

**Broxbourne Council**  
**Child Protection Policy**  
**August 2022**

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>SECTION / CONTENTS</b>
3	<b>1.0 Introduction</b>
3	<b>1.1 Broxbourne Council Child Protection Policy Statement</b>
4	<b>1.2 Background and Legislation</b>
6	<b>1.3 Scope of the Policy</b>
7	<b>1.4 Definitions</b>
7	<b>1.5 Types of Abuse</b> - Physical Abuse - Emotional Abuse - Sexual Abuse - Neglect
9	<b>1.6 Low level concerns</b> - Families First
9	<b>1.7 Celebrity, VIP and Visitor Safeguarding Policy</b>
11	<b>2.0 Reporting, Referring and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns</b>
11	<b>2.1 Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse or demonstrating behaviours or other symptoms that might indicate abuse or neglect.</b>
12	<b>2.2 Responding to allegations or concerns about a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider</b>
13	<b>2.3 Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person e.g. parent, carer, other service user</b>
13	<b>2.4 Reassurance for those raising concerns or reporting child abuse</b>
14	<b>2.5 Designated Child Protection Officer</b>
15	<b>2.6 Out of Hours Working</b>
15	<b>2.7 Confidentiality</b>
15	<b>2.8 Data Protection</b>
16	<b>3.0 Staffing</b>
16	<b>3.1 Safer Recruitment</b>
17	<b>3.2 Training</b>
17	<b>3.3 Disciplinary Offences</b>
18	<b>3.4 Risk Management</b>
18	<b>3.5 Work Experience</b>
18	<b>3.6 Communication with Staff</b>
18	<b>3.7 Communication with Children and Young People</b>
19	<b>4.0 Relationships with other agencies</b>
19	<b>4.1 Contracted Service Partners</b>
19	<b>4.2 External Organisations using Council Facilities</b>
20	<b>4.3 Grant Applications</b>
20	<b>4.4 The Community</b>
20	<b>4.5 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership</b>

21	<b>Appendix 1 – Contact Details for Designated Child Safeguarding Officers</b>
22	<b>Appendix 2 - Good Practice for Working with Children and Young People</b>
23	<b>Appendix 3 – First Aid</b>
23	<b>Appendix 4 – Photography</b>
24	<b>Appendix 5 – Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse</b>
24	- Physical Abuse
24	- Emotional Abuse
25	- Sexual Abuse
26	- Neglect
26	- Child Sexual Exploitation
27	- Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines
28	- Child Trafficking
28	- Private Fostering
28	- Modern Slavery
29	- Domestic Violence
29	- Female Genital Mutilation
30	- Breast Ironing
30	- Honour Based Crimes / Forced Marriage
31	- Faith/Ritual Abuse and spirit possession
31	- Radicalisation
32	- Online Abuse
33	- Substance Misuse and Alcohol Abuse
33	- Children with a Disability
33	- ‘See the Adult, See the Child’
33	<b>Appendix 6 – Celebrity, VIP and Visitor Safeguarding Protocol</b>
37	<b>Appendix 7 – Child Safeguarding Referral Form and Bodymap</b>

## **1.0 Introduction**

Section 11 of The Children’s Act (2004) places a duty on all statutory agencies working with children and young people to ‘safeguard and promote their welfare.’ This duty means that the Council must make arrangements not only to ensure its functions are discharged with full regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people but that any services that are contracted out to other organisations also have regard to that need.

During the course of providing services or coming into contact with residents, the Council has the opportunity to make positive impacts into improving the lives and outcomes for children and young people, protecting them from harm and neglect.

This policy demonstrates how the Council will meet its legal obligations and reassure members of the public, service users, councillors, employees and people working on behalf of the Council:

- a) What they can expect from the Council to protect and safeguard children and young people (sections 1.0-1.4, 1.6, 2.1-2.8, 3.0-3.7, section 4.1-4.3);
- b) That they are able to voice any concerns through an established procedure (sections 2.1-2.4);
- c) That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with in a serious and effective manner; (sections 2.1-2.4) and
- d) That there is an efficient recording and monitoring system in place (sections 2.5-2.8).

This policy updates and replaces the Council’s previous Child Protection Policy that was produced in 2017. It reflects changes in legislation and practice, and draws upon good practice provided by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), the Local Government Association (LGA), and others.

### **1.1 Broxbourne Council Child Protection Policy Statement**

*“Broxbourne Council has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people and protect them from harm and abuse when they are engaged in activities, events or services provided or organised by, or on behalf of, the Council. All children and young people have a right to protection and the Council will endeavour to keep them safe from harm and abuse, through adherence to the guidelines set out in the Council’s Child Protection Policy.*

*The Council will respond promptly and appropriately to any suspicion of abuse or neglect. It will act in the best interests of the child or young person at all times.*

*The Council will proactively seek to promote the welfare and protection of all children and young people living in the Borough at all times.*

*The Council is an extended partner of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and has accepted the legal responsibility to inform Hertfordshire County Council of any concerns about a child’s wellbeing. The Council’s Child Safeguarding Policy has been developed in line with the HSCP Countywide safeguarding procedures manual.”*

## 1.2 Background and Legislation

Broxbourne Council is not the primary agency for responding to child protection concerns. That responsibility sits with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

The Children Act (1989) makes provision for local authority services for children in need and those at risk of significant harm. Child Protection (section 47 of the Act) is when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. However, the local authority also has the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need (section 17 of the Act) who are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services.

'Harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development. 'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; 'Health' means physical or mental health; and 'Ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment that are not physical.

Broxbourne Council has a responsibility to inform the local authority (HCC) where it has concerns that a child is in need or at risk of significant harm, as defined by the Act.

Section 27 of The Children Act (1989) states that the local authority can request the help of a district council in meeting its child protection functions by providing relevant information about families that could be helpful to HCC Children Services' staff who are carrying out assessments under Section 17 or Section 47 of The Children Act (1989).

Section 11 of The Children Act (2004) places a statutory duty on key people and bodies – including district councils - to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Across the Council, staff must consider how service delivery would impact upon the five Every Child Matters outcomes supported by section 10 of The Children Act (2004) these are:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

Section 10 of the 2004 Act also outlined the duty to promote inter-agency cooperation between named agencies (including district councils) whilst Section 13 gives district councils representation on, and participation in, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs). This was amended by the Children and Social Work Act (2017) which abolished LSCBs and replaced them with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs). These are jointly governed by the top tier authority, the police and the NHS.<sup>1</sup> The duty to co-operate remains.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) reiterates the important role district and borough councils, as providers of housing, environmental health services, community

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<sup>1</sup> Broxbourne is covered by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership which is the LSCP for Hertfordshire - <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-partnership/hscp.aspx>

provision and leisure services, have to play in working collaboratively across agencies to maximise safeguarding in their localities.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) sets out a number of arrangements which all organisations who provide services for children, parents or families should demonstrate to fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These include:

- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including the commissioning of services
- Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to protect children and young people including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers
- Procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against staff, councillors and volunteers
- Arrangements to ensure all staff undertake and refresh appropriate training to equip them to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively
- Policies in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with guidance from Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Arrangements to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information
- A culture of listening to and talking with children to ensure their views on actions and intervention are taken into account

The Housing Act (1996) as amended by Section 213A of the Homelessness Act (2002) ensures that a housing authority contacts social services (with or where appropriate without consent) when a family with children is ineligible or intentionally homeless. This section also ensures that housing authorities cooperate with social services to provide advice and assistance to help ineligible or intentionally homeless households with children.

The Housing Act (2004) gives local authorities powers and duties to take action against bad housing conditions and Environmental Health officers will assess the impact of health and safety hazards in light of hazards that occupants are vulnerable to and consider safeguarding children as part of this process.

The Modern Slavery Act (2015) places specific duties on local authorities under sections 43 and 52 of the Act, to refer child victims through to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), or to make a duty to notify referral to the Home Office for a Single Competent Authority assessment.

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) places a duty on local authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) places a duty on local authorities in relation to safe accommodation, homelessness assistance and additional support services for victims of domestic abuse. In accordance with the Children Act, children who form part of a household in which domestic abuse is taking place, whether present or not when the abuse occurs, are automatically referred to children's services for safeguarding irrespective of whether the adult victim wishes to seek support.

This policy seeks to ensure that the Council adheres to the requirements of the above pieces of legislation. The Council will achieve this by:

- Raising awareness throughout the Council of the statutory “duty of care” relating to children and young people and actively encourage good practice amongst all staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors. This will include mandatory “introduction to safeguarding” training for all staff and the publication of relevant child safeguarding updates on the Council’s intranet.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff, councillors and volunteers who work with children and young people to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations.
- All staff and volunteers who work with children and young people will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff, councillors and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Council’s Child Protection Policy, together with any procedures and good practice guidelines that may be published from time to time, through the inclusion of a clause within every job description.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people. Listening to children and young people, minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Making sure organisations that are awarded grant funding or contracts have a child protection policy whenever there is the likelihood of contact with children and young people.
- Co-operating with the requirements of and guidance from Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and HCC’s Children Services department.

It is not the responsibility of any Borough/District Council councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider to determine whether abuse is being experienced, or has taken place, or indeed the nature of any abuse. The Council is not responsible for investigating any safeguarding incidents or allegations, involving children or young people. The role of the District Council councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is to inform and report concerns, not to investigate or judge. However they should be aware of signs and symptoms that could indicate abuse. The one exception is when an allegation has been made against a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider in which case an investigation is carried out under the guidance of the Local Authority Designated Officer (see section 2.2).

