

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedure

This policy applies to all those involved in Shine, including, but not exclusively, trustees, staff and volunteers and should be read in conjunction with:

Shine's Safeguarding Policy Statement

Safeguarding Adults Policy & Procedure

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

INTRODUCTION

Shine:

- Actively encourages a culture that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Is committed to promoting good practice and protecting children and young people from harm.
- Recognises that children and young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse or harm due to various factors such as stereotyping, discrimination, isolation, a lack of power to protect themselves, increased dependency on personal care or possible communication or learning difficulties. ability to communicate about a problem.

SHINE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

All our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained, and supervised, and are familiar with our safeguarding policy and procedures and will follow Shine's Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

All staff and volunteers will be alert to the indicators of potential abuse or harm and report any issue following Shine's policies and procedures. There should not be any investigation, if the child or young person is in immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted immediately on 999, then a full record made using Shine's Safeguarding reporting form.

To safeguard children and young people, Shine will:

- Implement our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedure, reviewing annually.
- Share information about the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures and safeguarding good practice with trustees, staff, and volunteers.
- Share information about any concerns with agencies who need to know and will involve children and the parent with responsibility appropriately.
- Carefully follow the procedures for recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers, including compulsory DBS/ACCESS Northern Ireland (NI) disclosures when required.
- All new staff who have responsibility for safeguarding will be DBS/ACCESS NI checked and receive training on appointment; have regular checks undertaken and will be offered on going safeguarding training.
- Recruit staff in NI to the role of Safeguarding Champion.
- Provide all staff and volunteers with appropriate safeguarding training at least every two years.
- Provide effective management for staff/volunteers through 1-1s, support and training.
- Take appropriate action to respond to safeguarding issues.
- Ensure that accurate and timely records are kept in relation to safeguarding and that these records are monitored and audited on a regular basis in accordance with Shine's retention policy.

INDICATORS

Everyone who works with or who has contact with children and young people should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that a child or young person's safety may be at risk. Many signs and symptoms have other explanations: recognising abuse or harm is not easy. However, it is important to be alert to the indicators.

Examples of indicators are:

- A disclosure by an individual or a third party, including a description of an event or action that appears to represent potential abuse or risk of harm.
- Unexplained injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part or parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour e.g., withdrawal, bouts of temper, sadness, etc.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness, sexualised language or engaging in sexually inappropriate behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly of those whom a close relationship would normally be expected.

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- Being prevented from socialising or attending events.
- Sudden loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- Appearing increasingly unkempt or with unusually poor personal hygiene.

The above is a general list, by no means exhaustive, and for people with spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus there are a myriad of other complex factors that can affect behaviour and presentation.

There are many routes through which a member of Shine's staff or a volunteer might discover that a child is at risk of harm or abuse. Examples are:

- On a home visit
- At an event
- Via email
- Through social media contact
- From a phone conversation/call
- Through contact with a parent/carer or other third party

DEFINITIONS

Harm can be defined as ill treatment or the impairment of health, safety, or development (including physical, intellectual, financial, emotional, social, and behavioural development) either self-inflicted (i.e., self-harm) or inflicted by others.

Health means physical and mental health.

Ill treatment includes physical and non-physical ill treatment.

TYPES OF ABUSE/HARM

Physical abuse/harm is the deliberate injury of a child, young person or individual at risk or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Financial or 'material' abuse includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Psychological/emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's wellbeing. It may involve making the person feel worthless, inadequate, or only valued for what they can do for another person. It may also involve making the person feel frightened or in danger or exploiting or corrupting them.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities which they can't or don't consent to, even if the child, young person or individual at risk concerned is not aware of what is happening. It includes either being the subject of or being forced to watch sexually explicit images/videos.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child, young person or individual at risk's basic physical or psychological needs and is likely to seriously impair the person's health or development.

Institutional abuse is the maltreatment of a person (often children, young person, or older adults) from a system of power. Institutional abuse occurs within emergency care facilities such as foster homes, group homes, kinship care homes, and pre-adoptive homes.

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, sometimes repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves.

Self-harm is to deliberately injure oneself, which is sometimes (but not always) a sign of a person being at higher-than-normal risk of suicide - either intentional or not.

