

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

As a BACP accredited counsellor I uphold my safeguarding responsibilities seriously at all times. This policy lays out the procedures I follow to reduce to reduce any potential risk of harm to children and young people that attend counselling sessions at my private practice.

The term safeguarding is used to refer to a number of areas of concern relating to children including:

- Child Protection issues
- Sexual exploitation/abuse
- Radicalisation
- Physical, emotional abuse or neglect

A counsellor's role in safeguarding is to:

- **Recognise** – I have a clear understanding of what the different signs and symptoms of potential abuse, harm and neglect can be.
- **Respond** – it is essential that I respond appropriately and do not ignore the situation.
- **Report** – concerns need to be reported without delay. Confidentiality is important, so I only share information with those who are a part of the safeguarding process.
- **Record** – I make precise, comprehensive notes that detail everything about my safeguarding concern.
- **Refer** – if the safeguarding risk is urgent and I suspect somebody is under immediate or severe threat, I will contact the relevant local authority or police services.

Introduction

As a BACP accredited counsellor I am committed to ensuring the safety and physical and emotional well-being of children. I recognise that working therapeutically means I will may into contact with children who may be at risk of harm or exploitation including radicalisation.

In fulfilling these responsibilities I am aware of my obligations under the following legislation:

- The Children Act 1989
 - the current child protection system is based on this act
 - Paramountcy Principle, Parental Responsibility
 - Significant Harm (Section 47)
 - Child in Need (Section 17)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
 - the right to respect for private and family life
 - the right to a fair trial
 - protection of health and morals

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
 - reclassification of rape
 - new definition of consent
 - offence of grooming
 - risk of sexual harm orders
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
 - Makes it an offence for UK nationals to take a girl abroad for the purposes of FGM or to help others to carry out FGM, even in countries where it is legal.
- The Children Act 2004
 - after Victoria Climbié
 - Laming Inquiry & Report
 - Keeping Children Safe
 - Every Child Matters
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004
 - Creates a new offence of causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult
- Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005
 - Sets out the framework for the national Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
 - Allowed for the establishment of a centralised vetting and barring scheme for people working with children
- Children & Families Act 2014
 - Is wide-ranging, tackling everything from school meals to smoking in cars, but at its core lie significant changes to how adoption works and major reforms to improve the lives of looked-after children. It supports children and young people with disabilities and/or special educational needs, and includes Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Young Carers' Needs Assessment and Personalisation and Personal Budgets.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
 - created new duties for the police, health and the local authority to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. From October 2019 this arrangement will be called the 'East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership' (ESSCP).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
 - Guidance setting out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard children.

I have a duty to report suspected safeguarding concerns relating to a child to external agencies (relevant authority to the client's home address).

Key Safeguarding Principles

Every adult has a role to play in the safeguarding of children and young people. I am committed to:

- Undertake safeguarding training every 2 years
- Keep up to date with LSCB Safeguarding and Prevent Procedures
- Where a disclosure has been made report concerns in a timely manner
- Contact Clinical Supervisor for support
- Follow record keeping protocols

Definition of a Child

For the purpose of this policy, a child is a person under 18 years of age.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event and it can increasingly happen online.

Definitions of Abuse

For the purpose of this policy safeguarding is defined as protecting children who maybe at risk of exploitation (including radicalisation), domestic violence, harm, neglect or abuse. 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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

- **Domestic Abuse** is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It is not just physical violence. Domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. Abusive behaviour can occur in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended. Both men and women can be abused or abusers.
- **Sexual Abuse** A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This does not have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Children will often not realise that what is happening to them is abuse.
- **Child Sexual exploitation** is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.
- **Neglect** This is the most common form of child abuse. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get love, care and attention they need from

parents or carers. A child who is neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage – even death.