### **1.3 Scope of the Policy**

This Child Protection Policy covers all councillors, employees (full-time, part-time, sessional and casual workers) and volunteers, as well as activities and services commissioned or grant funded by the Council. Everyone listed has a moral and statutory responsibility to take action when they suspect or recognise that a child or young person may be a victim of or at risk of significant harm or abuse.

This policy applies to all services and situations within the Council’s operation which could possibly involve children and young people or impact upon their wellbeing. This includes, but is not limited to, leisure provision, investigations into youth anti-social behaviour, home

visits where children and young people are present, grant funding of external organisations and the provision of support and advice around housing issues and homelessness.

Councillors of the Council share a responsibility with staff when representing the Council. Therefore all aspects of this policy apply equally to councillors.

A previous policy also included vulnerable adults, which is defined as anyone who is 18 years of age or over who cannot protect themselves from abuse because of age, illness, disability or a mental health problem. The Council has established a separate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

This policy should also be read, where appropriate, in association with the Council's Domestic Abuse Policy and its Prevent action plan.

#### 1.4 Definitions

The phrase 'children or young person' is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years, including unborn children. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

All children and young people irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection.

The term parent/carer is used as a generic term to represent anyone with legal parental responsibility.

The phrase 'councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers' is used to refer to all district councillors, employees and people working on behalf of or representing the Council - either paid or voluntarily. An example of a contracted service provider would be sports coaches employed from another organisation on behalf of the Council to deliver specific activities at a leisure centre, youth project or play scheme.

#### 1.5 Types of Abuse

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) defines four main forms of child abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's development capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying causing children to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children.

- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape, buggery or oral sex) and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- **Neglect:** 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 and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
  - provide adequate food and clothing, 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);
  - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect is the most common form of harm to children, both nationally and locally. In 2021 HCC published its Neglect Strategy and formed its virtual Neglect Hub.

Alongside these categories of abuse, the following have been identified as additional areas of concern that are affecting children:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines
- Child Trafficking
- Private Fostering
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic Violence
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Breast Ironing
- Honour Based Crimes / Forced Marriage
- Faith/Ritual Abuse and spirit possession
- Radicalisation
- Online Abuse
- Substance Misuse and Alcohol Abuse
- Children with a Disability
- 'See the Adult, See the Child'

Guidance on spotting the signs and symptoms of the above forms of abuse will be included in all child protection training provided/commissioned by the Council. To aid staff, signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at Appendix 5.

Staff who have any reason to believe that a child is experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing any of the above, should report their concerns to the Council's Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) as per the procedures in section 2.5. **If the child is in immediate risk of harm, the police should be called on 999.** These referrals will usually



result in a section 47 (of the Children Act 2004) child protection enquiry conducted by HCC social workers or the Police.

## **1.6 Low Level Concerns**

There may be circumstances in which officers may be concerned about the well-being of a child, although it is not a child protection concern. Under these circumstances, trained professionals can initiate multi-agency support through a Families First Assessment. Families First is the term used in Hertfordshire for services that work together to support families who need this extra help. These are also known as early help services.

Families First helps with issues such as:

- Parenting
- Mental and Physical Health problems
- Drug or Alcohol dependency
- Domestic Abuse / Relationship Support
- School related concerns including non-attendance, bullying
- Debt advice
- Risk of being homeless.

The key principles of Families First are:

- Be empowering and focus on building resilience and family strengths;
- Promote personal responsibility and not create dependency;
- Be flexible in providing longer and shorter term support depending on the needs of the family;
- Involve as few professionals as possible, who can coordinate and prioritise support to make things simpler and more manageable for families;
- Work with whole families, including fathers and other family members;
- Leave parents, children and young people feeling that the situation has improved for them;
- Promote life skills for young people including; alcohol and substance misuse awareness, education, sex and relationships, financial skills, cultural awareness, community cohesion and sustainable living;
- Be based, and designed, within communities, making the most of local resources and delivering services at the most local level;
- Provide a seamless interface between specialist services with a critical focus on the needs and safety of children and young people.

Broxbourne Council will identify an appropriate number of staff across departments to be trained on the Families First Assessments, so to enable the Council to support local families where required and to make referrals to support families before they reach crisis point.

Information on Families First, and details of early help services, can be found at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst)

## **1.7 Celebrity, VIP and Visitor Safeguarding Policy**

In 2018, the Chair of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board requested that Broxbourne Council's safeguarding policies reflected the risk from visiting VIPs and celebrities in the light of the scandals involving Jimmy Saville, Rolf Harris etc. Utilising best practice from the NHS, a Celebrity, VIP and Visitor Safeguarding Policy was produced acting as an adjunct

to the Council’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult policies. It was agreed by Cabinet in December 2018, and has been subsequently implemented by other district and borough councils.

This Policy has now been integrated into this revised Child Protection Policy. These procedures can be found at Appendix 6.

## **2.0 REPORTING, REFERRING and RESPONDING to SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

There are three main situations where councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

- Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse or demonstrating behaviours or other symptoms that might indicate abuse or neglect.
- Responding to allegations or concerns about a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider
- Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person e.g. parent, carer, other service user

### **2.1 Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse or demonstrating behaviours or other symptoms that might indicate abuse or neglect.**

If a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is in this situation, they should:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is said and allow the child, young person or vulnerable adult to talk at their own pace
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with other responsible people – do not promise to keep secrets
- Only ask questions for clarification and do not ask leading questions (that suggest certain answers)
- Reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- Do not touch them to comfort them or take them home,
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform
- Immediately report to and inform the Council's Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) or their deputy (see section 2.5)
- If a child is in immediate risk of harm and you cannot contact the DCPO, call the police on 999 (you should still inform the DCPO subsequently).
- Record all the details you are aware of, as soon as possible, using the child or young person's own words. If you have concerns because the child or young person is demonstrating symptoms of abuse, note what these are and when/how they were demonstrated. This is particularly vital when working with children or young people who are not able to verbalise what is happening to them e.g. in a crèche. A Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 7) may be of help but is not mandatory. The form includes a bodymap to help show where injuries/markings are located.
- Include the date, time, location and the child's details as known (name, address, date of birth)
- Only record fact and/or what has been observed and what causes concern. Do not make any judgement in the report
- Sign and date the form if used.
- Send the report / a copy of the form to the DCPO via email to [safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk) marking the email "child"

The Council's DCPO will inform HCC Children Services department and the police as appropriate. This should be within 24 hours of receiving the referral if not immediately.

It is not the Council's role to investigate this concern but the DCPO should (ensure that they) receive updates from the social worker / police as to the progress of the investigation as it may impact on service delivery or other interactions with the young person and their family.

Best practice suggests that parents should be informed of the intended referral as long as it does not put the child / young person at further risk of harm. Consent is not required to breach confidentiality and make a referral where a serious crime is believed to have occurred, where vulnerable people are at risk or where the alleged perpetrator may go on to abuse others.

## **2.2 Responding to allegations or concerns about a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider**

An allegation is any information that indicates that a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider may have:

- Behaved in a way which has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with children.

This applies to any child that the member of staff/volunteer/councillor has contact with in their personal, professional or community life.

If a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider receives an allegation that falls in the category above, they should:

- Take the allegation or concern seriously
- Immediately report to and inform the DCPO
- Record details on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 7)

The Designated Child Protection Officer will inform the Assistant Director Resources/Personnel Manager to agree the next steps. These usually involve:

- the immediate suspension of the individual against whom the allegation has been made
- informing the HCC Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose role it will be to investigate the allegation. This should be made immediately and always within one working day of when an allegation is made about abuse against a child or young person as the individual may work in multiple settings for multiple employers.

Failure of the Council to act in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 in responding to allegations made against its staff, volunteers or councillors may result in the prosecution of the Council.

To avoid / limit mistaken allegations against employees and volunteers, the guidance in Appendix 2 should be followed.

Child Protection concerns made against a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider must link directly to the related policies, specifically the Council's

Disciplinary Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy, the Complaints Procedure and the Data Protection Policy.

### **2.3 Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person e.g. parent, carer, other service user**

If a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider is in this situation, they should:

- Take the allegation or concern seriously
- Immediately report to and inform the DCPO
- Record details on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 7), providing as much information as possible. This may not always be possible when receiving anonymous letters of concern or calls to the Council's helpline.

The Council's DCPO will inform Hertfordshire County Council's Children Services department and the police as appropriate. This should be within 24 hours of receiving the referral if not immediately.

Helpline staff should be trained to refer callers with child protection concerns that do not relate directly to the Council's services to the Hertfordshire County Council Children Services' call centre on 0300 123 4043. This also applies to the Council's out-of-hours service.

Members of the public do make safeguarding referrals directly to the Council, either via letter, email, telephone or the website. These will be reviewed at a basic level to ensure all necessary information is provided, and then referred on to HCC Children Services to investigate under their statutory duties. No public referrals are ignored but they should not be encouraged, rather directing them to HCC. This information is stored in the secure safeguarding files and spreadsheet.

### **2.4 Reassurance for those raising concerns or reporting child abuse**

The Council will take any concern made by a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider, member of the public or child seriously and sensitively.

Referrals made by a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider cannot be anonymous and should be made in the knowledge that, during the course of enquiries, the agency who made that referral will be made clear. If it is felt that the referral will place the member of staff at risk, please inform the DCPO who will pass that information on to HCC Children Services so that the source of the referral is not revealed.

The Council will not tolerate harassment of any councillor, employee, volunteer, contracted service provider or child who raises concerns of child abuse. Any such harassment by another employee will be dealt with through the Council's disciplinary procedures.