Exploitation is the improper use of a child, young person or individual at risk for another's profit or advantage.

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Domestic abuse is any incident of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or who have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Where there is a possibility that children or individuals at risk are seeing or hearing domestic violence, you must consider that they may be harmed as a result and treat this as a safeguarding concern.

Self-Neglect is lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety this can include, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, inability to avoid harm as a result of self-neglect, failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs, inability, or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs.

Other forms of abuse include female genital mutilation, honour-based violence/forced marriage, child, and adult sexual exploitation (grooming) and radicalisation.

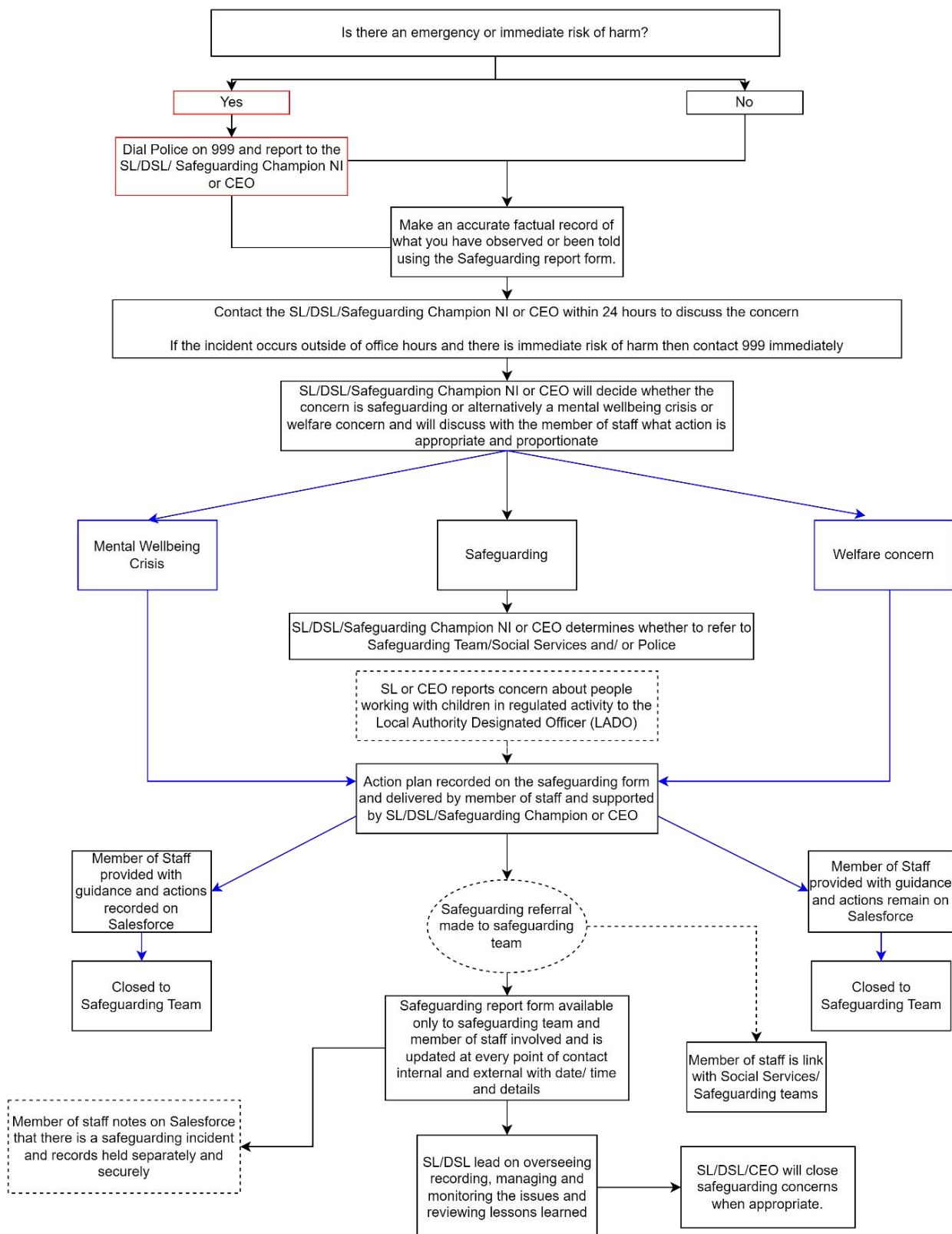
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PROCEDURE: Concerned about a child or young person being at risk?