- **Online Abuse** is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Children can feel there is no escape from online abuse as abusers can contact them day and night and the abuse can come into the safe places like their bedrooms. In the UK 'sex texting' is a reportable offence.
- **Physical Abuse** is deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. It is not accidental. Children who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. This is known as Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) There is no excuse for physically abusing a child. It causes serious, and often long-lasting, harm and in severe cases, death.
- **Emotional abuse** is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Children who are emotionally abused are often suffering another type of abuse at the same time – but this is not always the case. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them.
- **Bullying and cyberbullying**, bullying is a behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks is often called cyberbullying.
- **Child trafficking and modern slavery** are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for child sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare or cooking. Children are often forced into labour in factories or agriculture or criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs and bag theft.
- **Grooming** is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Children can be groomed online, face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know. This might be a family member, friend or professional. Groomers might be male or female and can be any age. Many children do not understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abusive.
- **Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment** that happens between children of a similar age or stage of development. It can happen between any number of children and can affect any age group. It can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those who experience it.

Effective safeguarding systems are "those where all professionals share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and Local Authority Children's Social Care."

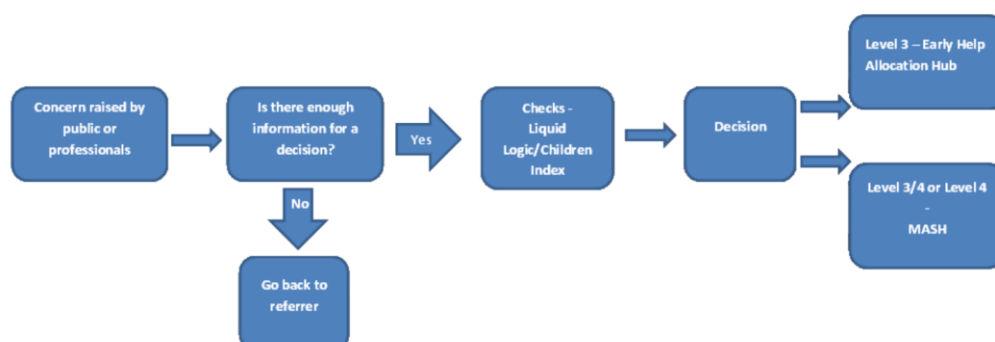
(Working Together 2015 Introduction)

Managing disclosures

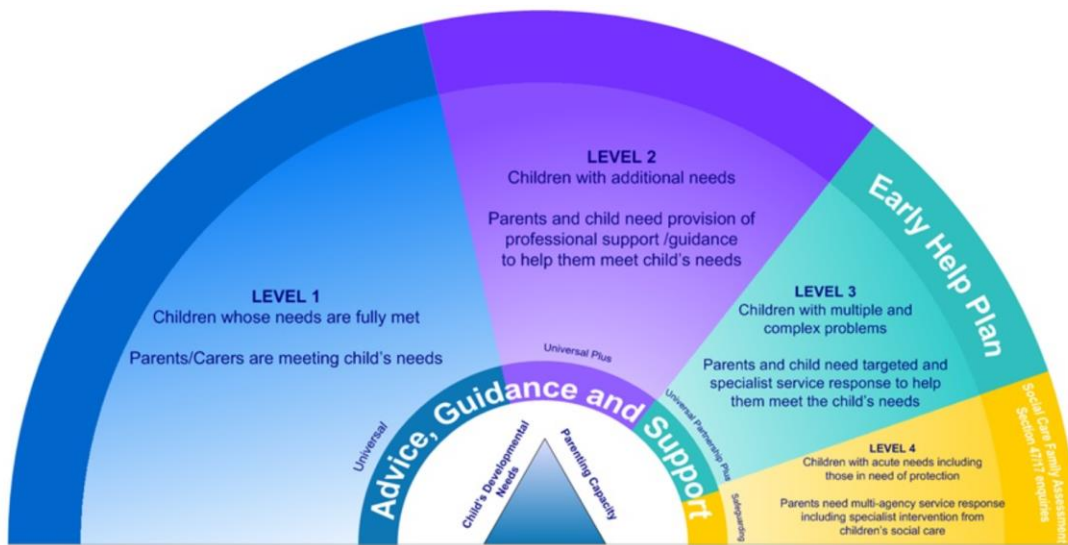
I will:

- listen carefully and stay calm; advise the child that I will need to inform someone
- make sure I have understood the matter under discussion, clarifying points if necessary
- reassure the child that by telling me, they have done the right thing.
- inform the child that I must pass on the information now but only to those who need to know; inform them who I am going to tell
- where practical, concerns will be discussed with the family and agreement sought for a referral unless this may:
 - place a child at risk of significant harm
 - lead to the risk of losing evidential material
 - in cases where fabricated or induced illness is suspected
- I will take a note of the main points of conversation including names, times, dates, etc together with any injuries observed.
 - Records will be: clear and accurate; written in Plain English; differentiate between fact, opinion, allegation and observation; signed and dated; stored in a locked cabinet with limited access if hard copy or stored on a password protected system if electronic
- Contact the Children's Social Care Team/MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) at the Local Council, for the correct telephone number to call. <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

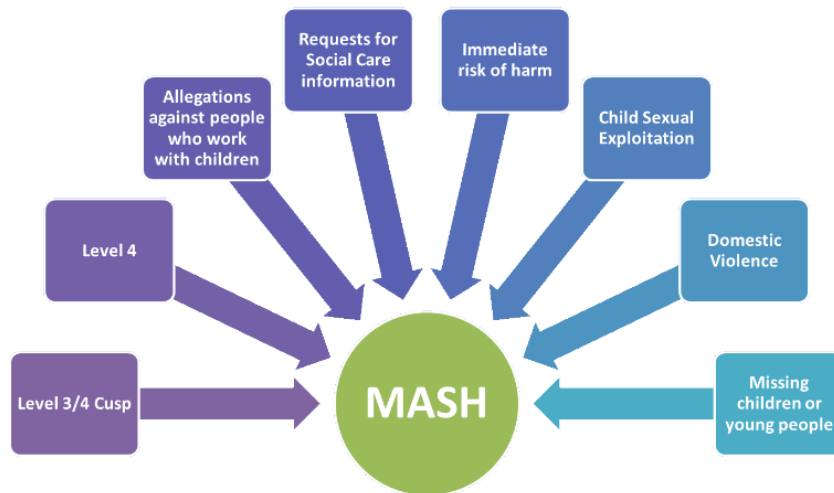
The SPoA flowchart



East Sussex – Single Point of Access (SPoA)



East Sussex Family and Environmental Factors



The MASH is responsible for responding to police notifications (SCARFs) at level 3 and 4 of the Continuum of Need and Initial Contacts received via SPOA at level 4 and the level 3 /4 cusp. All requests for statutory social care information are dealt with within MASH.

- Report the information – I will give as much information as possible:
 - name, date of birth, family details
 - clear information about immediate concern
 - what strategies have been tried previously
 - any other relevant background information
 - whether parents are aware of referral
 - what I consider to be the risk
- Complete the relevant form and email as soon as possible

- The children's social care team will tell me what happens next, this might include Early Help Assessment, Statutory assessments or Children in need
- I will contact my Clinical Supervisor

Eligibility to work with children

I have the following in place:

- Enhanced DBS
- Public Liability Insurance
- Safeguarding training (undertaken every two years as a minimum requirement).
- Prevent Awareness, an introduction into the risks of radicalisation and the role that professionals and practitioners can play in supporting those at risk:
<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen2.html>
- FGM, an introduction to recognising and preventing FGM: <https://www.fgmelearning.co.uk/>

Other safeguarding training undertaken:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Protecting Children from Domestic Abuse
- Safeguarding children with SEND/disabilities
- Protecting Children from County Lines

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protectionChildLine>

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/child-protection-and-safeguarding>

<https://www.barnardos.ie/learning-development/protecting-safeguarding-children-online>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1139597/moj-county-lines-practical-guidance-frontline-practitionerspdf.pdf

EAST SUSSEX SPoA

The SPoA team is based on the first floor of St Mark's House in Eastbourne and can be contacted either by email or telephone on Phone: 01323 464222

Email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk or

Secure email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

KENT

Online form for support: <https://apps.nelft.nhs.uk/SPA-KentMedway-Support>

Single Point of Access (also referred to as SPA)

Telephone: 0800 011 3474

Email: nem-tr.kentchildrenandyoungpeoplehealthservices@nhs.net

Operating Times: Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm, Saturday: 8am to 12noon

SURREY

Telephone: 0300 470 9100

01483 517898 (out of hours hosted by the emergency duty team)

E-mail: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/.../contact-childrens-services>