Any councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider who is nervous about raising concerns of child abuse may be accompanied by a Trade Union or other legal representative to any meeting arranged as part of the Council's procedures for dealing with child abuse. This cannot be extended to any other meeting held by other agencies as part of the investigation process without that agency's agreement.

When a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider raises a concern of child abuse, that person may be kept informed of the progress of any investigation where appropriate, and with the agreement of the relevant investigating agency.

Staff who feel that their child safeguarding concerns have been ignored or not referred on to appropriate agencies, can call the NSPCC Whistleblowers' Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) . Further information can be found at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

## **2.5 Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)**

Accountability for ensuring that the Council fulfils its child protection and safeguarding children responsibilities falls to the Chief Executive. However, responsibility is delegated to the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO).

The Council will designate a member of staff as the DCPO to act as a lead on child safeguarding issues. One or two officers will be named as Deputy DCPO to support the DCPO and to cover if the DCPO is absent.

These responsibilities will be recognised within the job descriptions of both individuals and within their annual objectives.

The Council will ensure both the DCPO and the deputy DCPO(s) receive the training they need to undertake this role.

The Council will ensure that the DCPO and the deputy DCPO(s) will be given the resources (primarily time) to undertake their safeguarding responsibilities in a timely, professional and appropriate manner, ensuring that they are supported by senior managers if a child protection issue requires attention when there are other conflicting priorities.

The DCPO (or deputy) will represent the Council at appropriate safeguarding forums in the county, including the Broxbourne Families First Partnership and the District Child Safeguarding Leads meetings.

Except for circumstances where a child is in immediate risk from harm, all concerns and referrals about children and young people's welfare must be reported to the DCPO or the Deputy DCPO.

In general the DCPO:

- Will keep the records of safeguarding concerns and referrals in a secure place,
- Will work with the Personnel department and Heads of Service to ensure that staff are appropriately trained / made aware of child safeguarding issues;
- Be responsible for making the referral to HCC Children's Services (or other agencies);
- Act as a point of contact for staff to discuss possible child protection concerns;
- Establish with the reporting person whether parents' permission should be sought;
- Ensure personal information about referrers, including identifying details, will only be disclosed to third parties (including subject families and other agencies) with the consent of the referrer.

Contact details for the DCPO and Deputy DCPO can be found at **Appendix 1**

## **2.6 Out of Hours Working**

It is recognised that councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers work outside of office hours and therefore may encounter difficulty contacting the DCPO or the deputy DCPO. The current DCPO is happy to receive calls relating to child protection at any time but if he cannot be contacted, the councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider should report directly to the Hertfordshire County Council Children Services' call centre on 0300 123 4043. Advice can also be sought from the Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on their advice line - 01438 737511

The councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider should complete a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 6) and contact the DCPO at the first opportunity.

## **2.7 Confidentiality**

Employees must not:

- Discuss any allegations of child abuse, substantiated or not, with anyone from the Council, other than the Designated Child Protection Officer or the Chief Executive (or other Director in the absence of the Chief Executive) or the Assistant Director Resources/Personnel Manager (in the case of an allegation against a member of staff);
- Discuss any allegations of child abuse, substantiated or not, with any member of an external agency, other than as part of the formal reporting procedure, as set out in this policy;
- Discuss any allegations of child abuse, substantiated or not, with any other interested party, including parents, carers and relatives of the child / young person without the express permission of the person with overall responsibility for the investigation.

This does not exclude the employee from the need or right to consult with a solicitor, trade union representative or other bona fide legal adviser.

Any enquiries from the media concerning an allegation of child abuse must be referred to the person at HCC with overall responsibility for the investigation or the Chief Executive (or other Director in the absence of the Chief Executive). Any other councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider should respond with 'no comment' to all questions and queries and refer them to the officers outlined above.

Any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, young person, vulnerable adult, their family and any child protection investigations that may follow.

## **2.8 Data Protection**

Effective information sharing underpins integrated working and is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding.

All paper copies of the Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 6) must be retained by the DCPO in a safe and secure location. No information relating to child protection should be removed from the Council premises either in hard copy or on portable media devices e.g. memory sticks.

All electronic information regarding child safeguarding referrals is stored in password protected files. Files are only stored on the Council's computer network which is connected to the secure UK government connect network. The Council's Computer Usage policies, signed by all members of staff, document how to ensure that there is no unauthorised access to the Council's computer network.

Computer referrals are only sent electronically to HCC Children Services after the case has been discussed with appropriate staff at HCC Children Services. When requested by these staff, files are sent to a secure non-personal email address e.g. [protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:protectedreferrals.cs@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

### **3.0 STAFFING**

The Council recognises its employees / volunteers could have the potential to abuse children or young people. The Council will therefore ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, and young people.

#### **3.1 Safer Recruitment**

In line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 the Council's Personnel department will take reasonable steps to ensure that staff working with children and young people are safe to do so, using the best practice found in the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Safe Staffing handbook 2014

Before recruiting staff (whether paid or unpaid), the Council will ensure that:

- Job advertisements firmly state that the Council takes safeguarding seriously and will require an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check to be undertaken before employment can commence – this can help deter unsuitable individuals from applying;
- The Personnel department should work with the Line Manager for the new recruit and the DCPO to agree whether the post required an enhanced DBS check;
- Thorough checks are made of an applicant's identity, work history and references;
- All job applicants are asked to declare any criminal convictions;
- All employees must provide at least two references, which must be received and accepted as satisfactory to the Council before employment commences. One referee must be the current employer, or if the applicant is not employed, the most recent employer. References must cover the last three years of employment and if in education be provided by the course tutor. Referees must be previous employers, not friends and must not be related to the applicant;
- Proof of qualifications are obtained;
- Evidence of the person's right to work in the UK is obtained (employees only);
- An Enhanced DBS Disclosure is carried out including checks of the Independent Safeguarding Authority's Barred Lists;
- There are always two members of staff interviewing candidates for positions working with children and young people;
- Confirmation of employment will be subject to the receipt of necessary clearance;
- A probationary period and close supervision of the person is undertaken;



- Existing employees who have changed jobs and in the opinion of the line manager / Personnel, new duties bring them into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults must complete DBS checks;
- DBS disclosures must be renewed every three years;
- It will be made clear to applicants that have a substantial contact children and young people that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, that is, certain convictions will never become 'spent'.

A person who is barred from working with children will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with children. The Council is required to refer individuals seeking employment who are barred to the police.

### **3.2 Training**

It is important that staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, and know the correct procedures to report such observations or disclosures.

Although all staff need to be aware of the Council's safeguarding responsibilities, training needs to be appropriate to the position. Personnel and the DCPO will review the staffing roles on a yearly basis and agree a training programme.

Induction - All new staff will be made familiar with and given a copy of the Child Protection Policy and will be made aware of the role of the DCPO and deputy DCPO

Introduction to Safeguarding – this is mandatory training for all staff and covers the basics of child safeguarding, safeguarding vulnerable adults, domestic abuse and hate crime. This is currently delivered by e-learning.

Level 1 Safeguarding – All staff working with children and young people, including casual and sessional workers, will be expected to undertake Level 1 child safeguarding training within six months of commencing employment. This will be renewed every three years.

Advanced Training – Line managers may identify additional safeguarding training needs during the annual appraisal process. The DCPO and Deputy(s) will need to refresh their specialist training every two years.

External Training – the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, HCCs Families First team and other agencies provide a number of free / very low-cost specialised training sessions each year e.g. 'bites and bruises', 'child sexual exploitation' 'working with families with domestic violence.' The DCPO will work with Personnel to highlight these opportunities to staff as appropriate.

Personnel will ensure that safeguarding training is recorded on the iTrent personnel system.

### **3.3 Disciplinary Offences**

Any allegations against a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider as per section 2.2 will be investigated in line with the Council's disciplinary procedures which should reflect the additional actions identified in section 2.2.

The Council must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service should a member of staff, councillor or volunteer be dismissed because they have harmed a child or vulnerable

adult, or would have done so if they had not left. This must be done in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when the individual concerned works with children.

### **3.4 Risk Management**

Wherever an event or service is proposed for children or young people, the risks must be assessed in advance, and “safeguarding” issues and relevant matters addressed. Consent may also be required from parents for children to take part.

In particular the ongoing training needs of staff and volunteers in relation to child or vulnerable adult protection need to be considered as part of any risk assessment. This should include the refresh training needs of staff and volunteers who have already been trained.

Managers / Lead Officers should ensure that there are the correct adult/children ratios at activities and that suitable safety, security and sanitary facilities etc are available. The NSPCC recommend:

- Age 0 - 2: 1 adult to 3 children
- Age 2 - 3: 1 adult to 4 children
- Age 4 - 8: 1 adult to 6 children
- Age 9 - 12: 1 adult to 8 children
- Age 13 - 18: 1 adult to 10 children

All Council initiatives and facilities shall be designed and risk assessed to ensure low risk of injury to children or vulnerable adults.

### **3.5 Work Experience**

The Council offers work experience placements across the Council to many young people each year. Although primarily designed to help young people become familiar with the workplace, it is also beneficial to the Council as it provides a direct link to an important part of the district we serve. Employees should not travel or work alone in an isolated location with a work experience student.

Work experience placements should be forwardly planned and structured. Managers have a responsibility for the students’ health, safety and welfare. Under health and safety law, these students will be regarded as employees.

### **3.6 Communication with Staff**

The Council’s Child Protection Policy, Procedures and the contact details of the DCPO and Deputy DCPO(s) will be placed on the Council’s staff intranet. Information posters will be displayed in all facilities with Council employees.

