Policy

Safeguarding policy

Introduction

Contact Hostel offers a supported accommodation for homeless young women in the Manchester area who are between 16 and 19 years old. We aim to provide more than just a place to stay, we aim to provide a home that is safe and secure, where it is possible to work towards the goal of a better and happier future.

This is promoted by the process of protecting young people from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables young people to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Statement of principles

The Contact Hostel is committed to practices that protect young people from harm. The legal definition of a child is that “a child is a child until their eighteenth birthday” The organisation recognises and accepts its responsibilities to develop the awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.

We will always work to appropriate Government guidance and all Local Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures.

We will always follow relevant Protection of Vulnerable Adult guidance.

Statement about working with children and young people

We are committed to updating and reviewing these policies and procedures on a regular basis.

We are committed to multi disciplinary working

We will recruit all staff and volunteers in an equal opportunity way and ensure that full checks (including DBS) and references are undertaken before a person starts work

We will provide all our staff with formal child protection training on induction and at intervals of at least every three years.

We will ensure a designated person is always available to co-ordinate all child protection and other protection concerns.

We will include a code of behaviour within this policy

A vulnerable adult could be defined as anyone “Who is eighteen years of age or over, who is or may be in need of social care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness: and who is or may be unable to protect her or himself against significant harm or exploitation”

Definitions of abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or

scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms

of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to

cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children 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 the child’s developmental capability, as well as

overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child

participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the

ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including 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 occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in

sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether

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.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological

needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a

child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or

abandonment).

* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
* ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional

needs.

Taken from “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015”

All staff will be trained in the understanding of other distinct forms of abuse and will be familiar with the supplementary guidance in Working Together 2015.

Children aged 16 and 17 years can be subject to child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Children and vulnerable adults can be subject to female genital mutilation (FGM).

Children and vulnerable adults can be subject to forced marriage.

Children and vulnerable adults can be subject to trafficking.

Children and vulnerable adults can be subject to modern slavery.

Children and vulnerable adults can be affected in many ways by gang related activity.

Children and vulnerable adults can be affected by domestic violence in many ways.

Children and vulnerable adults can be affected by bullying and by cyber bullying.

Staff recognize the dangers of social media and the potential harm from bullying, threats and untrue statements being made about individuals.

Additionally, young people could be abused financially as well

Staff will seek to educate all children and vulnerable adults about all forms of abuse and about staying safe in all situations.

Recognising abuse

When working with children we get to know them well and build up a relationship. From this position it becomes more likely that the skilled professional will recognise the sign and symptoms of abuse.

There are many of these and may include the following:

* Injuries. Particularly injuries with no or inconsistent explanations. Medical problems.
* Pregnancy. Sexually transmitted illnesses
* Lack of physical development. Failure to thrive.
* Social emotional delays. Speech disorders
* Self-harm and suicide attempts
* Sadness. Anger. Depression. Guilt. Confusion. Fear. Worry
* Lack of trust
* Lack of self-esteem
* Inappropriate sexualised behaviour/sexualised knowledge
* Frightened appearance. Running away
* Enuresis/encopresis
* Tiredness. Becoming withdrawn
* Acting out behaviour. Aggression. Extreme passivity
* Inconsistent/bizarre behaviour
* Abusive towards others
* Poor attachments
* Poor relationship building. Poor social functioning
* Mental health issues and personality disorders. Stress.
* Bullying
* Substance misuse
* Poor educational achievement
* Unkempt appearance.
* Over protected child
* Eating disorders. Loss of appetite. Overeating
* Personality changes
* Talking about having a secret
* Covering up. Unhappy to undress
* Not seeking medical help

Signs and symptoms are only clues as to what has happened and need to build up a picture. Just because a child exhibits some of these does not mean they have been abused. Some signs and symptoms are more indicative or one category of abuse rather than another. It will be important for all staff to record any information which may be a sign or symptom of abuse.

Suspicions or allegations of abuse. Referring. Reporting. Contact details

All suspicions or allegations of child abuse should be recorded as accurately as possible if involving a disclosure of abuse in the exact language of the person giving the disclosure. All suspicions should be passed directly to the nominated child protection person or their deputy.

The nominated child protection person is the manager

The deputy nominated child protection person is the deputy manager

The designated person will judge whether they meet the significant harm or likely significant harm criteria and if they do or there is any doubt pass these on to the relevant safeguarding team as soon as possible and follow this up with a written copy within 24 hours.

