be like those for other forms of abuse and may particularly include:

- Distance from cultural heritage.
- Experience of migration
- Experience of racism and discrimination.
- Family members or friends associated with extremist groups.
- Family tensions.
- Sense of isolation and feelings of failure.

It is important to note that not all individuals at risk of radicalisation and acts of terrorism are susceptible or vulnerable and they may be acting out of choice.

Risk Assessments:

The level of risk will vary across different parts of the UK.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards, Children's Services, Early Years Centres, and Employment Training and Skills practitioners should ensure they are informed of the risks in their areas and work with other agencies in assessing risks where appropriate.

Training will be provided proportionately for all relevant Storyy Homes staff dependent upon their role and links to front line service delivery. The approach to training will be to adopt a 'Train the Trainer' model to ensure staff and volunteer's knowledge and changes in practices within and across the Storyy Homes Group.

Making a Report

A staff member may have concerns as a result of:

- A direct disclosure.
- An observation.
- An expression of concern or complaint made by another person.

If you suspect that a child is at immediate risk or is engaged in the planning or implementing of an act of terrorism, take the following course of action immediately:

- Contact your line manager and consider referral to Police on 999 Or Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.
- Contact the organisational Safeguarding lead.
- All actions must be recorded in detail.
- For further advice contact your Safeguarding Lead or the associate director.

If you suspect that a child at risk may be under the influence of radicalisation or extremism but not in immediate danger, the following actions must be taken:

- Raise your concern directly with your line manager in the first instance.
- Inform them of the nature of your concerns.
- Contact the Police on number 101 to discuss the next steps with them.
- Request to speak to officers with the responsibility in relation to Prevent duties.
- Contact the safeguarding lead informing them of the actions taken to date.
- Record everything in detail on the serious incident reporting form.
- Clarify with the Police or Anti-Terrorism hotline the next steps and ask how feedback will be provided.

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Responsibility: Line Manager

Ensure any reported Prevent Concerns are managed in accordance with these procedures and where necessary escalated to the relevant authorities.

- Multi-Agency Case and Serious Case Reviews
- Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Equivalent Processes.

Notification where Storyy Homes has been involved in a case under review.

Serious Case Reviews/Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews are commissioned when:

- Abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected.
- The child has died or been seriously harmed.

Responsibility: Responsible Manager

As soon as a formal notification is received that a child has died or has been seriously injured (or before if directed by senior management), the child's file and that of any immediate family with whom Storyy Homes staff may have been working with must be sealed.

Manual/paper files, if held, must also be sealed and locked in a cabinet not accessible to Storyy Homes staff.

On receiving notification any of the above Reviews, the responsible manager must notify the Associate Director and Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Staff involved with the child and or family must be supported and be reminded of the support available from Storyy Homes Employee Assistance Programme.

Responsibility: Assistant Director Children's Services

Alert the local Media Manager as the case may generate local publicity.

Notify Storyy Homes Board of directors and ensure that they are informed of the notification immediately. Complete a serious incident form and forward onto them immediately.

Responsibility: Associate Director / Board of Directors

The Associate Director (ideally this should not be the line manager) to undertake a 'rapid review & risk assessment' of all related case files, which must include:

- A chronology of Storyy Homes involvement with the child/ family
- Any potential internal disciplinary issues (you must liaise with Human Resources if this applies)
- Any concerns about internal or multi-agency procedures, which may need immediate consideration.

If the notification indicates the likelihood that a case might have generated significant public interest or if there are implications for corporate risk, inform the Company directors and relevant others if the case is potentially high profile.

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Storyy Homes's media response must be co-ordinated in conjunction with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children's Board/Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and agree a Child Protection media strategy to avoid contradiction and misunderstanding.

Storyy Homes's Insurers must be notified about cases if there is a risk of a claim against Storyy Homes for liability, this will be completed by the associate director or one of the board of directors.

All reviews commissioned by the Local Safeguarding Children Board or Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements Group or Child Protection Committee (CPC) or Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) where Storyy Homes are or have been involved.

Responsibility: Associate Director/Director

If there is no indication of major public interest, decide who will prepare the Storyy Homes contribution to the review.

Authors for single agency reviews undertaken for an external body should have appropriate seniority, have demonstrated competence in preparing complex reports and making recommendations for internal agency and multi-agency change and undergone relevant training.

Notice should be taken of any expertise that is needed in order to conduct the review.

Where possible, two authors should be identified: one to take the lead role and the other to act as a 'buddy', to assist with interviews and report design, and act as a critical reader.

If there is likelihood that there will be major public interest consult with the Directors to decide who should prepare the report. Ensure the Board of Directors sign off such reports.