### **3.7 Communication with Children and Young People**

Young people communicate through a variety of means including through social networking websites (such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), instant messenger and text messaging. The Council will increasingly need to use such media to communicate with

children and young people. Consultation and communication procedures must include safeguarding protocols to protect children.

All staff responsible for maintaining electronic communication with young people should receive Level 1 safeguarding training.

The HSCP has produced guidance for professional using the internet responsibly and it is recommended that the Council councillors, staff, volunteers and contracted service providers follow these guidelines:

- Ensure all electronic communication with children, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with the policies of the organisation.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend anyone connected to your setting, member of the community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use your organisation's or setting's ICT systems and resources for all official business. This includes your business email address, business mobile phone or photography equipment.
- Do not give out your own personal details, such as mobile phone number, personal e-mail address or social network details to children, parents, carers and others.
- Only take images of children and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with business policy. Ensure that the parent/carer of any child under 18 has given written consent. Photos should be taken on devices that belong to the Council and should be returned to the Council after use. Once downloaded, the photos must be deleted from the device.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in work and outside, will not bring your organisation or professional role into disrepute.
- You have a duty to report any incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or your organisation.

## **4.0 RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

### **4.1 Contracted Service Partners**

Section 11 of the Children Act (2004) places a statutory responsibility on the Council to ensure that its contracted service partners, regardless of the value of the contract, have in place sufficient arrangements to meet the criteria within Section 11 guidance to ensure that their arrangements meet the requirement to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The provisions within Section 11 of the Children Act (2004) apply to all contracted service partners / agencies commissioned to carry out functions on behalf of the Council. The determination of the specific terms of the application of this policy, to contractors/agencies delivering services on behalf of the Council, shall be specified where appropriate in contractual documents, including procurement standards, monitoring and quality assurance.

Where the contractor is working directly with children and young people, the responsible managers should receive a copy of the contractor's child protection policy and DBS disclosures for all staff working with children and young people.

## **4.2 External Organisations using Council Facilities**

Independent sports clubs and other organisations involved with children, and young people who regularly use leisure centres, parks, open spaces, community halls and outdoor sports facilities operated by or on behalf of the Council must have a child protection policy. Furthermore, they must ensure that their staff or volunteers who have contact with children and young people have had a satisfactory DBS check as a condition of hire.

## **4.3 Grant Applications**

A child protection policy and satisfactory DBS checks for staff and volunteers are required from any organisations working with children and young people who seek grant funding from the Council. This information will be requested at the application stage and applications will not be processed without the relevant documentation.

## **4.4 The Community**

As Community leaders, the Council can support the protection and welfare of children through ensuring these issues are appropriately in the public domain. This may include, but is not limited to, the dissemination of information about safeguarding to the public and local businesses (e.g. distributing information about the Hertfordshire child sexual exploitation campaign “Say Something If You See Something” to taxi drivers, hotels, licensed premises), hosting and chairing the Broxbourne Families First Partnership, supporting the Broxbourne Pastoral Leads network, sharing safeguarding training and policy with agencies who deliver services to children and young people in the Borough etc.

## **4.5 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership.**

The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) ensures that all agencies and organisations who work with children and young people work together to keep them safe in accordance with Section 13 of The Children Act 2004. The joint leaders of HSCP are Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary and, from 1 July 2022, the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board.

The Council is committed to maintaining an effective working relationship with the HSCP to help achieve its mutual aims in respect of child safeguarding.

## **Appendix 1 – Designated Child Safeguarding Officer and other Key Contacts**

The DCPO is Steve Whitlam, Community Development Manager. 01992 785555 x5909.  
Email: [safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk) (please mark email 'child')

The Deputy DCPO is Nikki Hall, Community Development Officer (Children & Events) and Kidz Klub Manager. 01992 785574. Email: [safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk) (please mark email 'child')

For Domestic Abuse or Prevent referrals, please contact Louise Brown (Community Safety Manager) – 01992 785555. Email: [safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@broxbourne.gov.uk)

Out of Hours – please call HCC Children's Centre Call Centre on 0300 123 4043

## **Appendix 2 – Good Practice for working with children and young people**

It is best practice for councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers to follow these guidelines

- Always be publicly open to scrutiny when working with children and young people and avoid situations where a councillor, employee, volunteer or service provider and an individual child are alone unobserved.
- Children and young people should never be left unattended.
- Respect the child, young person or vulnerable adult and provide a safe and positive environment.
- If any form of physical contact is required it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines e.g. National Governing Body of Sport Guidelines.
- If supervision in changing rooms or similar environments is required, ensure staff work in pairs and never enter opposite sex changing rooms.
- With mixed groups, supervision should be by a male and female member of staff, where possible.
- All children and young people should be treated equally in the context of the activity.
- There is a need for clubs/settings to have access to emergency support and a mobile phone is often the best way to ensure this. However, with the development and advance of mobile technology this may now pose a threat to the safety of children – images and video footage can be taken and uploaded to the internet without anyone being aware. It is therefore recommended that the club/setting (e.g Kidz Klub playscheme, crèche) have a basic mobile phone with no camera, video or internet facility if possible. All staff members should be asked to leave their personal mobiles in a secure place and access them only during breaks and not in the presence of the cared for children. Similarly, there should also be consideration taken regarding the children's use of mobiles during their time with the club/setting. Provision should be made to ensure the safety of the children and this may mean storing the children's phones in named envelopes/small plastic bags which are kept safe. It is the supervisor's/manager's responsibility to make exceptions to this in the case of a family emergency etc and to risk assess appropriately.

This is not always possible when conducting detached youth work / community based youth sessions. Staff should not use their own personal phones or devices to take photos / film of the children / young people that they are working with. If there is a need to take a visual record of the session, this should be done on a Council owned device which is

returned to the office in the first instance. Staff should not download any images of children/young people onto their own computers/devices.

- Councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers must put the well being and safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult before the development of performance.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is accidentally injured as the result of a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider's actions, seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, always report such incidents as soon as possible to your line manager and to the DCPO and make a written report.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult arrives at the activity or service showing signs or symptoms that give you cause for concern, you must act appropriately following the procedures outlined in section 2.

It is contrary to best practice for councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers to:

- Spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children and young people away from others.
- Take children and young people in a car journey alone, no matter how short.
- Take children and young people to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Arrange to meet children and young people outside an organised activity or service.

Councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers must never:

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children, young people and vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use it yourself.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun.
- Let an allegation by a child or young person be ignored or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children, young people and vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves e.g. assist with changing.
- Share a bedroom with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Enter areas designated only for the opposite sex.
- Use the internet to access pornography.
- Become involved in any financial transaction with, or on behalf of, a child or young person.

Employees who breach any of the code above will face investigation and may face disciplinary action, which could lead to a dismissal and the possibility of a criminal investigation where there is evidence of illegal activity.

Volunteers in breach of the above Code of Conduct will have their services terminated with immediate effect. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, the volunteer will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face criminal investigation.

If a councillor does not adhere to the policy, there may be grounds for reporting their behaviour to the Standards Committee, who may require an investigation under the Member

Code of Conduct. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, the councillor will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face criminal investigation.

### **Appendix 3 – First Aid**

Under ordinary circumstances, a child, young person or adult can be administered with first aid only if their parent or guardian expressly permits this course of action through completion of the Parental Consent Form.

Incomplete consent forms may prevent the child or young person or vulnerable adult from being able to participate in an activity.

When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or is aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid is administered.

Child welfare is of paramount importance. In certain circumstances, consent forms will not have been obtained (such as open access Play Events). In such cases, councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers may undertake first aid as a last resort, following the guidelines above and notifying parents as soon as possible to minimise a child's or young person's distress.

### **Appendix 4 - Photography**

Staff, councillors and volunteers should be vigilant at all times regarding people using cameras or videos within the Council services and at events or activities which involve children and young people. Consent must be sought from parents when cameras and other image recorders are used to picture children and young people. All services must follow the guidance set out in the Council's Photography Policy and consent forms can be obtained from the Communications team. Professional photographers or invitations to the press to cover Council services, events and activities should be done through the Communications team.

Other guidelines are:

- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or young people or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside of the activities or services, or at a child's or young person's home.
- The child or young person should be happy with having their picture taken.
- Parents must be informed that photographs of their child or young person may be taken during Council services, activities or events, and parental consent forms should be signed agreeing to this. This must include information about how and where these photographs will be used.
- Photographs of children should not be taken on devices (phones, cameras, tablets etc) that belong to staff.

The names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

## **Appendix 5 – Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse**

### **Physical Abuse**

#### Bruises

- commonly on the head but also on the ear or neck or soft areas - the abdomen, back and buttocks.
- defensive wounds commonly on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet.
- clusters of bruises on the upper arm, outside of the thigh or on the body.
- bruises with dots of blood under the skin.
- a bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently.
- bruises in the shape of a hand or object.

(Staff working with young children should receive training on the Hertfordshire Bruising Protocol)

#### Burns or scalds

- can be from hot liquids, hot objects, flames, chemicals or electricity.
- on the hands, back, shoulders or buttocks; scalds may be on lower limbs, both arms and/or both legs.
- a clear edge to the burn or scald.
- sometimes in the shape of an implement for example, a circular cigarette burn.
- multiple burns or scalds.

#### Bite marks

- usually oval or circular in shape.
- visible wounds, indentations or bruising from individual teeth.

#### Fractures or broken bones

- fractures to the ribs or the leg bones in babies.
- multiple fractures or breaks at different stages of healing.

#### Other injuries and health problems

- scarring.
- effects of poisoning such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures.
- respiratory problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.

