



HEAR US CROYDON

Croydon's Mental Health Service Users Group

www.hear-us.org

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Hear Us

QUALITY MANUAL



SECTION D: People Management

D.3.5.2 Safeguarding Children Policy

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| AGREED DATE: | 27/07/2021 |
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| NEXT REVIEW DATE: | 11/09/2025 |
| VERSION #: | V8 |



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

You are expected to:

- 1) Undertake the relevant safeguarding children training for your role, as directed by your manager and the designated 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 Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead, CEO 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
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. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE – HEAR US SAFEGUARDING REPORTING PROCEDURE

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.
- 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.

Hear Us Staff: If you receive a disclosure of alleged abuse or develop a strong suspicion that abuse is taking place, you should:

- record the allegation clearly and accurately,
- and make a safeguarding referral.

If you are unsure about whether or not to make a referral, you can speak to the Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance, in their absence, the CEO or Chair of the Trustees.

Hear Us Volunteers or Trustees: If you receive a disclosure of alleged abuse or develop a strong suspicion that abuse is taking place, you should:

- record the allegation clearly and accurately,
- report your concern to your line manager or other Hear Us senior manager as soon as possible, who will take appropriate action.



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If you have an urgent concern about a child that needs an immediate response, consider calling 999 and request the appropriate emergency service.

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.
- record any report or suspicion, making clear notes of the case (dates, times, details of incident)

Hear Us staff must:

- notify the relevant statutory agency by making a safeguarding referral (see below)
- notify the Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in their absence, the CEO or Chair of the Trustees).

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. FOR HEAR US STAFF MAKING A SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL

If you have an urgent concern about a child that needs an immediate response, consider calling 999 and request the appropriate emergency service.

If you are worried or have concerns that a child or young person is being neglected, harmed, or may need support, there are several ways Croydon Council can help:

Local support directory

Check the local [directory of organisations](#) who offer support to children and families across Croydon.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)



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If you cannot find the right help through the local directory, you can contact the MASH team by making a referral. The MASH can offer you support and advice, as well as putting families in touch with other services.

If you are unsure about whether or not to make a referral, or which service will best help the family and safeguard the child, you can:

[refer to the Croydon Threshold document](#) on the [Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#) or speak to the Hear Us designated safeguarding lead in the first instance

If the child has an allocated social worker or key worker, or you need to enquire if the child has an allocated social worker or key worker, please contact the worker or their team directly, or call on **0208 726 6000** and press Option 3.

Make a referral

Online: You can make a referral using the Croydon Council children and families [online portal clicking here](#) and follow the instructions. Please note: **in order to progress with the online referral form you must either log in or complete a simple registration for a new account. You can then continue to complete this form. This will enable you to track the form at a later date.**

If you are experiencing any difficulties with registering for an account online or logging into your account please contact the CFS team email crsproject@croydon.gov.uk

Or by phone: Call **0208 255 2888** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For any other enquiries, please email mash@croydon.gov.uk

Please note referrals and information requests should be made via the Portal and not via email.

Urgent referrals

REMEMBER: IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OR HARM CALL 999



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If it is not appropriate to call 999, but you have an urgent safeguarding concern that requires a same day response, you can contact the MASH team in the following ways:

During office hours, Monday to Friday, 9pm to 5pm:

Call the MASH on **0208 255 2888**. The referral, if appropriate, will be accepted over the telephone and you will need to follow this up by completing the online referral form within 24 hours.

Out of Hours:

Call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on **0208 726 6400. Press 5** for Children's Services and listen to the message until you hear 'If your call is an emergency, please wait and your call will be transferred'.

The call operator will take your details and pass the message on to the EDT social worker to respond. This may not be immediately, dependent on other calls into EDT. EDT responds to any urgent child safeguarding concerns that cannot wait until the next working day.

If you struggle to get through to the out of hours number, please email: SSD-EMERGENCY-DUTY-TEAM@croydon.gov.uk

Online:

An [online MASH referral](#) may be a more appropriate option, which will be actioned the following working day.

Multi Agency Referral Form

[This form](#) should be used to refer a child and family for one of the three following services:

1) **Children's Social Care (CSC):** Where you are worried about the safety of a child, or the child may be at risk of harm if specialist services are not given to them or their family. This is the threshold for an assessment led by children's social care under Section 17, Children Act 1989, or children in acute needs who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm under Section 47, Children Act 1989.



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2) **Early Help:** Where you are worried for a child's wellbeing and/or the child may be disadvantaged by their circumstances and the family has asked for support. Support is needed by one or more organisation. You can also request parenting programmes through this form.

3) **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health service:** Where you are worried about the emotional wellbeing or/and mental health of a child/young person. This service is for children, young people under 18 and their families who live, go to school, work or have a GP in Croydon. They cover the following conditions:-

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Stress
- Eating disorders
- Psychosis
- Suicide
- ADHD
- Autism spectrum
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties

Any professional working with children can also seek advice from a social worker by contacting the *MASH Professionals Consultation Line **0208 726 6464 (Monday to Friday, 13.00pm - 4.30pm)**

The Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead will make sure accurate details of all safeguarding referrals are recorded in the appropriate databases. The Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure all safeguarding referrals are regularly reported to

- the NHS South West London ICB (Integrated Care Board)
- any funders who require this information, ensuring confidentiality is adhered to in line with Hear Us confidentiality policies
- and Hear Us Trustees.



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7. 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 must inform the Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead or another senior manager as soon as possible, who will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is located within children's services and should be alerted to all cases. The NHS South West London ICB 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 Hear Us. The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to employer's attention.

LADO

Jane Parr : jane.parr@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8726 6000 Ext 24817 Mobile: 07716 092630

Email: LADO@croydon.gov.uk

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

LADO Service Manager

Steve Hall : steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8726 6000 Ext 24334 Mobile: 07825 830328

Karen Anns (Business Support Coordinator) 0208 726 6000 Ext 23981

Use of Information relating to children



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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 and Supervision

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 Hear Us Designated Safeguarding Lead. Refresher training is also required. All staff and volunteers must have regular supervision, as set out in the Hear Us Supervision and Appraisal Policy.

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://www.croydonlcsb.org.uk/guidance-and-resources>
- Find support for children, young people and families <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/find-support>
- 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/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)



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8. ASSOCIATED HEAR US POLICIES

- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Staff Handbook (including whistleblowing, complaints, lone-working)
- Staff Supervision and Appraisal Policy
- Hear Us Safeguarding Procedure Flow Chart

| GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY | |
|---|---|
| Hear Us Designated 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 |



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| Version # | Author | Date | Version Notes |
|-----------|---------------|------------|---|
| HU-V5 | Claire Hawkes | 16/08/22 | Reviewed policy – no changes (in legislation etc). Updated Chair of trustees. Updated CCG. |
| HU-V6 | T Oldham | 14/04/2023 | New Revision – annual review |
| HU-V7 | Claire Hawkes | 17/04/2024 | New revision. New guidelines and system for making safeguarding referrals. Updated contact details |
| HU-V8 | Claire Hawkes | 11/09/2024 | New revision to clarify Hear Us internal procedure. Volunteers. Flow chart added to associated policies |
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