Preparation of the Report

Responsibility: Report Author

Consult with the Safeguarding Lead and Associate Director on the process and ensure guidance follow the Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Ensure draft reports are shared with the Associate Director, Safeguarding Lead and the Board of Directors.

Ensure all staff referred to in the report have the right to:

- See what is written about them.
- Correct any factual errors and comment on the findings.
- Ensure that these processes do not delay completion of the report beyond the agreed timescale.
- Pass the report to the Board of Directors for quality assurance.
- External Commissioning

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Responsibility: Responsible Senior Manager

If reports are externally commissioned through Storyy Consultancy or authors with relevant expertise, then the Associate Director and Board of Directors should be fully involved along with the Safeguarding Lead.

All reports must be quality assured by the Safeguarding Lead and signed off by the Associate Director and the Board of Directors who were responsible for the commission.

Staff Care

Responsibility: Associate Director

The Associate Director of the organisation must assess the risk as to whether it is appropriate for the worker to continue their role with children and families in the interim.

Staff must be made aware that an IMR or ICR is different to, and separate from, any disciplinary investigation or internal inquiry although information gathered during the review process may be used to inform an investigation or inquiry. Disciplinary action may be taken on a concurrent basis whilst a case review is in progress.

- Staff must be made aware that they have the right to request to be accompanied, if they are invited to attend a disciplinary hearing.
- A companion may normally be a UNISON or other trade union representative of the staff members choice, or a Storyy Homes colleague.

Status of files on conclusion of the review

All records are to be retained in accordance with the Retention of Data Policy and procedure and when Implementing Recommendations from the review.

Responsibility: Associate Director Report Author

The Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements Group or Child Protection Committee's template should be used in compiling the report.

Copies of Storyy Homes Individual Management Reports and Initial Case Reviews including the action plans must be forwarded to the Associate Director. The Associate Director is responsible for ensuring that any organisational learning is appropriately shared and informs policy and training going forward.

Copies of any executive summaries and Storyy Homes authored overview reports must be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

Responsibility: Directors

The Directors must ensure the implementation of all the actions within the action plan, within agreed timescales and feedback on progress on a quarterly basis until the actions have been completed.

Post report

Responsibility: Responsible Senior Manager

- The Directors must decide how feedback is given to those staff members/teams implicated in the IMR/ICR.
- Consideration should be given to the author/s of the report conducting the briefing.
- The Associate Director will undertake annual analysis and make an annual report to Directors outlining key messages and learning.

Multi Agency Case Reviews or other reviews

Responsibility: Associate Director/ Board of Directors

Any requests to undertake a review must be considered by the Directors in consultation with the Safeguarding Lead as required.

- The requests should be logged under the case notes.
- Where Storyy Homes has had active involvement with the child/family subject of the review then a suitably experienced and trained staff member should be a member of the 'review team'.
- Ensure that all staff invited to take part are clear about confidentiality and scope of the review and their role in it.
- Staff and managers directly involved in the case may be required to form part of the 'Case or Review Group'.
- As these reviews are non-statutory, appropriate advice regarding Data Protection can be gained from the Associate Director.
- All staff must be supported to take part in case/review meetings and conversations.

The final report and any learning or action arising from it must be shared with the Associate Director and Board of Directors/

Suitable Storyy Homes staff may be required to conduct internal systems reviews where Directors consider it appropriate or beneficial to the organisation.

Media strategy

Responsibility: Associate Director / Board of Directors

Storyy Homes media response must be co-ordinated in conjunction with Local Safeguarding Children Board and Multiagency Safeguarding Group or the Child Protection Committee.

A media strategy will avoid contradiction and misunderstanding. It is usual for the Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements Group to co-ordinate any media strategy.

Storyy Homes Media responsible person must liaise with the relevant Associate Director and Operations Manager before releasing any public statements about the review.

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Events

For any young person or child attending an event or visiting a service relevant risk assessments must be completed, and procedures must be followed. This process must be followed on every occasion where children and young people attend events and when there are visits, even if they have visited before.

Responsibility: Operations Manager

The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring that the following protocols are followed:

- Before an event or visit, the Operations Manager must carry out a full risk assessment.
- consider who is to attend and the supervision and welfare of any children who might be present.

The risk assessment should include:

- who will manage the visit.
- Arrival and departure times
- managing the interface with any children
- Health and safety risks etc.

All visits should be handled through the relevant Operations Manager

Should management or staff wish to approach a VIP/celebrity to attend the event, you must do this via Operations Manager. Equally.

Where a visitor or VIP is attending Storyy Homes, ensure that physical contact is kept to a minimum and where it does take place it is appropriate. This should form part of your risk assessment and must be in line with Safeguarding practice.