#### Signs of head injuries include:

- swelling.
- bruising.
- fractures.
- being comatose.
- respiratory problems.
- seizures.
- vomiting.
- unusual responses – irritable, poor feeding, lethargic, unresponsive.

### **Emotional Abuse**

There often aren't any obvious physical symptoms of emotional abuse or neglect but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions. Changes in emotions are a normal part of growing up, so it can be really difficult to tell if a child is being emotionally abused.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long.
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious.



- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery etc.
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts.
- seem isolated from their parents.
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends.

Parents might demonstrate emotional abuse by

- humiliating or constantly criticising a child.
- threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names.
- making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child.
- blaming, scapegoating.
- making a child perform degrading acts.
- not recognising a child's own individuality, trying to control their lives.
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations.
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as domestic abuse or drug taking.
- failing to promote a child's social development.
- not allowing them to have friends.
- persistently ignoring them.
- being absent.
- manipulating a child.
- never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes.
- never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Children who are sexually abused may:

### Stay away from certain people

- they might avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends.
- they could seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them.

### Show sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age

- a child might become sexually active at a young age.
- they might be promiscuous.
- they could use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to.

### Have physical symptoms

- anal or vaginal soreness.
- an unusual discharge.
- sexually transmitted infection (STI).

- pregnancy.

The signs of grooming aren't always obvious. Groomers will also go to great lengths not to be identified. Groomed children may:

- be very secretive, including about what they are doing online.
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- go to unusual places to meet friends.
- have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain.
- have access to drugs and alcohol.

In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.

## **Neglect**

Having one of the signs or symptoms below doesn't necessarily mean that a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple, or persistent, signs then it could indicate there's a serious problem. Children who are neglected may have:

### Poor appearance and hygiene:

- be smelly or dirty.
- have unwashed clothes.
- have inadequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat.
- seem hungry or turn up to school without having breakfast or any lunch money.
- have frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.

### Health and development problems:

- untreated injuries, medical and dental issues.
- repeated accidental injuries caused by lack of supervision.
- recurring illnesses or infections.
- not been given appropriate medicines.
- missed medical appointments such as vaccinations.
- poor muscle tone or prominent joints.
- skin sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm.
- thin or swollen tummy.
- anemia.
- tiredness.
- faltering weight or growth and not reaching developmental milestones (known as failure to thrive).
- poor language, communication or social skills.

### Housing and family issues

- living in an unsuitable home environment for example dog mess being left or not having any heating.
- left alone for a long time.
- taking on the role of carer for other family members.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

This is defined by the Government as follows: "Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into

sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.” (‘Child Sexual Exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners’, Department for Education, February 2017).

It can affect any child (male or female) under the age of 18, including those aged 16 and 17 who can legally consent to have sex. It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and by adults or other children. If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute CSE, but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

In Hertfordshire, Operation Halo is the police unit dedicated to combatting CSE whilst the Vulnerable Adolescents Safeguarding sub-group is the sub-group of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership tasked with raising awareness of CSE.

The Council works with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, Hertfordshire Constabulary, schools and other partners to raise awareness of CSE so that information and/or concerns can be shared effectively. The Council will work with taxi drivers, hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation, fast food outlets and licensed premises so that they are able to spot and report any signs of CSE so that the Council and partners can use the range of powers available to disrupt such activity.

Symptoms may include

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

Where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into committing criminal activity. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

County Lines is the name given to describe drug dealing by criminal gangs from urban areas expanding their activities into smaller towns and rural areas. It often involves the

exploitation of children, as gangs use young people and those with mental health or addiction problems to transport drugs and money.

## **Child Trafficking**

This is when children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation including CSE, benefit fraud, domestic servitude, forced labour and criminal activity e.g. pickpocketing, begging, working on cannabis farms etc. Children may be trafficked into the UK but can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious but you might notice unusual behaviour or events. These include a child who:

- spends a lot of time doing household chores.
- rarely leaves their house, has no freedom of movement and no time for playing.
- is orphaned or living apart from their family, often in unregulated private foster care
- lives in substandard accommodation.
- isn't sure which country, city or town they're in.
- is unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details.
- might not be registered with a school or a GP practice.
- has no documents or has falsified documents.
- has no access to their parents or guardians.
- is seen in inappropriate places such as brothels or factories.
- possesses unaccounted for money or goods.
- is permanently deprived of a large part of their earnings, required to earn a minimum amount of money every day or pay off an exorbitant debt.
- has injuries from workplace accidents.
- gives a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

Signs an adult is involved in child trafficking include:

- making multiple visa applications for different children.
- acting as a guarantor for multiple visa applications for children.
- travelling with different children who they are not related to or responsible for
- insisting on remaining with and speaking for the child.
- living with unrelated or newly arrived children.
- abandoning a child or claiming not to know a child they were previously with.

## **Private Fostering**

There can be legitimate reasons why a parent arranges for their child to live with someone else who is not a close relative of the child e.g. for education, or because of ill-health in the child's family. Any such arrangement lasting for more than 28 days are legally required to inform HCC of these arrangements to ensure the child's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. There are currently low levels of private fostering arrangements registered with HCC. Some arrangements may not be registered as they are a cover for child trafficking.

## **Modern Slavery**

The Modern Slavery Act (2015) places a new statutory duty on public authorities to notify the National Crime Agency (NCA) (section 52 of the Act) on observing signs or receiving intelligence relating to modern slavery, e.g. human trafficking, slavery, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. The public authority bears this obligation

where it has ‘reasonable grounds to believe that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking’.

Currently, victims of human trafficking who are identified by a ‘first responder’, including local authorities, can be referred to the NCA via the NRM (National Referral Mechanism) however this is on a voluntary basis and with the adult victim’s consent.

Children do not need to give their consent to be referred to the NCA.

## **Domestic Violence**

Domestic Abuse is any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive and threatening behaviour or violence. A child may suffer from abuse not only by being physically abused directly, but also seeing or hearing the maltreatment of another. If someone in the household is committing domestic abuse against another member of the household, there is an increased risk that any child in the household may also be subject to abuse. Therefore all reports of domestic abuse where children are present must be referred to the Council’s Designated Child Safeguarding Officer who will then refer on to HCC Children Services.

It’s often difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive.
- display anti-social behaviour.
- suffer from depression or anxiety.
- not do as well at school – due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a range of procedures which; involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It’s also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna. FGM ranges from pricking or cauterizing the genital area, through partial or total removal of the clitoris, cutting the lips (the labia) and narrowing the vaginal opening. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given to explain FGM. However, FGM has been illegal in the UK since 1985. Since 2003, it has also been illegal to take abroad a British national or permanent resident for FGM, or to help someone trying to do this. Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales must report ‘known’ cases of FGM in under 18s to the police (‘Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- Home Office, 2016). More information can be found at the National FGM Centre - <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/>

A girl or woman who’s had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet.
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college.
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what’s going to happen. But she might talk about:

- being taken 'home' to visit family.
- a special occasion to 'become a woman'.
- an older female relative visiting the UK.

She may ask a teacher or another adult for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen or she may run away from home or miss school.

### **Breast Ironing**

Also known as “Breast Flattening”, this is the process whereby young pubescent girls’ breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Similarly to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), breast ironing is classified as physical abuse and must be referred as such. Young pubescent girls usually aged between 9 – 15 years old and from practicing communities (Cameroon, Benin, Ivory Coast, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Togo, Zimbabwe and Guinea-Conakry) are most at risk of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is often a well-kept secret between the young girl and her mother (the act is carried out 58% of the time by mothers). Often the father remains completely unaware. Some indicators that a girl has undergone breast ironing are as follows:

- Unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college including depression, anxiety, aggression, withdrawn etc.
- Reluctance in undergoing normal medical examinations.
- Some girls may ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- Fear of changing for physical activities due to scars showing or bandages being visible.

The girl generally believes that the practice is being carried out for her own good and she will often remain silent.

### **Honour Based Crimes / Forced Marriage**

Honour based abuse is when a crime or incident has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. The terms “honour crime” or “honour-based violence” embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women), including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the “shame” or “dishonour” of the family.

Forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Most cases involve young women aged between 13 and 30.

Warning signs may include:

#### Education

- Absence and persistent absence.

- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays.
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality.
- Poor exam results.
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility.
- Removal from a day centre of a person with a physical or learning disability.
- Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities.
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger.
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education.

#### Health

- Accompanied to doctors or clinics.
- Self harm/attempted suicide.
- Eating disorders.
- Depression/ Isolation.
- Substance misuse.
- Unwanted pregnancy.
- Female Genital Mutilation.

#### Family History

- Siblings forced to marry.
- Early marriage of siblings.
- Self harm or suicide of siblings.
- Death of a parent.
- Family disputes.
- Unreasonable restrictions eg. kept at home by parents

#### Police might be aware of the following

- Victim or other siblings within the family reported missing.
- Reports of domestic abuse, harassment or breaches of the peace at the family home.
- Female genital mutilation.
- The victim reported for offences e.g. shoplifting or substance misuse.
- Threats to kill and attempts to kill or harm.
- Reports of other offences such as rape or kidnap.
- Acid attacks.

### **Faith/ritual abuse and spirit possession**

The belief in 'possession' and 'witchcraft' is relatively widespread and includes concepts of demons or the devil acting through children or 'leading them astray' (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context). It is not confined to particular countries, cultures, religions or immigrant communities in this country. The number of identified cases of child abuse, linked to accusations of 'possession', are small, but the nature of the related child abuse can be particularly disturbing and damaging to the children.