Key:

Safeguarding Lead (SL)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL)



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DO:

- Listen and reassure.
- Stay calm and reassure the person that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Always take any allegation seriously.
- Do not make a child repeat information - it is not your role to investigate or prove the abuse has taken place.
- Do not pass judgement or make derogatory comments about the alleged abuser, victim, or anyone involved.
- Respect the trust that has been placed in you but explain that you must tell someone else in Shine.
- Do not promise to keep the matter confidential.

Shine does not investigate safeguarding concerns, you should always follow Shine's process and policies, discuss with the SL/DSL/NI Safeguarding Champions or CEO any concerns and they will provide guidance and a plan on what action is appropriate and proportionate. There must be no delay in making this contact.

Remember - local authorities (or the Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) in Northern Ireland) have the lead responsibility for individuals at risk where there are safeguarding concerns. When invited and where appropriate, Shine employees should participate in strategy discussions, case conferences, and safeguarding plans. They may also have a role in supporting individuals at risk and families through these processes.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH THOSE WHO HAVE PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The line manager or staff member will inform those with parental responsibility about allegations, and what steps Shine has taken, and offer support to them and the child/ young person who is at risk.

However, those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed in cases where:

- The person with responsibility may be the alleged perpetrator.
- It is possible that the child would be intimidated into silence.
- It is possible that it will put the child in more immediate danger.
- There is a strong likelihood that important evidence could be destroyed.
- The child does not wish the person with parental responsibility involved at that stage and is competent to make that decision.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Please see the Shine confidentiality policy for further detail.

RECORDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

All information, correspondence and communications must be properly recorded. When recording the disclosure use the words that were said, maintain a factual, non-judgmental record at all stages using the Safeguarding Reporting form Appendix A.

In the case where a volunteer has identified a possible safeguarding concern, unless there is immediate risk of harm, the volunteer should contact the SL/DSL/NI Safeguarding Champions or CEO within 24 hours. The SL/DSL/NI Safeguarding Champions or CEO will then manage the concern from this point.

ROLE OF SAFEGUARDING LEAD/DEPUTY/SAFEGUARDING CHAMPION NI & CEO

- Act as the main contact for safeguarding within Shine.
- To provide guidance and specialism on the appropriate and proportionate action to be taken by Shine when concerns are identified.
- Promote safeguarding awareness and ensure safeguarding training is provided every two years for SL/DSL/NI Safeguarding Champions and CEO.
- Implement and promote the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Notify lead trustees if a safeguarding issue arises relating to staff, trustees and volunteers or any safeguarding issue which could impact on the reputation of Shine.
- Provide information and advice re safeguarding issues and raise awareness about safeguarding.
- Keep abreast of developments in safeguarding.
- Prepare and seek SMT and Board agreement for an annual safeguarding action plan.
- Review safeguarding policy every year.

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- Monitor and review all referrals and allegations made by, or on behalf of, children and individuals at risk to ascertain whether there is any pattern or concentration of incidents of a child or individual at risk's abuse that requires a specific response.
- Ensure that safeguarding is discussed at one service manager meeting each year.
- Prepare a quarterly safeguarding report for the Board.

ROLE OF THE LINE MANAGER:

- To liaise with the parent with caring responsibilities as appropriate.
- Promote safeguarding awareness and ensure safeguarding training is provided every two years for all staff and volunteers in their area.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers are aware of, and have access to, full copies of the policy and procedures and are aware how to report a child or young person at risk of abuse.
- Attend inter-agency meetings in respect of child or young person safeguarding investigations at a local level, if required.
- Ensure that safeguarding is discussed at 1:1 supervision meeting.
- Ensure that safeguarding is discussed at one regional/country team meeting each year.
- Ensure that risk assessment forms are completed for all events.