Children should not be left alone with the visitor at any time, and they must not exchange details directly with Children.

Parental permission is required where photographs are taken of Children for Storyy Homes purposes.

Should you have any concerns about an event or visit or are worried that risk is not being appropriately managed, you should speak to your line manager. Managers should escalate concerns to the Associate Director and to your Safeguarding Lead.

Prior to any Visitor arriving at the service or an event the Operations Manager should share the Safeguarding Protocol and ensure staff are aware of what they should do if they observe

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something of a safeguarding nature during their visit or event. This is important to do prior to arrival to ensure safe practice is observed.

Should any concerns or issues arise during the event/visit these should be discussed with the Operations manager or safeguarding lead and escalated immediately to the Associate Director if these relate to the visit. Where relevant any concerns will be handled in line with Storyy Homes Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Information Sharing and Consent

All practitioners who have access to information about adults at risk have a duty to preserve confidence. Everyone's right to confidentiality must be respected. All personal information must be treated with care and kept securely.

This means not disclosing it to people who do not need to know.

In normal circumstances the child who is the subject of the information, parents or social services will be required to give consent before information about them can be shared.

Irrespective of the age, abilities or level of maturity of the child, if information is disclosed which indicates that the child at risk (or another person) is at serious risk of harm, then confidentiality cannot be preserved as safeguarding procedures must take precedence.

The term 'Vital Interest' which is used in the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 permits sharing of information where it is critical to prevent serious harm or distress, or in life threatening situations.

Education

Keeping Children Safe in Education

The Department for Education issued statutory guidance in 2018 requiring schools and colleges to take due regard when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- The guidance defines 'school' meaning all schools whether maintained.
- Non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools.
- Alternative provision academies.
- Maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units.
- 'College' means further education colleges and sixth-form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and relates to their responsibilities towards children under the age of 18.

The statutory guidance should be read and followed by:

- Governing bodies of maintained schools and colleges:
- Proprietors of independent schools (including academies and free schools).
- Alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools
- Management committees of pupil referral units

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The above should ensure that all staff in their school or college read at least Part One of this guidance.

Any Storyy Homes Service providing educational provision as determined by this guidance must ensure that Keeping Children Safe in education Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges is read and understood by all staff in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

Each Storyy Homes service providing educational provision as part of this guidance must ensure it has appropriate local arrangements to evidence that the above requirements are being complied with.

References

Please note this list is not exhaustive:

- [The Children Acts \(1989\); \(2004\)](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child \(1989\)](#)
- [Education Act \(2002\)](#)
- [Prevent Strategy 2015](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [The Serious Crimes Act 2015](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' 2018.](#)

Compliance

The Associate Director and Board of Directors and the Operations Manager will monitor compliance with this policy and procedure and relevant KPIs and other performance measures.

- General Compliance
- Induction
- Supervision
- Performance and Development Reviews
- Learning & Development Plans
- Case file sampling and file auditing
- Annual Service Quality Assessment

Appendix 1

Glossary and Definitions

<p>Child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Acts 1989 & 2004 define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. • The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines a child in relation to the powers & duties of the local authority. Young people between the age of 16 & 18 who are still subject to a compulsory supervision requirement by the Children’s Hearing can be viewed as a child. • The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) applies to “all human beings under the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”
<p>Safeguarding</p>	<p>In England, safeguarding children and promoting their welfare means.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting them from maltreatment, • Preventing impairment of their health and development • Ensuring Children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. • Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. <p>In Wales the Social Services & Well Being Act imposes duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers that require them to work to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support.</p> <p>In Scotland, the term Safeguarding refers to the collective principles and responsibilities of the GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) approach to identify and address needs and risks within a framework of the child’s whole world and well-being at the earliest opportunity.</p>
<p>Child Protection</p>	<p>Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This action refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. Alongside physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect this includes children affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic abuse. • Female genital mutilation. • Enforced marriage. • honour-based violence. • missing’ children and young runaways. • Children exploited by gangs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual exploitation and trafficking. <p>This list is not exhaustive. More information about working with children affected by these issues are available on the OFSTED web site.</p>
Abuse	<p>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., the internet). An adult or adults, or another child or children may abuse them</p>
Physical Abuse	<p>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.</p>
Emotional Abuse	<p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 though it may also occur alone.</p>

<p>Sexual Abuse</p>	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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 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.</p> <p>Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p>
<p>Neglect</p>	<p>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 or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home abandonment). • Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger. • Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers). • Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. • It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
<p>Domestic Abuse and Violence</p>	<p>The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour. • Violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. • The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to emotional, financial, physical, psychological, or sexual behaviours. • From December 2015, coercive or controlling domestic abuse is a crime punishable by up to 5 years in prison, under section 76 of the Serious Crimes Act 2015. This relates to a purposeful pattern of behaviour, which takes place over time, for one individual to exert power, control, or coercion over another.