### **Radicalisation**

Radicalisation is the process by which a person, often from a vulnerable background, comes to adopt extreme political / religious or social ideologies, associated with terrorist groups, and begin to engage in extremist and criminal acts. Since July 2015, all schools, childcare providers (including the Council's playschemes) and public facing bodies have a duty under

the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) to have “due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.”

This is known as the Prevent duty. This includes a duty to make referrals whenever there are concerns that any individual (of any age) is at risk of radicalisation. Hertfordshire’s Prevent Strategy aims to reduce the threat to the county from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The Channel Panel is part of the local Prevent Strategy and is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism to help these individuals think about and revoke the choices they have made. To enable this to happen, all staff working directly with children and young people should undertake the WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training. This should be developed in conjunction with the Council’s Prevent action plan.

The Home Office states in the Prevent Strategy that ‘Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm’.

The following are some signs that could mean somebody could be at risk of radicalisation or is going through a radicalisation process:

#### Physical changes:

- Sudden or gradual change in physical appearance.
- Sudden or unexpectedly wearing religious attire.
- Getting tattoos displaying various messages.
- Unexpectedly growing a beard.
- Unexpectedly shaving their head (skinhead).
- Possesses unexplained gifts and clothing (groomers will sometimes use gifts such as mobile phones and clothing to bribe a young person).

#### Social changes:

- Cuts ties with their friends, family or community.
- Starts to become socially withdrawn.
- Becoming dependent on social media and the internet.
- Begins to associate with others who hold radical views.
- Bullies or demonises other people freely.
- Begins to attend rallies and demonstrations for extremist causes.
- Associates with known radicals.
- Visits extremist websites, networks and blogs.

#### Emotional and verbal changes:

- Begins to complain, often with anger, about governmental policies, especially foreign policy.
- Advocates violence or criminal behaviour.
- Begins to believe in government conspiracies.
- Exhibits erratic behaviour such as paranoia and delusion.
- Speaks about seeking revenge.
- Starts to exhibit extreme religious intolerance.
- Demonstrates sympathy to radical groups.
- Displays hatred or intolerance of other people or communities because they are different.

#### **Online abuse**

This is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phone. 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. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). As there might be a disclosure of online abuse to frontline staff working with children and young people, this is covered in the specific three-hour Child Safeguarding training so that staff can advise on e-safety.

### **Substance misuse and alcohol abuse**

As well as the emotional harm that witnessing abuse of substances (drugs) or alcohol can cause children, the behaviour of parents, family members or other people within the family can have a direct and immediate impact on a child. Children themselves can misuse drugs and alcohol. This may have a significant impact on their wellbeing and safety, making them extremely vulnerable to abuse in addition to the effects on their wellbeing.

### **Children with a Disability**

Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons. They may be more inclined to be socially isolated, have extra dependency on parents and carers for daily living needs, including intimate personal care, have an impaired capacity to resist/avoid abuse, have limited ability to communicate with others when there is a problem and may not have anyone they trust to disclose their concerns to.

### **‘See the Adult, See the Child’**

This is a policy from the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board. Analysis of Serious Case Reviews into a death of a child shows that there is a cumulative risk of harm when different parental risk factors are present in combination over a period of time e.g. domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health, parental substance misuse, parental involvement in violent crime, social isolation etc. Professionals are encouraged that when working with adults presenting these risk factors, that they should explore whether there are any risks to any children in the household and to make referrals accordingly.

## **Appendix 6 – Celebrity, VIP and Visitor Safeguarding Policy**

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is no risk to the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults arising from visits to Council facilities, events and services by approved and invited visitors such as celebrities, VIPs and media representatives.

### Definitions

Approved visitors - individuals or groups who are invited or who have approval to be on the Council premises for an official purpose or for the benefit of staff, residents or the Council. These may include:-

- VIPs - key stakeholders including MPs, Government Ministers, elected representatives, overseas dignitaries, members of the Royal Family.
- Celebrity – famous or high profile figures who might be well known to the public; also includes costumed characters as these would be well known to children and young people.
- Media – journalists or other representatives of print or broadcast media organisations i.e. newspapers or television. This category will also include associated technical or creative people such as camera and sound crews, or photographers. It will also cover individuals using Council facilities to film, interview or report etc.

Public areas - any location in Council facilities that is accessible by the general public and does not have secure entry. These would include reception areas, food and beverage areas at Leisure facilities.

Restricted areas – any part of a Council facility associated with the business of the Council which has a secure door or requires a security pass or staff member to gain entry.

### Introduction

Broxbourne Borough Council may receive visits from celebrities, VIPs and media representatives for a variety of reasons including but not limited to Ministerial visits, formal opening of facilities and events, promotional campaigns e.g. the annual Panto launch, filming on Council premises, presenting awards etc. The Council recognises the value of such visits in raising the profile of the Borough, motivating staff and engaging with members of the public.

The Council aims to support and accommodate visitors whenever possible, whilst recognising a responsibility to protect the safety, security and privacy and dignity of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Council recognises the need to ensure the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults from any forms of potential or actual assault, abuse or grooming.

This policy applies to invited celebrity and VIP visitors and media representatives to the Council's facilities and events.

This policy does not apply to anyone, who happens to be a celebrity or VIP, who is visiting a relative or friend at a Council facility or who is attending a Council facility to provide a

personal function or to receive personal support e.g. pay their Council Tax bill, enquire about a planning application.

### Procedure

All VIP, celebrity or media visitors to the Council must be agreed by the Chief Executive. Member Services and the Communications team will hold overall responsibility for the arrangement and monitoring of all approved visitors to the Council. They should keep a log of all visits.

The appropriate manager of the service being visited will have overall responsibility in ensuring that the approved visitor is supervised at all times by a named member of staff. All visitors should wear a visitor's badge. Where the visitor may come into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the manager should inform the appropriate Safeguarding lead to consider any potential risks.

The vast majority of VIP or celebrity visits are one off events which means that standard safeguarding checks such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are not applicable. Therefore the approved visitor(s) must be accompanied at all times.

Approved visitors who are in the Council for extended periods of time or who are here on repeated occasions, and are likely to be unaccompanied, will be subject to DBS checks if their visit will bring them into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Section 11 of the Children's Act (2004) affirms that the Council's statutory responsibilities with regards to child safeguarding apply to all contracted service providers / agencies commissioned to carry out functions on behalf of the Council (Section 4.1 of the Council's Child Protection Policy). This applies when contracting or commissioning celebrities, either directly or via agents, to work with children and young people, e.g. at performances at The Spotlight. This should be stipulated where appropriate in contractual documents including procurement standards, monitoring and quality assurance. Contractors should provide a copy of their Child Protection Policy and DBS disclosures.

Staff must ensure that there is always more than one adult present when celebrities or VIPs are with children and young people.

Approved visitors must not be given access to the personal information relating to any children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Approved visitors should not have unaccompanied access to any restricted areas. If an approved visitor wishes to visit a resident's home in one of the Council facilities (hostels, temporary accommodation), written consent of the resident must be obtained first and the visitor accompanied by a senior member of staff at all times during the visit.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults must not travel unaccompanied in vehicles with approved visitors and their entourage.

### Reporting

If during a visit, the behaviour of a visitor or a member of their accompanying party gives cause for any concerns whatsoever, then this should be raised at the time with the member of staff who is supervising them and the visit brought to an immediate end.

Any incident should be reported to both the appropriate safeguarding lead and to the Communications team.

If the behaviour of a visitor causes safeguarding concerns the designated person for safeguarding should contact the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership or Hertfordshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board for guidance. Any criminal acts should be reported to the police.

Staff who witness any such incident must not report it to the media or on social media, abiding with the Council's Social Media policy.

#### Confidentiality

Prior to all approved visits, visitors will be informed by the Communications team of the appropriate confidentiality and consent requirements for residents and staff as well as for themselves, and will be expected to abide by them during and after the visit. This includes obtaining appropriate consent for all images, still and moving, for use in all media, including social media, to protect everyone's identity.

Any residents who may be involved in a visit, e.g. they are attending an event or receiving an award, will be asked in advance of the visit whether they mind being potentially approached by the visitor. If there is likely to be photography, they will be asked if they consent to be photographed and will be requested to sign a photograph release form.

Staff are representatives of the Council and are expected to behave professionally at all times. During VIP and celebrity visits, staff should continue in their roles as usual while supporting the management of the visit where appropriate. However staff have a right to refuse to be recorded on any photographic media without supplying a reason.

Approved official visitors to restricted areas should always be greeted appropriately by staff and treated respectfully throughout their visit. Staff must not approach celebrities unless advised to do so by the Communications team. This includes asking for photographs and autographs.

# Appendix 7 - Child Protection Incident Report Form

Complete this form to the best of your ability, please remember to maintain confidentiality and do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know. The Bodymap might be useful to show where injuries / markings of concerns are located.

