

**Safeguarding Policy:
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

The **DOT**
Collective

POLICY STATEMENT

The Dot Collective (TDC) is committed to a practice, which protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice which is applicable to TDC staff, including those who work with TDC on a volunteer or freelance basis, as well as the Dot Collectives Board of Trustees.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

-For the purposes of this policy, Vulnerable Beneficiaries are defined as children under the age of 18 or anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities that lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that particular time.

A Vulnerable Beneficiary can be anyone:

- Who receives social care services or personal care
- Who requires assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem
- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services

For ease of reading in this document whenever the terms *Child, Children or Young People* are used, it refers to all Vulnerable Beneficiaries including vulnerable adults.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which could cause Vulnerable Beneficiaries harm.

We will safeguard children, young people and other vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately and doing so in a swift and appropriate manner.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and any freelancers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- This Policy will be made readily available to all staff and volunteers, and will also sit on the Dot Collective's website.
- Reviewing our policy annually and reflecting on any reports made, reviewing the effectiveness of the reporting process every quarter.

- The Policy has been agreed with the Board of Trustees and is fully supported by the Artistic Director and all members of The Dot Collective staff.

This policy is accompanied by three appendices.

Appendix A is an Incident Report Form

Appendix B details other useful contacts

Appendix C details definitions of abuse.

Other internal policies relevant to Vulnerable Beneficiaries and Safeguarding: Equality Policy, Whistle blowing policy & Disciplinary and Grievance procedure.

CODES OF BEHAVIOUR - STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is the policy of The Dot Collective to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of The Dot Collective's programmes, training events, workshops or other activities. Personnel should, at all times, show respect and understanding individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of The Dot Collective.

ATTITUDES

Guidelines for all The Dot Collective staff and volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers should be committed to treating children and young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child, young person or vulnerable adult is saying
- Valuing each child and young person
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person

STAFF CONDUCT

Staff and volunteers should:

- Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect a young person's right to privacy
- Always dress professionally appropriately at all times
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned

- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow themselves to enter or become embroiled in inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child, young person or vulnerable adult

Safeguarding people with dementia

The enormity of the challenge of helping people to live well with dementia can be gauged by public attitudes and the stigma attached to dementia.

TDC are committed to demonstrate practices that everyone can do to help people live with dementia.

People with dementia can be extremely vulnerable due to the nature of their condition. Early symptoms can affect communication and reasoning skills and consequently they may not be able to understand or explain to others what is happening to them. The MORI research clearly demonstrates the stigma attached to dementia. A diagnosis and the life-changing decisions that follow can have a substantial impact on partners, families and friends – and on their relationship with the person with dementia.

We recognise the importance and are committed to treating a person with dementia with dignity, maintaining their human rights and ensuring that appropriate safeguards are put in place to protect them in their home and from abuse.

Safety in environment

A person's environment can help or hinder their ability to live well with dementia. Poorly fitted mats or poor lighting can lead to trips and falls. Forgetfulness can result in a cooker being left on or a tap left running. A lack of spatial awareness (to be aware of yourself in the space around you) can lead to someone walking into a table, chairs or other furniture or objects. Disorientation can result in someone getting lost in their own home – perhaps being unable to find the bathroom, bedroom or kitchen.

We will make the environment safe for someone with dementia by following advice from The Alzheimer's society and SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) by:

- removing ill-fitted mats
- re-arranging furniture to help them move more easily around individual rooms
- putting on lights to help improve visibility in the home
- pulling back net curtains to allow more natural light into rooms
- installing simple devices to avoid sinks and baths overflowing
- fitting sensors to monitor movement in the home, particularly at night

- putting cleaning fluids out of reach – and removing medicines that are no longer needed (that is, taking them to the chemist)
- fitting smoke alarms – and ensuring that fireguards are placed in front of open fires
- putting simple signs on doors and cupboards to make it easier to find rooms and objects (such as cups, saucers and cutlery).