Suspicions and allegations of child abuse should be passed to the safeguarding team in the area where the alleged abuse has taken place.

Details of the local safeguarding team for the Contact Hostel.

Address: **Contact Centre MCC**……………………………………………………….

Telephone number**:0161 2345001/email: mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk**

The manager of the team is……………………………………………………………………

The Emergency Duty Team telephone number:**0161 2259295**

If children tell staff about abuse, they will often only give partial or disjointed information, often they will give information over time and sometimes it will not be easy to understand. Staff should record the information as soon as possible and, in the words, it has been given to them without any attempt to summarise or put into their own words. Staff should follow a few simple dos and don’ts.

* Stay calm. Act as though it is OK to talk about anything
* Take what they say seriously. Be concerned and sensitive
* Keep an open mind. Children sometimes find it difficult to describe event accurately if they are outside their experience
* Do not stop children talking unless there is a clear reason
* Do reassure children you will help them
* Do not agree to keep and secrets. You have to pass this information on. You can reassure children that the information will be dealt with very carefully.
* **Do not ask any closed, direct, or leading questions**
* You may ask a few very general questions if you feel it is necessary
* Do not promise the child anything you cannot deliver. You cannot say you will stop them seeing someone or remove the child from home
* Do reassure the child that others will also work to keep them safe

Allegations against staff (including allegations against managers)

If any worker has or receives an allegation against any member of the organisation they should pass this straight to the nominated person (see above). The nominated person will then judge this against the “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015” guidance (Appendix 5) and if required make a referral to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (DO). All allegations against workers even if they contain child protection issues must be referred to the DO. In the event the allegation is against the nominated person the information should be passed to the Chair of Trustees

Chair of Trustees…**Andy Farrell or the designated Lead: Laura Redhead & Susanne Flynn (Trustees)** Numbers can be found with the trustees file in the upstairs office.

In the event that this person is unavailable the referral should be made direct to the Designated Officer.

D.O. **Marjella O’Hargan or Jackie Shaw Tele: 0161 2341214** ………………………………………………………………

Staffing

All staff paid and unpaid are subject to the recruitment policy and procedures. (see policy). Staff are recruited in line with the OFSTD safe recruiting guidelines. All staff and volunteers have an enhanced DBS check which is to renew every three years as a minimum. All serious disciplinary issues will be reported to Housing Related Support and if required to the DBS. Staff are required to work alone at the hostel and these issues are covered by the lone working policy (See policy), and by relevant risk assessments held on the young people’s files.

Visitors

All visitors to the hostel and its grounds will be asked for relevant ID. Staff who are concerned or suspicious about ID should contact the employing organisation for further checks. All visitors should sign in and out of the hostel visitors’ book. Any visitor who is not known or who is not wanted should be prevented from entering the hostel and should be asked to leave. Staff should report any concerns to the manager and the manager will judge whether to contact the police or other relevant body.

Staff training, supervision, and support

Staff will receive a full induction, ongoing training, and regular supervision as well as appropriate support as laid out in the staff handbook, (See staff handbook).

Whistle blowing

Staff are always encouraged to report any concerns they may have to the nominated person by the hostel whistle blowing policy, (See whistle blowing policy). Concerns about the nominated person should be passed to the Chair of Trustees. Concerns about the chair of trustees should be passed to the **Commissioner at Manchester City Council**.

**Advice may be gained From the NSPCC whistle blow advice line for professionals on : 08000280285**

Complaints

All complaints about anything to do with the hostel, from any person within or outside the organisation should be dealt with in by using the hostel complaints policy and procedure, (See complaints policy)

Health and safety

The hostel has a separate health and safety policy, (See health and safety policy). All residents always self-medicate. However, if after an appropriate risk assessment, the manager decided to administer medication to any young person a new “storage and administration of medication” policy would be required.

Risk assessments

The hostel will have a completed risk assessment signed by the manager for the following areas.

* All residents will have been risk assessed and this will be on their file
* All activities other than everyday activities
* All supervised trips and holidays away from the unit
* Any other out of the ordinary activity such as building work or refurbishment etc

Risk assessments that involve residents or staff taking part in activities which are subcontracted to other organisations should include checks on their organisation staff qualifications, risk assessments and insurance details.

Safeguarding and challenging behavior

The hostel does deal with young people with a range of challenging behaviour, but this would not normally involve any serious aggressive or violent behaviour. However, the hostel recognizes that there is always a possibility of residents becoming aggressive or violent at any time. Staff are given training and support to deal with these issues.