<b>1. Your Information:</b>	
<b>Your Name:</b>	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Contact no.:</b>	
<b>Name of Child Concerned:</b>	
<b>Child's Address:</b> _____ _____ _____	<b>Age:</b>
<b>Postcode:</b> _____	<b>D.O.B:</b>
	<b>Sex:</b> Male / Female
	<b>Disability:</b> Yes / No
<b>3. Incident Report:</b>	
<b>Location:</b> (Facility and room incident occurred)	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time of Incident:</b> _____ am/pm
_____ _____ _____ _____	
<b>Did you witness this yourself or Is the child/parent/carer reporting it:</b> Witnessed myself / Child told me / Parent/carer reporting it	
<b>Action taken so far: (continue on another sheet if necessary)</b> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	

<b>Print name:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
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A copy of this form should be sent to Broxbourne Borough Council's Designated Child Protection Officer **Immediately.**

**5. Further Action**  
**- To be completed by Child Protection Officer -**

**Date received:**

**External Agencies contacted:** Yes / No

**Who contacted:** (Social Services/Police/Other e.g. NSPCC)

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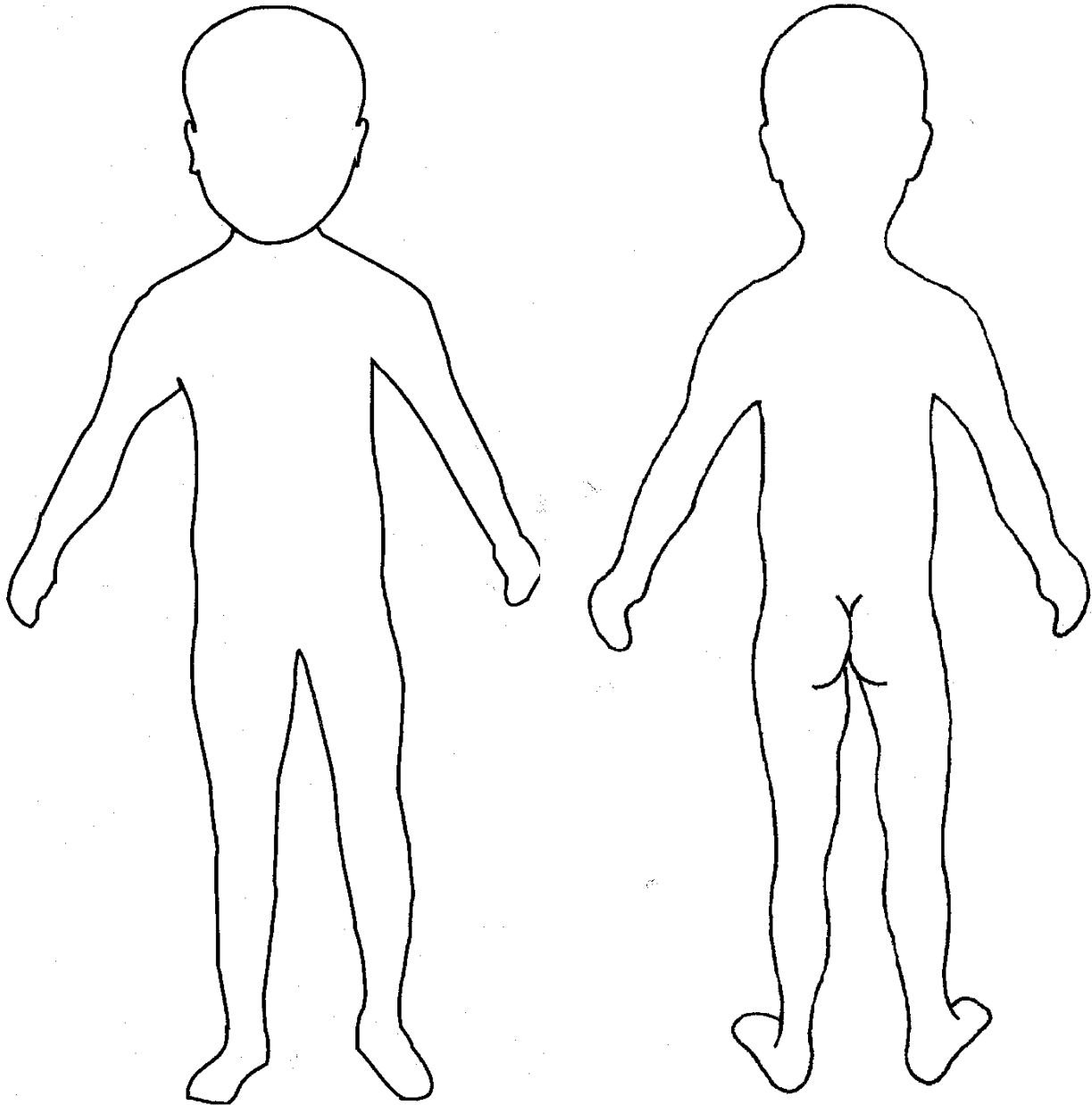
**Appendix 7A - Bodymap**

**(This must be completed at time of observation)**

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

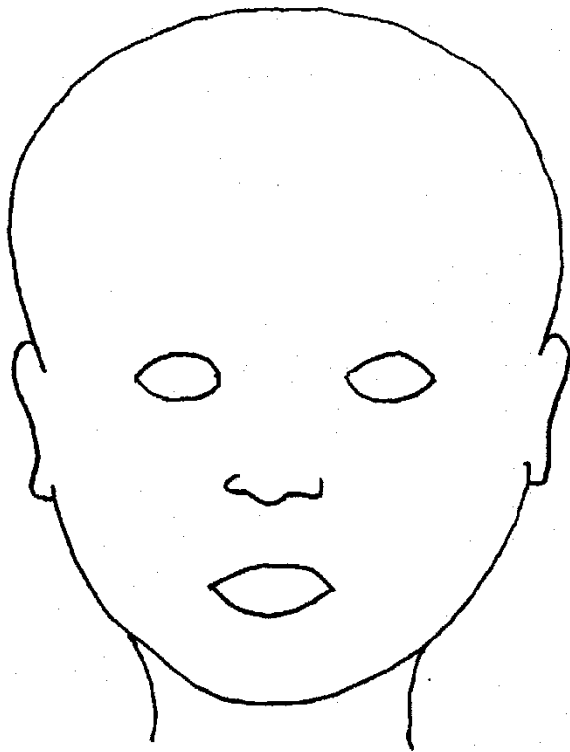
Name of Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

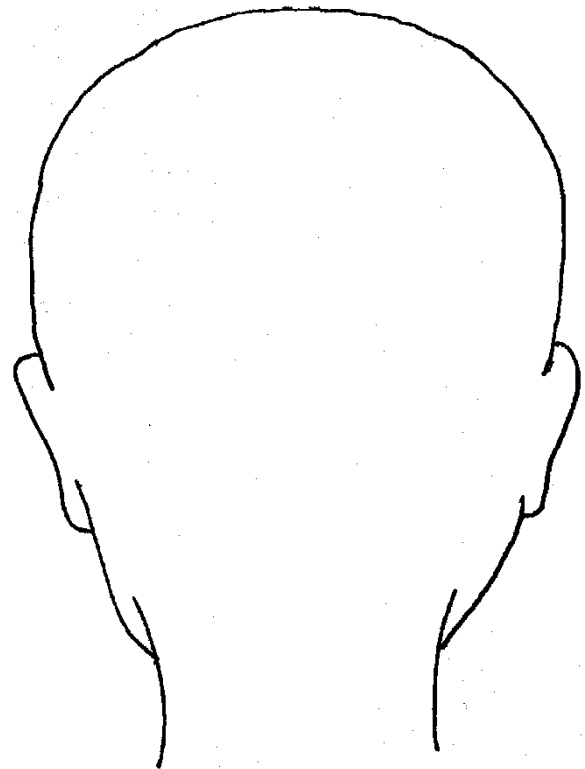


Name of child:

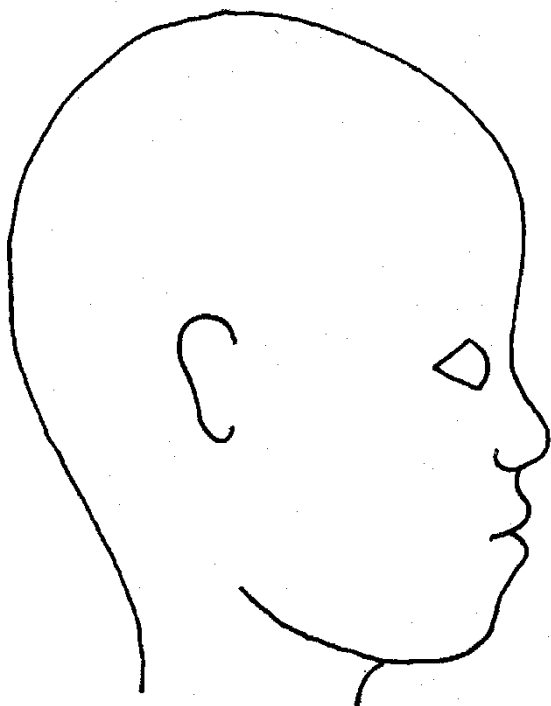
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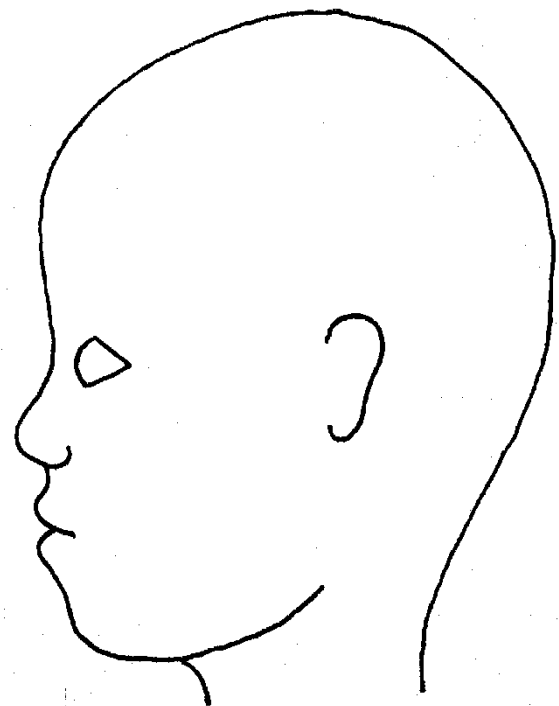
**FRONT**