CONTACT DETAILS

Designated Safeguarding Lead (SL): Gill Valentine gill.valentine@shinecharity.org.uk

Telephone: 07879 322751

Deputy Safeguarding Lead England & Wales: (DSL) Sarah Carrier

Sarah.carrier@shinecharity.org.uk

Telephone: 07778 697716

Safeguarding Champion Northern Ireland: Marie McGonnell

Marie.mcgonnell@shinecharity.org.uk

Telephone: 07789 616420

To find the local Safeguarding Children Boards:

England <https://www.safecic.co.uk/scb-england>

Northern Ireland <https://www.safeguardingni.org/>

Wales <https://www.safecic.co.uk/scb-wales>

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS REGARDING INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS AT RISK

The Finance Director (or if not available the CEO) must make sure any allegations are reported to the Charity Commission.

Children and young people may be subjected to abuse by those who work with them. Allegations of abuse against staff or volunteers must be taken seriously and reported to the Safeguarding Lead or the CEO, or in their absence, another member of SMT who will deal with them sensitively and expediently.

The child or young person's interests are of paramount concern. Their views and wishes must be given careful consideration at all times and they should receive appropriate support.

The matter should not be recorded on the database. All relevant information should be held centrally by the Finance Director.

Investigations into alleged abuse by employees or volunteers may have three related, but independent strands, which can run in parallel:

1. Child or young person safeguarding reporting to appropriate services.
2. A police investigation into a possible offence.
3. Disciplinary procedures where it appears that the allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of staff or volunteers.

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Where an incident of abuse or assault by a member of staff or volunteer is witnessed and evidenced to have occurred, disciplinary proceedings will be invoked immediately, with the person concerned placed on precautionary suspension pending the outcome of further enquiries. They should have no contact with the family/member and their access to online accounts and telephone should be suspended.

However, where an allegation or suspicion of abuse arises involving a member of staff or volunteer which cannot immediately be proven or disproven, the line manager of the alleged perpetrator must immediately make sure that contact between the two parties (and their families if relevant) is stopped. This may include redeployment to tasks which do not involve direct contact either with the persons concerned or any member if such tasks are available.

Shine will make the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) aware of any allegations. The LADO works within Children's Services and gives advice and guidance to employers, organisations and other individuals who have concerns about the behaviour of an adult who works with children and young people.

Shine should liaise with the local authority/HSCT and police regarding the progress of the investigation as appropriate.

If a criminal investigation process is completed and there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, and if a local authority/HSCT investigation has been completed and there is insufficient evidence then a disciplinary investigation will be undertaken to determine “on the balance of probabilities” whether or not the alleged incident has occurred. Sometimes a child or young person can retain loyalty towards those who care for or who are responsible for them, which makes it difficult for them to say anything against them. When a person refuses to lodge a complaint with the police, or withdraws a complaint previously made, Shine is still obliged to pursue an internal disciplinary enquiry to determine whether any disciplinary action is required.

Any disciplinary action will be carried out in accordance with Shine’s disciplinary policies. Where such an investigation has concluded that a staff member or volunteer has abused a child or young person Shine will:

- Initiate appropriate disciplinary action
- Arrange notification to DBS/ACCESS NI and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) register

Where concerns have been investigated internally through disciplinary procedures and are not substantiated, this outcome should be explained by the line manager to the child or young person and their family, where appropriate, the opportunity given to invoke the complaints procedure.

Shine has a duty of care towards its staff and volunteers and will seek to ensure that anyone against whom an allegation is made is treated fairly and in an open and honest manner. They should be supported to understand why the concern has arisen and be kept informed about the progress of the investigation. Precautionary suspension and inquiry may cause stress for anyone suspected of abuse and it is important that management offers advice and support to staff/volunteers. It will always be made clear that precautionary suspension is not disciplinary action in itself.

RELATED POLICIES

- Safer recruitment policy (94)
- Managing allegations of abuse or inappropriate actions policy (92)
- DBS/Access NI
- Social Media Policy (20)
- Bullying and Harassment
- Whistleblowing
- Data protection policy & procedure
- Retention of documents policy (71)

REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every year or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation
- Government guidance as a result of any other significant change or event

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Any staff member or volunteer who breaches any of these procedures may be subject to disciplinary action. Staff and volunteers must follow the Shine Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at all times.

Date of Review: June 2023

Date next review due: June 2024