



HEAR US
Croydon's Mental Health Service Users Group
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Hear Us

QUALITY MANUAL



SECTION D: People Management

D.3.5.2 Safeguarding Children Policy

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Hear Us
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Registered in England No. 6891337
Charity No.1135535



1. AIM

This policy aims to adopt the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps in relation to the safety and welfare of the children with whom Hear Us comes into contact, within the course of its work.

Implementing this policy and following the guidelines will enable those who undertake work for Hear Us to be confident that they have taken all reasonable precautions to prevent harm occurring to children while being prepared to deal with an incident should it occur.

Hear Us expects all those working with children and young people under the age of 18 years in any capacity – paid or voluntary - to apply this policy.

Hear Us work with children, young people and their parents

It is important to remember that as someone who works in a paid or voluntary capacity at Hear Us you may come into contact with children, directly or indirectly, in a wide range of situations in connection with any one of our services.

To whom does this policy apply

The policy applies to all staff, trustees, and volunteers.

All those covered by the policy have a duty to do everything reasonable within their power to ensure the safety and welfare of children while they are in contact with Hear Us.

2. SUMMARY OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Abuse or neglect, can take many forms. Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to. *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)* statutory guidance sets out full descriptions.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



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You are expected to:

- 1) Undertake the relevant safeguarding children training for your role, as directed by your manager and the Safeguarding Lead.
- 2) Respect the wishes of a child as you would an adult. You must not impose yourself on them.
- 3) Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child in contact with Hear Us.
- 4) Remember that children regard adults as role models and ensure your behaviour, language, gestures etc., are appropriate and above reproach.
- 5) Be aware of child protection issues in relation to the work you do.
- 6) Prevent any other member of staff or volunteer from putting any child in a situation in which there is a significant risk to their health and safety.
- 7) Take appropriate action if you become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing, or neglecting a child.
- 8) Report any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused whether by an adult or another child to the Safeguarding Lead, Chief Executive or, in their absence, the Chair of the Trustees.
- 9) Not physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or young person.

In most instances, any children you come into contact with will be accompanied by a parent. However, if due to illness or another unexpected event, a member of staff or volunteer is left in charge of a child or children, they should act and make decisions in accordance with this policy and guidelines.

Golden Rule - Safety in Numbers

In all situations, we should aim to ensure that no adult is in a one-to-one situation with a child. Safety in numbers should be the golden rule, whether the numbers are other children or adults.

4. DISCLOSURE

Appointments

All staff and volunteers who come into contact with service users and/or their children are required to apply to The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) prior to appointment.

The appointment will only proceed if:

- 1) the pre-employment checks prove satisfactory



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and

- 2) the Disclosure provides no cause for concern as to their suitability to work with children. This applies whether the appointment is the result of recruitment or an internal move. Managers must also be mindful of these requirements as the content of posts develop over time and new tasks are assigned.

5. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

If you are worried about a child or a young person in Croydon, or you think a child or their family may need additional support, a referral should be made to the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) team at Croydon Council. **Please speak to the Hear Us Safeguarding Lead to discuss further.** It is vital you report your concerns so that this can be investigated.

All referrals will be sent to the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) team who will triage the referral to the appropriate services. <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/professionals-working-children-and-young-people/making-referrals-children-services/SPOC>

Consent must be given by the young person (if they are over 16 years of age) or their family before a referral is submitted to the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) team. The only exception to this is when there is an immediate risk of significant harm.

If the child is in immediate danger call 999, or contact SPOC immediately on 0208 255 2888 – Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

If you need professional advice on whether or not a referral should be submitted, you can call the SPOC consultation line.

SPOC consultation line

Telephone: 020 876 6464

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

It is to be hoped that you will never have to deal with an alleged incident of child abuse. But it is sensible that you are prepared to do so if necessary.

There are five potential scenarios which you should be aware of and be prepared to deal with if necessary:

- 1) There is suspicion or evidence that a child is being abused e.g. at home.
- 2) A child discloses abuse happening e.g. at home; at school.



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- 3) There is suspicion or evidence that a child is being abused by a member of staff or other person associated with Hear Us.
- 4) A child accuses a member of staff or other person associated with Hear Us of abusing them.
- 5) Abuse takes place or is suspected on Hear Us premises by an individual unrelated to Hear Us.

In all cases you must:

Be prompt, calm, assured and professional

Keep any details strictly confidential and share only on a 'need to know' basis, referring to the Hear Us Confidentiality Policy.

If practicable, staff should discuss making a referral with the **Hear Us Safeguarding Lead** or another manager within Hear Us although if this would delay the reporting of concerns unnecessarily and potentially leave a child at risk, this may not always be possible.

You should record any report or suspicion, making clear notes of the case (dates, times, details of incident). The Safeguarding Lead will record this on the confidential safeguarding database. If you are receiving the report from a third party, you should make them aware that you have a duty to share this information with the relevant statutory agency.

6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

You must be aware that allegations of abuse made by children about adults do happen. The policy and guidelines are there to help you to avoid situations in which well-intentioned actions could be misinterpreted and ensure that you do not find yourself in a situation where an unfounded allegation by a child, young or vulnerable person can be made.

Children have a right to safe services. If you are concerned that a member of staff has behaved inappropriately towards a child, you or your manager must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is located within children's services and should be alerted to all cases. The NHS Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) must also be informed.

The LADO should provide advice and guidance to senior managers on the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with robustly and quickly as possible. Any allegation should be reported immediately to a senior manager within your organisation. The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to employer's attention.



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Local Authority Designated Officer

Telephone: 020 8255 2889

Email: LADO@croydon.gov.uk

Address: 4th Floor, Zone 2 Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CR0 1EA

Use of Information relating to children

Information about children, e.g. names and addresses, must be treated confidentially.

Discussion of the issues

Open discussion of child protection should be encouraged since this helps to make staff more comfortable with the issues involved. Do not keep it 'under wraps' for fear of upsetting or embarrassing people.

Training

All Hear Us staff, volunteers and trustees must undergo mandatory certified safeguarding training (at various levels depending on their role) which is monitored by senior management and the Safeguarding Lead. Regular refresher training is also mandatory.

Helpful links:

- The Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) website includes information and guidance for professionals, practitioners and managers who work with children, young people and their families <https://croydonlcsb.org.uk/>
- Local policies and procedures <https://croydonlcsb.org.uk/professionals/policies/>
- London Child Protection Procedures from the London Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://www.londoncp.co.uk/>
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* <http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners* <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/u>



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[ploads/attachment data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](#)

7. ASSOCIATED HEAR US POLICIES

- Confidentiality Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY

Hear Us Safeguarding Lead	Name: Claire Hawkes Email: claire@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 07784 334 379
Hear Us Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Lead	Name: Claire Hawkes Email: claire@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 07784 334 379
Chief Executive Officer	Name: Tim Oldham Email: tim@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888 or 0772 373 296
Chair of the Trustees	Name: Abeline Greene Email: abeline@hear-us.org Tel: 020 8681 6888