Safety and abuse

The Care Act 2014 describes 10 types of abuse – physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect, organisational, domestic violence, modern slavery, self-neglect and discriminatory abuse. Abuse can include:

- physical: hitting, slapping pushing and kicking
- sexual: sexual assault, rape or exposing a person to inappropriate material
- psychological: emotional threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation and intimidation
- financial: theft, fraud, exploitation of funds and misappropriation of benefits
- neglect: ignoring physical care, personal hygiene, and eating and drinking
- self-neglect: a person ignoring their own environment, hygiene and nutrition to a harmful degree
- organisational: neglect or seriously poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation
- domestic violence: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; and so called ‘honour’-based violence
- modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude
- discriminatory: racism, sexual abuse and harassment based on a person’s disability or cultural or religious beliefs.
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As a person comes to terms with a diagnosis of dementia and adapts to their new life, they may become vulnerable to abuse. A care worker should be aware of the different types of abuse and report any concerns to their line manager (who may then take up any issues with social services).

Recognising the signs of abuse

As a care worker, it is important to try to talk to a person with dementia about any concerns you – or they – may have. There may be a simple, innocent reason for someone having bruises on their legs (such as walking into furniture) or for becoming withdrawn or appearing sad (perhaps there has been some bad news, the person may be feeling unwell or has mislaid something important). However, a care worker should be alert to the possibility that abuse may be taking place, potentially by someone close to the person with dementia.

Signs of abuse can include:

- physical: bruising, undue redness or discoloration of the skin (perhaps brought about by pressure, swelling or missing hair)
- sexual: recurring urinary tract infections, agitation during personal care, the wearing of more clothing to cover certain areas
- psychological: crying for no obvious reason, being anxious, withdrawn or fearful

- financial: lack of money, missing possessions, another person's suspicious behaviour or influence concerning money
- neglect or self-neglect: lack of personal hygiene, dirty clothes, failing to keep the house clean
- organisational: similar issues within a formal care setting
- modern slavery: doing domestic chores, perhaps for family members, to the extent that they have no time to themselves, and are fearful of trying to change the situation
- discriminatory: being withdrawn and avoiding certain people or places
- domestic violence: many of the above concerns, if they are happening at the hands of a close family member, may well amount to domestic abuse.

Dignity and human rights

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and make their own choices in life. Human rights are relevant to everyday life and are designed to protect a person's freedom and their ability to have control over their life and to be involved in any decisions that affect their life. Sometimes, as a care worker, it is hard not to intervene when certain choices do not match your ideas and beliefs. However, it is important that you treat a person with dementia with dignity and respect at all times (that is, addressing someone by the name they choose, listening carefully, speaking respectfully, respecting the person's privacy and offering choices whenever possible). Occasionally, a care worker may have to remind families and friends to treat the person with the same dignity and respect (such as around privacy, making their own choices and allowing them to speak for themselves). This is possible provided it is dealt with in a polite and tactful way.

It may be difficult for a person with dementia to effectively communicate personal wishes and challenge any human rights issues. If a care worker suspects that a person with dementia is being abused or their human rights are being infringed, they should:

- talk to the person first and then report any concerns to their line manager.
- concerns are reported accurately and policies and procedures in place are adhered to.

CONTACT WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Staff and volunteers should:

- Should actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable beneficiaries, away from others
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable beneficiary this meeting must be as open as possible, and other The Dot Collective staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. The meeting should not take place in a room that is not private, unless absolutely necessary. If no adult is available as company to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable beneficiary without first asking permission.
- The Dot Collective will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries. The responsible adult will never be a member of The Dot Collective.
- If a child or vulnerable beneficiary is reliant upon an adult for any aspects personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, The Dot Collective will engage the responsible adult, which will never be a member of The Dot Collective.
- Staff and volunteers should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.