<p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</p>	<p>Sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where a child (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. In all cases those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.</p>
<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p>	<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a safeguarding issue, illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. There is a mandatory duty for regulated professionals to report cases of FGM in England and Wales.</p> <p>This applies where the victim is under 18 years old and has disclosed FGM directly and should be reported to the Police and social care department. This is a personal duty, which requires the employee who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred to anyone else.</p> <p>The only exception is if you know that another employee has already made a report. Therefore, there is no requirement to make a second referral.</p>
<p>Regulated Profession</p>	<p>A regulated profession is one, which is governed by a professional organisation or regulatory body to ensure that professionals meet the required standards of practice and competence for that occupation.</p>

<p>Prevent Concern</p>	<p>Children can be vulnerable to exposure to or involvement with groups or individuals who advocate intimidation as a means to a political or ideological end. These groups can include those promoting “violence from extreme right-wing or other ethnic or religious organisations” Prevent Strategy (2011). Prevent is part of the Government counter terrorism strategy CONTEST and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent focuses on all forms of terrorism and extreme ideologies and operates in a pre-criminal space, providing support and redirection to vulnerable children and adults at risk of being groomed into terrorist activities before any crimes are committed.</p>
<p>Extremism</p>	<p>Defined in the Prevent Strategy 2011 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.</p>
<p>Terrorism</p>	<p>Defined by the Terrorism Act 2000 as: an act that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people and/or damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system</p>

<p>Radicalisation</p>	<p>Defined as the process by which children come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. Radicalisation should be considered as an ‘additional vulnerability’ under Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2015). There is no obvious profile of a person likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas.</p>
<p>Trafficking and Modern Slavery</p>	<p>The United Nations defines trafficking in children as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, or abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purposes of exploitation. Modern slavery is a complex crime that takes a few different forms. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking.</p>
<p>Gang Exploitation</p>	<p>There are several areas in which children are put at risk by gang activity both through participation in and as victims of gang violence. Safeguarding procedures can provide a key tool for all agencies working with children to assist them when working together to prevent young people from being drawn into gangs, to support those who have been drawn into the margins of gangs; and to protect those who are at immediate risk of harm either as members or victims of gangs. Gang activity can also be used as the means through which children are sexually exploited and/or trafficked.</p>
<p>County Lines</p>	<p>County Lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or ‘deal lines. It involves child criminal exploitation as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as ‘cuckooing’. County Lines is a major, cross cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and missing persons.</p>

<p>Criminal Exploitation</p>	<p>Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur with technology.</p> <p>Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.</p>
<p>Young Carer</p>	<p>A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).</p>
<p>Private Fostering</p>	<p>Private fostering falls within safeguarding as it relates to the legal status, wellbeing and protection of children under 16 years, or under 18 years if disabled, who reside for more than 28 days in the care of someone who is not a parent, close relative, or someone with parental responsibility. The duty here is to ensure reporting of these children to the relevant local authorities.</p> <p>In Scotland, private fostering is the term used when a parent/guardian places a child who is under school leaving age (16 years) in the care of someone else, who is not a close relative or officially approved Foster Carer, for a period of more than 28 days</p>
<p>Allegation</p>	<p>An allegation is information, which comes to light from any source which suggests that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, or had the potential to harm a child or adult at risk. Although there are some differences in how allegations are handled across the four nations, the process for responding to allegations remains the same.</p>

<p>Wellbeing under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.</p>	<p>Wellbeing under the SS&WB Act means well-being in relation to any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing • Protection from abuse and neglect. • Education, training and recreation. • Domestic, family and personal relationships. • Contribution made to society. • Suitability of living accommodation. • In relation to a child, “well-being” also includes— • Physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development. • “welfare” as that word is interpreted for the purposes of the Children Act 1989.
<p>Serious Safeguarding Incident</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Serious Safeguarding Incident occurs under the following circumstances: • Unexpected or avoidable death of child at risk in receipt of services from Storyy Homes. • Serious harm to child where a life- threatening outcome required intervention. • Actions of another person which caused death or serious injury to a child. • An incident likely to result in adverse media attention and/or potential reputational damage for Storyy Homes. • An incident that is serious enough that it may lead to a Serious case review. • Case Review/Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Review and/or any case which indicates organised crime or large-scale abuse, • An incident likely to raise concern about professional practice or implications for Storyy Homes. • An incident which raises concern about possible radicalisation of any member of staff/child. • Where a registered provider is required to close by an external body.