The hostel has a policy of not permitting any physical interventions designed to discourage or prevent young people from harming themselves or others. However, the hostel does encourage staff to perform their “Duty of Care” at all times and do recognise that staff may use “reasonable force” to prevent harm. Reasonable force is defined as the minimum amount of force necessary to protect yourself or another person.

Any physical intervention used under these circumstances should be reported to the manager immediately. The hostel has a policy on sanctions (See sanctions policy) which describes appropriate and inappropriate sanctions.

Notifications

Staff should be familiar with the notification requirement contained within the Housing Related Support Contract. The requirement is to notify the Commissioning Officer.

Commissioning officer: **Sean Bleasedale** , **Commissioner, HRS,** **MCC**

Support planning

The hostel has a policy of having a support plan for every resident which outlines the support package. These are updated regularly and are based on Every Child Matters outcomes framework.

Vulnerable groups

The hostel is committed to their equality and diversity policy. The hostel takes many steps to ensure they support any person with who has needs.

The hostel advertises their complaints procedures widely including on their website.

The hostel use “language line” to provide interpretation services as required

Working with offenders

The hostel does work with young people who have a criminal record but do not work with violent or dangerous offenders. The hostel would take all referral information into account when writing a risk assessment.

Working with families

Any staff visits to meet the families of residents would be risk assessed.

The hostel does not allow any male visitors.

All female family or friends visiting will be subject to the visitor’s procedure and would be monitored throughout their visit.

Absences

Young people are always allowed to be away overnight but are asked to give details to staff of where they are going and when they are going to return.

Unknown absences would be dealt with by staff by making efforts to contact the young person in the first instance and would be reported as missing from home after 48 hours. Residents who were considered more vulnerable might have a requirement to be reported missing in less than 48 hours and this would be part of the care plan.

Bullying

The hostel has a separate bullying policy, (See bullying policy). The policy outlines a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

Safe working practices For Staff and Volunteers

1. Lone working.

Lone working is required at the hostel. However, staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others. Meetings with individual children should be avoided or take place within sight of others. If privacy is required, the door must remain open and other staff must be aware of the meeting. When on duty alone staff must not have individual meetings with children. All individual meetings must be recorded in the relevant files.

1. Physical contact with children.

Staff should give physical contact when appropriate and if the young person is happy for the contact or has given permission. Appropriate contact might be to comfort a distressed young person or to give medical attention or as a friendly and caring gesture. Contact such as this should be recorded if it is significant in any way. Play fighting or any contact designed to provoke a reaction would not be appropriate. No sexual contact is allowed. No contact is allowed to punish or chastise a young person in any way. Hugging may be appropriate from time to time. Kissing may only be appropriate if culturally appropriate.

Young people should be encouraged to look after their own personal hygiene.

1. Contact with young people away from the workplace.

Staff should not give young people details of their home address or telephone numbers or allow young people to visit their home. Staff should not meet young people out of work hours, except for organised and sanctioned activities. Staff should not take young people in a car alone. Staff should not store young people’s numbers on their mobile phone. Staff should not talk to young people via social network sites, or email. Staff should not allow young people to use their social network sites.

1. Staff sharing personal information.

Staff should not share any personal information of a sexual nature with young people or any other information that may be seen to cross appropriate professional boundaries.

1. Role modeling.

Staff should not show favoritism or develop “special” relationships with young people. Staff show allow young people to have privacy in their rooms and only enter after knocking and being asked to enter. Time spent in ayoung person’s room should be recorded. Staff should be sensitive to the needs of young people at all times. Staff should talk to young people about sex and sexuality when appropriate and record this. Staff should refer young people to appropriate agencies for more in-depth information about sex and sexual health issues.

Staff should dress in a modest fashion and should present themselves as clean and smart.

Staff should never leave young people alone in the hostel and should never give out any keys to young people, apart from their own bedroom key. No alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed in the hostel apart from when the manager allow a small quantity of alcohol for the purpose of an appropriate celebration. Staff should not consume alcohol or recreational drugs in the 12 hours prior to working.

Staff should avoid any practical jokes and food fights.

Staff should not take photographs of young people on any of their own equipment. No photographs of young people should be taken with them being inappropriately dressed. Staff should not allow any 18-certificate material into the hostel and should not access any on the hostel computers.

Staff should not use any inappropriate language or allow any inappropriate language to go unchallenged.

Staff on call should not drink alcohol.

Staff receiving inappropriate attention from any young person should record this.

1. Loans and gifts

Staff should not give any personal loans or gifts to young people. Staff should discourage young people or their families from giving them gifts to them. If a gift is received from a young person, it should be declared as soon as is possible to the manager and may have to be returned.

1. Use of authority

Staff should use their authority with care and good professional judgement. Staff should recognise that as adults we are in a position of considerable power over often vulnerable young people and should always act with respect and consideration

Conduct of workers

Workers will be made aware of the work of the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) at induction. They will be made aware of the requirement for managers to report to DBS and situations where workers are dismissed because of a harm issue.

Workers need to understand that if their behaviour away from work causes a risk to any children (including their own) or harm to any children then the organisation will take appropriate action to discipline or dismiss the worker.

Barring by the DBS constitutes gross misconduct.

British values and the Prevent duty

Introduction.

All workers now have an additional safeguarding responsibility.

These are to promote British values and to prevent radicalisation of children and young people and to report extremism if we see it. This reporting function is done in the same way as any child protection reporting is done.

British Values

Everyone has a slightly different take on this and there are different definitions. However, the Government defines British Values as,

* Democracy
* The rule of law
* Individual liberty
* Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Workers need to familiarise themselves with these values and find ways to promote them during everyday work. Recording some evidence of this work will also be important.

The prevent duty

This is now included in statutory guidance to all workers working with children and young people and in safeguarding guidance such as ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’. It is therefore and essential part of safeguarding children and young people.

Anyone working with children and young people should have a clear understanding of what radicalisation is and be able to

* Identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation
* Know what to do when they are identified.
* Understand the risks and be able to make a risk assessment of the risks to any child or young person
* Know how to protect and safeguard children from radicalisation

Workers should also be clear about how to build children and young people’s resilience by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views.

This is not about stopping the debate of controversial issues but about helping children and young people to understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process of encouraging someone to develop any radical views. It is not brainwashing which is changing someone’s views against their will. It may be about encouraging radical views in any area of life. While currently much thought is about terrorism children and young people can be encouraged to develop radical views about any issue. These might include race, sexuality, gender, age, disability, politics, religion, animal rights, etc.

It may well be that children and young people, who are just beginning to develop their views on many subjects, may be particularly vulnerable to those seeking to radicalise but clearly many adults might be vulnerable too.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Much material used to radicalise young people is available on the internet and through social media.

Workers need to be aware of this and take steps to monitor use of these sites if their concerns become heightened.

There is a great deal of violent and extremist material available and too much exposure to this runs the risk that young people may normalise these views.

Some radicalisations make take place in the family and again professionals will need to be aware of signs that this may be happening.

Professionals need to understand and be aware of where young people are spending their free time and who they are spending it with as radicalisation may take place in friendship groups or other formal and informal meeting places.

As with all dangers the best way to protect children is to introduce the subject at an early stage, to provide balanced discussion material and to talk about the issues and discuss the issues informally.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

Identity

* the student/pupil is distanced from their cultural /religious heritage and experiences.
* discomfort about their place in society.
* personal Crisis – the student/pupil may be experiencing family tensions.
* a sense of isolation.
* low self-esteem.
* they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends.
* they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

Personal Circumstances

* migration.
* local community tensions; and
* events affecting the student/pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
* Unmet Aspirations
* the student/pupil may have perceptions of injustice.
* a feeling of failure.
* rejection of civic life.

Experiences of Criminality

* involvement with criminal groups
* imprisonment; and
* /reintegration on release

Special Educational Needs

* social interaction
* empathy with others
* understanding the consequences of their actions; and  
  awareness of the motivations of others

More critical risk factors could include:

* being in contact with extremist recruiters.
* accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
* possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
* using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
* justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
* joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
* significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.
* experiencing a high level of social isolation, resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis

Concerns about radicalisation and extremism should be referred to the designated safeguarding officer in your organisation who will assess the risk and refer on to the Local Children’s Safeguarding Board duty officer or to the police in more serious situations that may require an immediate response.

**Local Authority Community Cohesion Officer:**

**Police Sergeant Darren Callaghan (collar number 9395)**

**City of Manchester Partnerships**

**G.M.P.**

**Town Hall Extension**

**1st Floor**

**M60.2AX.**

**Tele: 0161 8563673**

**Email: ManchesterCity.PartnershipTeam@gmp.police.uk**