Online Contact

- The Dot Collective will only contact a child directly via email or telephone in reference to workshops, performances or related The Dot Collective work.
- Where possible, all contact with children or vulnerable adults will be conducted via schools and care providers, or relevant and responsible adults.
- The Dot Collective will not contact a children or vulnerable adults directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters.
- The Dot Collective staff and volunteers will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child.
- If a child makes contact with a company member via social media, the member of the company should report it to the Artistic Director, who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the company member respond of their own volition.
- The Dot Collective staff and volunteers will not take or share photos or video footage of children or vulnerable adults without confirmation from the Artistic Director that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The relevant member related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools and care centres and for discussing how best to document projects, and will circulate this information
- Confidential data that is collected on children or vulnerable adults including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need to know basis.
- When sharing information, The Dot Collective personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.
- All children and vulnerable adults have a right to know the information the The Dot Collective holds on them.

It is imperative that each member of The Dot Collective staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of The Dot Collective procedures. Each member of staff will receive this Policy as part of the Company Handbook when they start work for The Dot Collective.

- The Dot Collective will issue the company handbook to each new starter at the The Dot Collective, which clearly lays out the Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy
- Any training in relation to Vulnerable Beneficiaries needs of each individual staff members are identified.
- After each annual review, the Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy will be shared with current and incoming staff members, so updates within the Policy are known and upheld by all staff and volunteers.

GUIDELINES ON RECRUITMENT

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people and vulnerable adults.

The same recruitment procedure will be adopted whether the company members are paid or unpaid, full, part-time or freelance.

Recruitment procedure

This process will be adhered to for any role at The Dot Collective that directly relates to working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

- Advertisements for roles that involve work with children will state that applicants will be expected to have a current DBS check. In most circumstances, company members will have obtained their own check, which should have taken place within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances The Dot Collective may arrange this. They may not work with children until a clean check is received.
- All applicants must submit a CV or application form detailing their experience relevant to the role.
- Successful applicants, including volunteers, will be interviewed to assess suitability for the role.
- Substantial gaps in employment will be queried.
- Two references should be taken up before appointing paid company members.
- For posts in which there will be direct contact with children, one reference should be regarding previous work with children.

On appointment

- An enhanced DBS (formerly CRB) check must be held by all The Dot Collective staff and volunteers who will be working directly with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked adult in carrying out their duties in working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Individuals who have a valid DBS check in place on appointment should have had their DBS check issued within the last 3 years and must present a copy of their DBS to the Designated Child Protection Officer (Executive Director) for verification.
- Copies of DBS checks for company members and volunteers will be held in The Dot Collective office in a locked filing cabinet. This information will be kept for no less than 5 years. Only the Artistic Director will have access to these files
- In addition, all permanent company members and/or those working directly with children will be required to read the Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy.

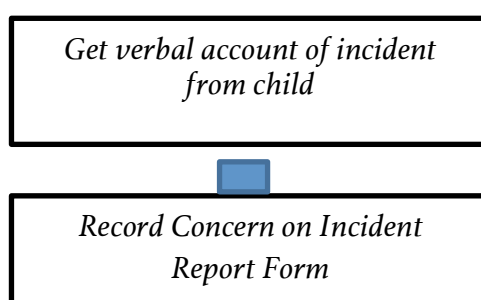
PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

In any case where someone The Dot Collective has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format [Appendix 1]. Details must include:

- Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary
- Date of Birth of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary (if available)
- Approximate Age of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action Taken
- Were the parents informed?