**BACK**



**RIGHT**

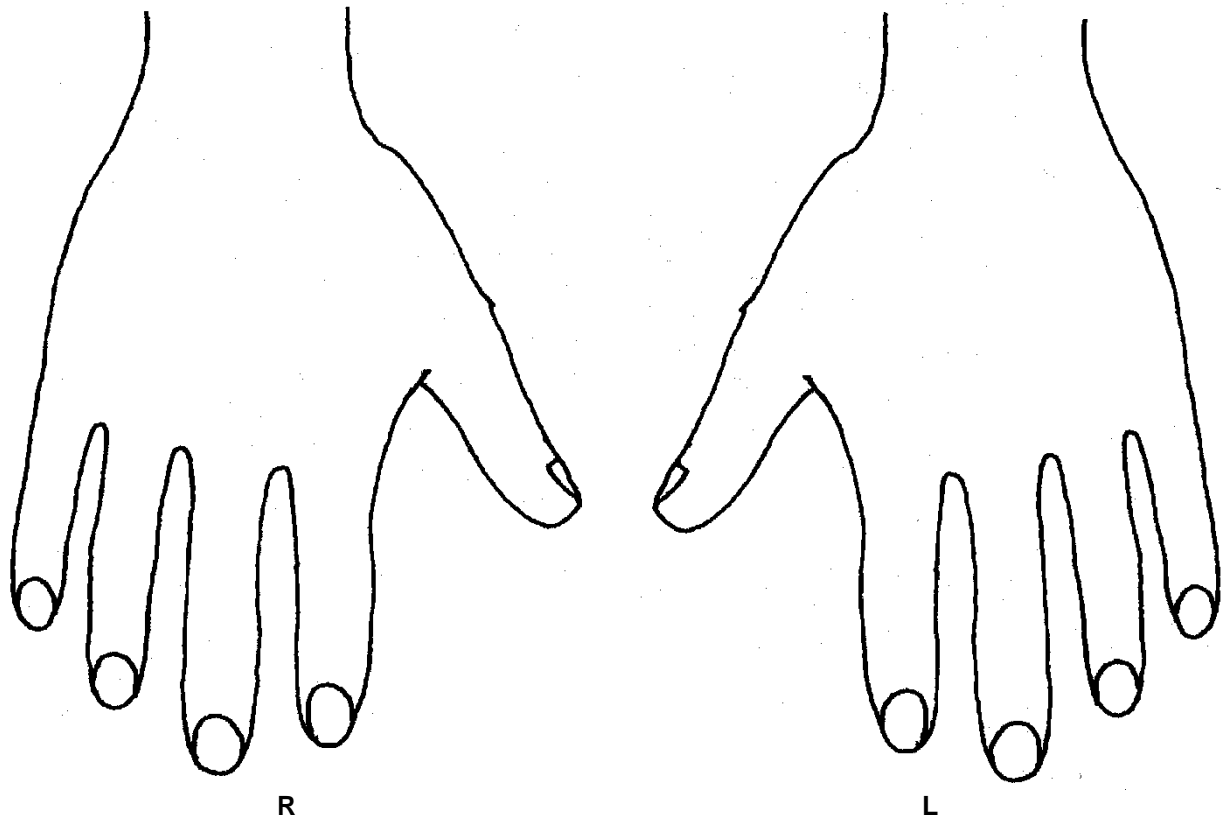


**LEFT**

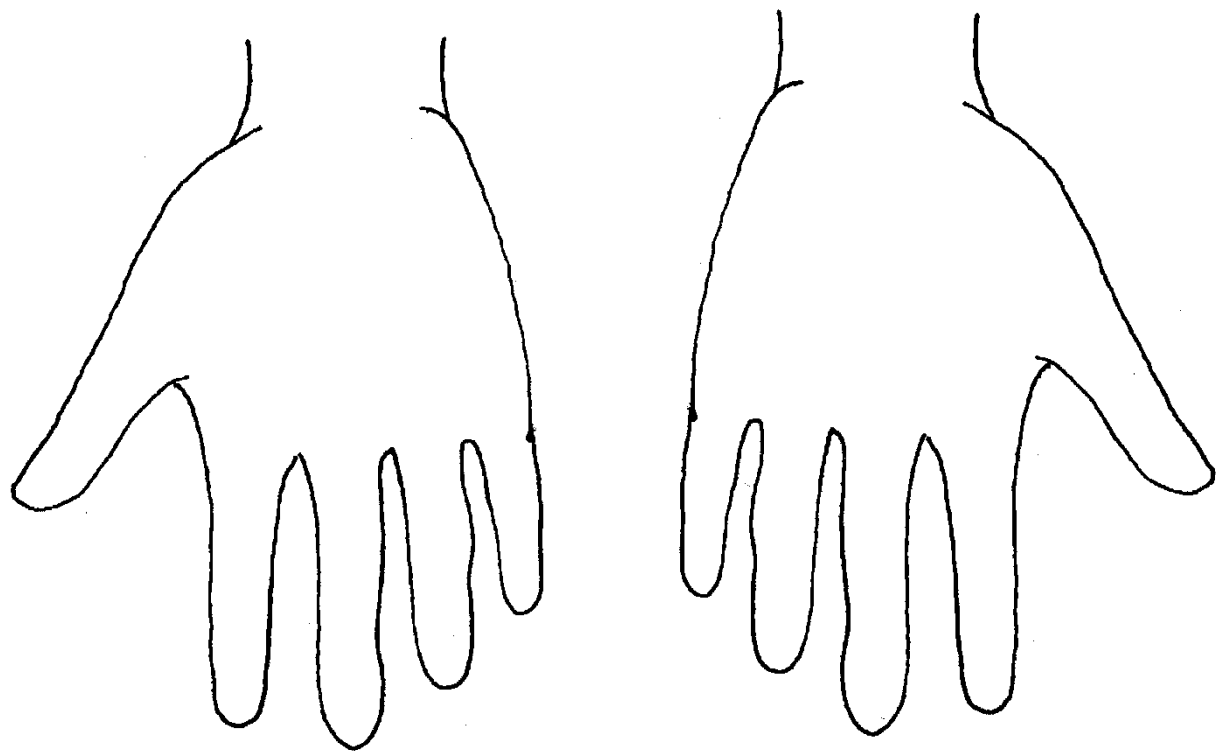
Name of child:

Date and time of observation:





BACK

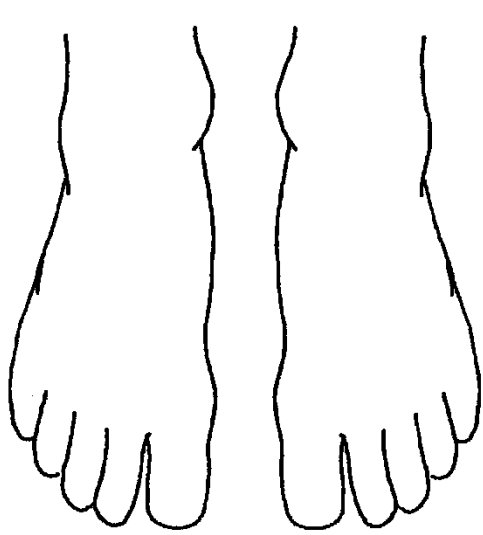


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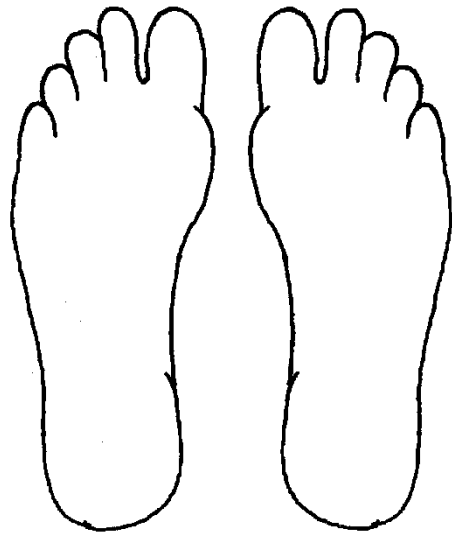
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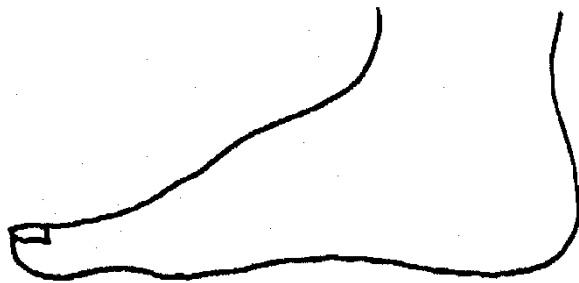
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R TOP L



R BOTTOM L

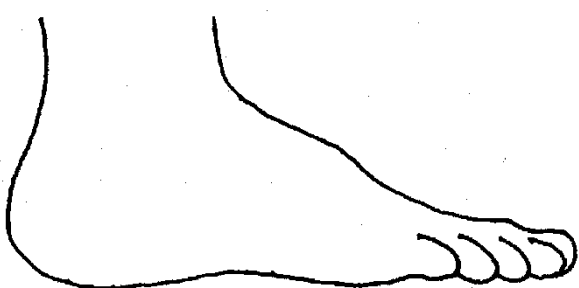


R



L

INNER



R



L

OUTER

Printed Name,  
Signature and Job  
title of staff:

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