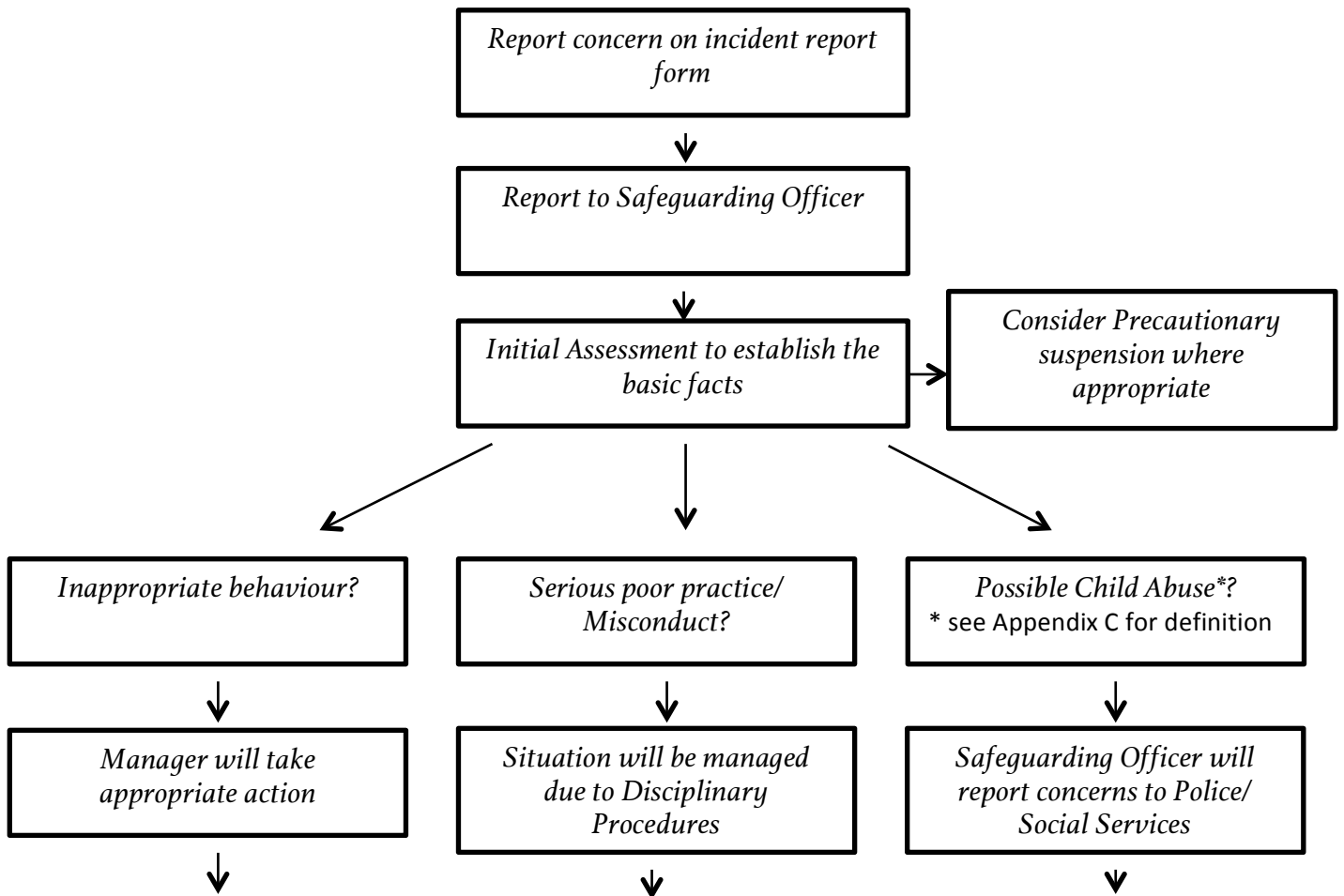
The record must then be signed by the completing person and the designated Child Protection Officer.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS MADE BY A CHILD OF SUSPECTED ABUSE





RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER



Possible Outcomes:

- *No case to answer*
- *Informal discussion*
- *Formal discussion*
- *Further training & support agreed*

Possible Outcomes:

- *No case to answer*
- *Disciplinary hearing*
- *Formal warning*
- *Further training and support agreed*

Possible Outcomes:

- *Police Investigation*
- *Criminal Proceedings*
- *Civil Proceedings*
- *Disciplinary hearing*

Referral procedure

The Dot Collective protection referral procedure for identified suspicion or concern will be followed at all times. This is outlined below:

The Dot Collective staff identify a Child Protection concern:

- All Vulnerable Beneficiary protection concerns should first be referred to one of the Designated Persons. No member of staff should act alone.
- Do Not Delay, the concern should be discussed between the referring member of staff and the relevant Designated Person as soon as possible, other The Dot Collective staff consulted as appropriate, and a decision made.
- If the concern is deemed of a serious nature, particularly one that warrants a referral to Social Services, the Designated Person will inform the Deputy Senior Designated Person.
- Wherever possible an identified concern will be discussed with the social worker responsible for the child (if possible) before any further action is taken. Advice from the social work department will be taken and any concerns discussed. The

Designated Person will lead on this but the person who identified the concern will assist.

- The person who identified the concern will be asked to complete a referral form.
- Information sharing needs to be proportional to the level of concern. Relevant Dot Collective staff and other agencies involved with the child will only be given information on a need to know basis.

The Dot Collective *staff are made aware of a child currently on a child protection plan:*

- When a child who is already subject to a Child Protection Plan is involved with The Dot Collective the Designated Person will be notified and provided with any relevant information on a need to know basis. This information will be shared with other Dot Collective staff on a need to know basis.

Designated Child Protection Persons

For reasons of confidentiality the only person(s) who need to know this information are the following Designated Child Protection Persons:

1. Laura Harling (Miss)
60 Coleman road, London SE5 7TG

The Designated Person(s) will inform the relevant outside organisation of the incident.

Social Services	Community Care Central The Town Hall Hornton Street LONDON W8 7NX Tel: 020 7361 3013 - SocialServicesline 020 7361 3013 - Social Services Line, Mon to Fri: 8.30am 5pm 020 7373 2227 - Emergency social worker, out of hours service
Police	C.A.R.E Units Tel: 028 9065 0222 – 24 hours Ask for Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry Unit
NSPCC Help line	Tel: 0800 800 500 – 24 hours, Freephone
Child Line (NI) Tel:	0800 1111 – Freephone

DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Protection of Vulnerable Beneficiaries will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of The Dot Collective Designated Persons for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files protected by password.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

This policy was approved and agreed by The Dot Collective Board of Trustees and management staff on the date shown below.

Signed : 

Name (please print): LAURA HARLING

Position: Artistic Director

Date: 12/01/21

Review dates: 12/07/21

The Name of Organisation: The Dot Collective

Charity Number: 1169951

The Document was reviewed on 10 January 2021

The Nominated Safeguarding Officer is: Laura Harling. Artistic Director

APPENDIX A

Incident Report Form

Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary: Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:	Name of staff member completing form:
Date the incident took place: Time:	
Where did the incident take place:	
Who else was involved/witnessed the incident:	
Details- Please provide a statement of fact:	
Action taken:	Parents informed? Yes/No

Signature of staff member reporting incident: _____

Signature of designated C.P. officer: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Useful Contacts

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
Helpline 01325 953795
01752 346984
Available 5pm to 8.30am Monday to Friday
and all day Saturday and Sunday

RBKC Local Safeguarding Children Board:

The LSCB Team can be contacted

RBKC Social Services Advice
socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk
Tel: 020 7361 3013.

The NSPCC (National Centre)
*42 Curtain Road
London, EC2A 3NH
0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk/*

Childline UK
*(help for children and young people)
Freepost IIII
London, N1 0BR
0800 IIII*

APPENDIX C

WHAT IS ABUSE?

The following definitions are taken from The Department for Children Schools and Families (2013) Working Together to Safeguard Children document.

ABUSE: 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. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

PHYSICAL ABUSE: 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.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: 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 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 alone.

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 or not 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. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NEGLECT: 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:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs