

# **Safeguarding policy and procedures**

Reviewed: October 2024

Next Review: October 2025

Signed by: D Johnson

## **Review**

This policy and procedure will be regularly reviewed in accordance with current practice and legislation.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **1. Policy Statement**

This policy applies to all Staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid Contractor staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Urban Synergy.

#### **The purpose of this policy is to:**

- protect children and young people who participate in the activities and services that we provide. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- provide Staff and volunteers with the principles and good practice guidelines to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities.

Urban Synergy believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

#### **We recognise that:**

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989;
- all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- Working in partnership with children and young people, their parents and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

#### **We will seek to keep children and young people safe by ensuring we:**

- provide a safe environment for children and young people to take part in any activity or access any service organised by Urban Synergy;
- support children and young people to be aware of their own safety and to keep themselves safe;
- promote an environment where children and young people feel secure, are enabled to talk and are listened to;
- make decisions based on the needs of children and young people;
- have clear safeguarding policies and procedures which are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board in the areas in which we operate;
- appoint a Safeguarding Team who will take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues;
- provide the appropriate level of support to children and young people who have suffered significant harm and to Staff involved in any safeguarding issue;
- create a culture of safer Staff recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or young people;
- promote a culture of transparency where all Staff feel able to challenge and raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, and address these concerns sensitively and effectively;

- ensure all members of Staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their roles;
- ensure all members of Staff who work with children and young people have regular supervision and can access support when needed;
- understand our duty of care to children, young people and Staff who undertake our activities;
- ensure that children and young people are kept safe when we work in partnership with other agencies;
- carry out an annual review of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures, and make changes as soon as possible if any gaps or weaknesses are identified;
- make the policy and procedures available to children and young people, their parents or carers on request.

## **2. Legal framework and policy and procedure references**

**This policy and supporting procedures are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:**

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice, (DfE) 2020
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015

**This policy contains the following procedures and further information:**

Section	Page number	Contents
1	4	Definitions
2	5	Types of abuse and how to recognise them
3	10	Safeguarding Team
4	11	Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult
5	15	Managing allegations against Staff and volunteers
6	16	Code of conduct for Staff
7	18	Recording and information sharing
8	21	Prevent Duty
9	24	External contacts
10	30	Safeguarding report form

## **Communication**

This policy and procedures will be communicated to all Staff at the start of their employment or volunteering with Urban Synergy and Staff will be informed of any updates to the policy. Information about the Safeguarding Team and how to contact them will be displayed in the policy.

The policy and procedures will also be shared with relevant third parties when necessary including agencies working in partnership, consultants and staff. Urban Synergy will only work in partnership with agencies that have appropriate Safeguarding policies and procedures. When working in partnership Staff will ensure that a written agreement is in place as to which agency will take the lead on safeguarding.

Children and young people and their parents or carers, if necessary, will be given information about the policy and procedures in an appropriate way when they join any activities or services. Key points to be shared include our commitment to safeguarding; Staff are here to listen; who to tell if you are worried about anything; and who we will tell if we are worried about your safety.

## **Review arrangements**

The Safeguarding Team is responsible for the periodic review of this policy, procedures and further information.

## Section 1 Definitions

**Children and Young people** - the protection of children and young people according to the terms of the Children Act 1989 defines a child as someone under the age of 18.

**Abuse**- a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or a child or children. Further information about the different types of abuse and signs that might indicate abuse are found in Section 2.

**Safeguarding**- defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

**Staff** - this includes all Urban Synergy Contractors or volunteers.

**Participants** – this includes all children and young people that engage in our projects, programmes and activities.

## Section 2 Types of abuse and how to recognise them

### Abuse of children and young people

The following notes are taken from What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, Advice for Practitioners; HM Government 2015. Further detailed information on types and signs of abuse can be found on the NSPCC website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts, and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, including, via the internet. In the case of female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.

The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger

child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so you should also be alert to parent-child interactions which are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.

There are a number of warning indicators which might suggest that a child may be being abused or neglected. Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- children with consistently poor hygiene;
- children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- children who talk about running away;
- children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse including child sexual exploitation, and neglect. Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Physical abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse can also occur

outside of the family environment. Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- children with frequent injuries;
- children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones;
- children with unexplained bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; or bite marks;
- an explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- several different explanations provided for an injury;
- unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- parties connected with the individual are uninterested or undisturbed by the injury;
- repeated presentation of injuries;
- family use of different doctors and A&E departments;
- reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Although the effects of emotional abuse might take a long time to be recognisable, practitioners will be in a position to observe it, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers. Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- parents or carers blaming their problems on their child;
- parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games;
- children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late;
- children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.

Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. It is important that practitioners remain alert and do not miss opportunities to take timely action. However, while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify. Neglect may occur if a parent becomes physically or mentally unable to care for a child. A parent may also have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, which could impair their ability to keep a child safe or result in them prioritising buying drugs, or alcohol, over food, clothing or warmth for the child.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal drug or alcohol abuse. Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- children who are left hungry or dirty;
- children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;
- children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm;
- children who fail to receive basic health care;



- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

## **Specific Safeguarding Issues**

There are also specific safeguarding issues detailed below and for which some further information is provided. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on these issues and should be consulted should the need arise:

**Bullying Including Cyber-bullying** - behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance cyber-bullying via internet, text message) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

**Domestic Violence** - any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

**Drugs** - including alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (legal highs) and volatile substances. This includes use or misuse by the participant or the impact of use or misuse by others on a participant.

**Fabricated or Induced Illness** - there are three main ways for a carer to fabricate or induce an illness. These are not mutually exclusive and include fabrication of signs and symptoms and may include fabrication of past history; fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital records and specimens of bodily fluids; induction of an illness by a variety of means.

**Faith Abuse** - this includes; belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray; ritual murders; use of belief in witchcraft or magic to create fear to make children more compliant when they are being trafficked to domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** - a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there is no medical reason for this to be done. There is a range of indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk, but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

**Forced Marriage** - a marriage in which one, or both spouses do not consent to marriage.

**Gangs and Youth Violence** - 'Street gangs' for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity.

**Gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)** - violence, physical, sexual or otherwise, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation. Includes transgender violence.

**Grooming** - when someone builds an emotional connection with a child, young person or vulnerable adult to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Grooming can take place face-to-face or online. Groomers will often gain the trust of family members, carers or colleagues to enable them to spend time alone with the individual.

**Hate crime** - any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or transgender identity.

**Mental health** - a mental health problem may make someone more vulnerable to abuse or may make it harder for them to take the first step in seeking help.

**Radicalisation** - the process through which an individual changes from passiveness or activism to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist, especially where there is intent towards, or support violence.

**Sexting** - exchange of self-generated explicit images, through mobile picture messages, webcams or over the internet.

**Teenage Relationship Abuse** – can include emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse or financial abuse (taking control of money and/or forcing a teenager to buy things or work/not work).

**Trafficking and modern slavery** – people are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Someone is in slavery if they are forced to work through coercion, or mental or physical threat; owned or controlled by an 'employer', through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse; dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'; physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.

**Young people who are sexually active** - under most circumstances where Staff have knowledge of a young person's sexual relationships this should be considered to be a normal part of a young person's development. The age of the young people involved should only be an issue where there is concern about a young person's ability to give genuine consent or where there appears to be an imbalance of power within that relationship. If Staff become aware that a young person aged under 13 has been involved in penetrative sex or other intimate sexual activity, action must be taken.

**Young people who are themselves parents** - Staff may work with young people who are themselves parents. If there are concerns about a young person's care of their child, it is important to be open and honest about these concerns and about action that needs to be taken to address them. In most situations Staff should discuss the concerns with the young person (parent). If Staff have any concerns that doing so will place the child, the young person or the Staff member at risk they should discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Officer first.

### **Section 3. Safeguarding Team**

Urban Synergy has a Safeguarding Team which comprises of:

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Children and Young People)	Dianne Johnson – Head of Programmes	07508 340391	<a href="mailto:dianne.johnson@urbansynergy.com">dianne.johnson@urbansynergy.com</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Charmaine Charles – Cohort Leader	07957 366662	<a href="mailto:Charmaine.charles@urbansynergy.com">Charmaine.charles@urbansynergy.com</a>

All Staff and volunteers should ensure they have the contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Person (or a Safeguarding Deputy in their absence) available at all times when working with children and young people.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** will:

- act as first point of contact for Staff in raising a safeguarding concern;
- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse to the relevant investigating agencies;
- liaise and co-operate with the Local Safeguarding Board and Child Social Care Teams in each area in which the charity operates;
- work closely with Staff to support children and young people where abuse is suspected or disclosed;
- provide advice and support to Staff on issues relating to safeguarding;
- inform the Managing Director of any issues and ongoing investigations;
- maintain accurate, secure records of referrals or concerns;
- ensure that cover is provided in the case of absence from the role.

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** will provide cover for the Designated Safeguarding Officer in their absence and carry out the responsibilities as outlined above.

The **Safeguarding Team** will:

- participate in relevant Safeguarding Training every 2 years, including refresher training
- review the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and provide information on findings to the Trust to ensure best practice is maintained.

Any allegations of abuse or concerns about the behaviour of members of the Safeguarding Team are investigated and addressed in line with this policy.

#### **Section 4. Dealing with disclosures or concerns about a child or young person**

Urban Synergy Staff have regular contact with children and young people primarily through education, community and employment programmes and are likely to be involved in working closely with these groups, some of whom may be marginalised, disaffected and vulnerable. Working in this close proximity means that Urban Synergy Staff may become aware of a situation where a child, or young person, is at risk of suffering significant harm.

The following procedure aims to support Staff to respond effectively to a safeguarding disclosure or concern. The same procedure should be followed if a participant makes a disclosure of historical abuse, even if they are no longer in contact with the alleged abuser.

**Ways abuse might be brought to your attention:**

- a participant might make a direct disclosure about him or herself, or about another participant;
- a participant might offer information that is worrying but is not a direct disclosure;
- a member of Staff might be concerned about a participants' appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a participant;
- a parent, carer or third party might make a direct disclosure about a participant or offer information that is worrying but is not a direct disclosure.

**Talking to a participant who has told you that he/she or another participant is being abused:**

- reassure the participant that telling someone was the right thing to do;
- tell the participant that you now have to do what you can to keep them (or another participant) safe;
- tell the participant what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it;
- let the participant tell their whole story - don't try to investigate or question the participant but do make sure that you are clear about what they are saying;
- ask the participant what they would like to happen as a result of what they have said, but don't make or infer promises that you can't keep.

**In the case of a child or young person give them the Childline phone number: 0800 1111**

**Action to be taken by Staff if concerns are raised or a disclosure is made:**

- contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or a Safeguarding Deputy in their absence) as soon as possible and inform them of the disclosure or concerns;
- make a written recording using the Safeguarding Report Form;
- pass any written information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer safely and securely and do not keep any records for yourself.

**On receiving a disclosure or concern the DSL will decide on the best course of action which may include:**

- seeking advice from the Child Social Care department or the NSPCC helpline;
- making a referral to the Child Social Care department - if a referral is made the Designated Safeguarding Officer will follow this up in writing within 48 hours;
- making decisions about who else needs to know and how this will be done;
- making a referral to another agency for specialist support and advice.

The DSL will add information to the Safeguarding Report Form that has been submitted by the person receiving the disclosure or raising the concern, and will keep and maintain any written records in line with the Recording and Information Sharing Guidelines.

**Helping a participant in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention:**

- if the participant is with you, remain with them and call the police;
- if the participant is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them;

- if the participant needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and while you are waiting for it to arrive, provide first aid help;
- contact the DSL as soon as possible to let them know what is happening.

A decision will need to be made about informing the participants' family and the Child Social Care department, when they should be informed, and who should do this. This should be done together with the police and/or health services.

Once the immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, Staff should follow the guidelines on dealing with disclosures and concerns.

### **When to talk to parents or carers**

Staff should discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Officer before deciding whether parents or carers should be informed of a disclosure or any concerns. Always consider the welfare of the participant in your decision making. The issues that will need to be taken into account are the participants' wishes and feelings; the parent or carer's right to know – unless this would place the participant or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation; the impact of telling or not telling the parent or carer; the current assessment of risk to the participant and the source of that risk; and any risk management plans that currently exist.

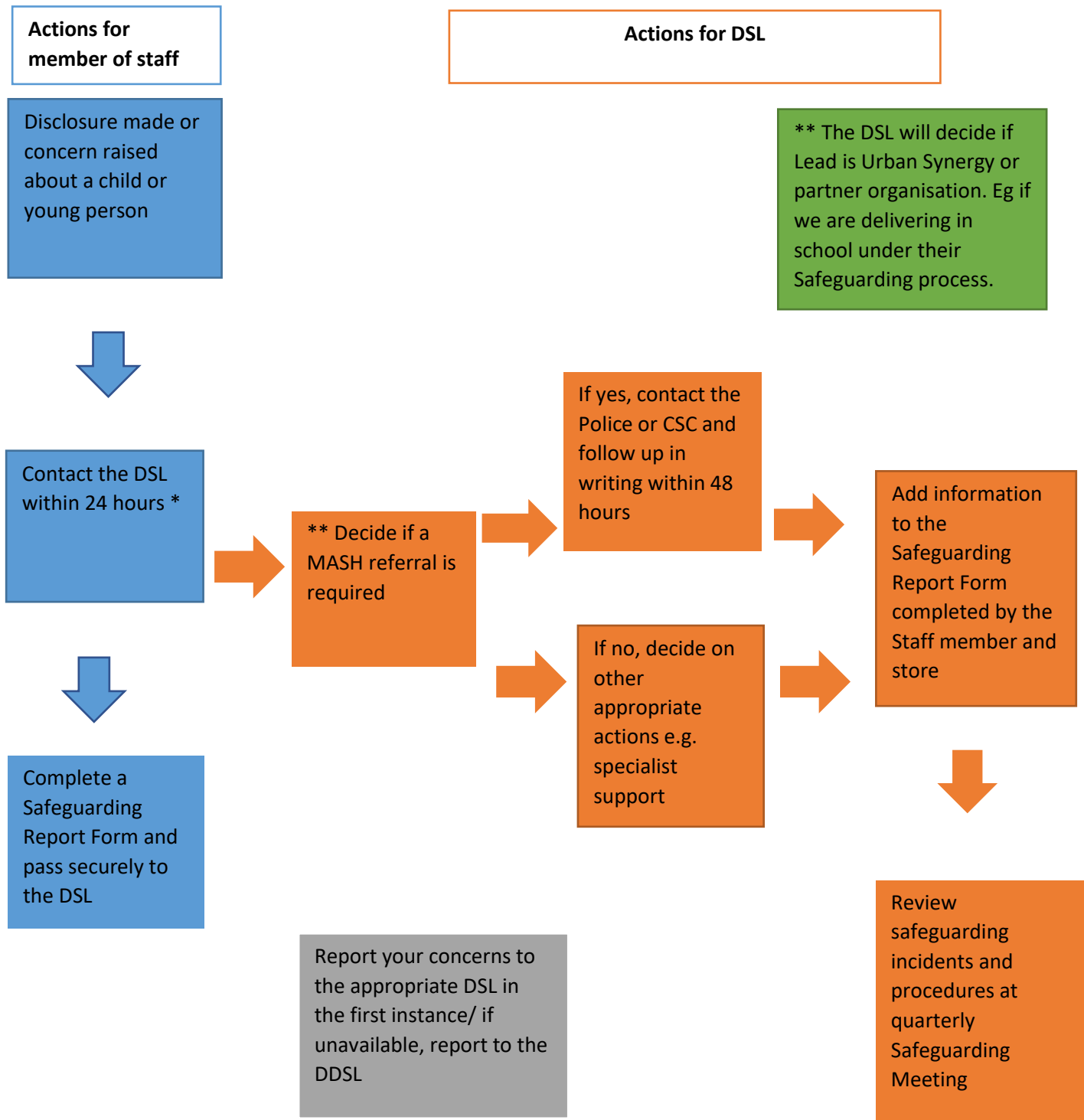
### **External contacts**

Urban Synergy recognises that on rare occasions when Staff are working on evenings and at weekends that they may be unable to contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team. In these cases, if a disclosure or concern is raised Staff may contact the relevant Child Social Care Team or the NSPCC helpline directly. Staff must make sure that they contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible, and complete all actions as outlined above.

### **Contracted and partnership work**

When working in partnership, disclosures, concerns or allegations of abuse must be reported in line with these procedures, but may also need to be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer within the partner organisation. Staff should agree to reporting procedures in advance and in writing with the partner organisation.

## Safeguarding Flow Chart



## **Section 5. Managing allegations against Staff and volunteers**

Allegations against Staff should be taken seriously and the following process will enable Urban Synergy to approach any allegation in a consistent way and without prejudice.

### **This procedure aims to:**

- ensure that participants are protected following an allegation of abuse by a member of Staff or volunteer;
- ensure that there is a fair, consistent and robust response to any allegations made so that any risk posed to participants is managed effectively;
- facilitate an appropriate level of investigation into allegations;
- ensure that Urban Synergy continues to fulfil its responsibilities towards members of Staff and volunteers;
- ensure that individuals are able to continue in their role if they have been subject to an allegation that is unfounded or malicious.

### **Action to be taken if an allegation is made or concerns are raised:**

The person to whom the allegation has been made or who has a concern should:

- contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and inform them of the allegation or concerns;
- make a written recording using the Safeguarding Report Form;
- pass any written information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer safely and securely and not keep any records for themselves.

### **On receiving an allegation or concern the DSL will:**

- inform the Staff member and suspend them from work, if appropriate, whilst an investigation is carried out – it should be noted that this is not an assumption of guilt;
- lead on the investigation with support from The Safeguarding Team;
- keep and maintain any written records in line with the Recording and Information Sharing Guidelines.

### **The investigation may include:**

- **informing the police if a criminal offence is alleged;**
- **informing the Local Authority Child Designated Team;**
- **conducting an internal investigation and possible disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy.**

### **The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted if:**

- Possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaviour in personal life (e.g., arrests / drug or alcohol misuse / child protection referral in relation to own children) that may have bearing on suitability to work with children – and at very least require a risk assessment

Behaving in a way that has harmed a child, or may have

- harmed a child

The DSL will cooperate fully with the Police or LADO and take advice from them on the course of action to be taken in relation to the Staff members employment and informing them of the details of the investigation. Advice will also be sought on how to inform the participant's parents or carers, and who should do this.

### **Once investigations are complete**

If a Staff member is found to have harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child; the Designated Safeguarding Officer will inform the Disclosure and Barring Service and the member of Staff will be disciplined using Urban Synergy disciplinary policies and this may result in dismissal.

If allegations are unfounded and it is appropriate for the member of Staff to return to work, it is the responsibility of the individual's line manager with support from the Designated Safeguarding Officer as required to ensure that they are properly integrated back into work.

Where an investigation establishes poor practice rather than abuse then the line manager will consider appropriate training and supervision and the Designated Safeguarding Officer will review general practice in relation to safeguarding.

## **Section 6. Code of conduct for Staff**

Urban Synergy delivers its work with children and young people (participants) in a variety of ways including group work, training sessions, 1-1 mentoring and coaching. This code of conduct is intended to provide guidance for Staff on careful and thoughtful conduct, and is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences which come from positive interaction within our activities and services. The code applies to all Staff and volunteers, and those working on behalf of Urban Synergy.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and has a twofold purpose of safeguarding participants from abuse and also protecting Staff and volunteers from false allegations of abuse; if we protect participants, we also protect ourselves.

### **Staff should:**

- always be aware of the needs of participants, and be vigilant for any possible signs of abuse;
- never promise confidentiality. There are circumstances in which information may need to be passed on to others in order to safeguard a participant
- Recording and information sharing guidelines for further information;
- always wear their ID badge when working on behalf of Urban Synergy and actively challenge Staff and visitors who are not wearing ID;
- not spend time alone with participants, especially away from others. Contact with individual participants should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left partly open and other Staff present or informed of the reason and location of the individual contact;
- avoid accidental 1:1 situations, for example, not using toilets specifically allocated for children;



- if they have specific responsibility for working on a 1:1 basis (as outlined in their job description), ensure that their line manager is fully aware of their work programme and that appropriate support is available if required. Further guidelines can be found in the Lone Working Policy;
- if they are a line manager of those Staff who have specific responsibility for working on a 1:1 basis; ensure that a risk assessment is carried out for each client and work location, and that the Staff member is fully supported through regular supervision. Further guidelines can be found in the Lone Working Policy;
- if they are trained to administer first aid, ensure whenever possible that this is done in the presence of another adult. However, in an emergency situation Staff should not hesitate to administer first aid simply because another adult is not present;
- not have unnecessary physical contact with participants. There may be occasions where physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing reassurance, or for physical support. In these cases, physical contact should only take place with the consent of the participant and should be avoided if it would likely be misinterpreted by the participant, their parent or carer, or a casual observer;
- not transport participants on their own or in their own vehicles. Where this is judged to be the only form of transport available in the circumstances, it should only be carried out with the full knowledge and consent of the line manager, the participant and the parent or carer;
- not contact or meet with participants outside an organised activity;
- ensure that their personal relationships do not affect the participants around them if they are engaged in relationships with co-workers or other adults present;
- not give out their personal details to participants. Participants should be asked to contact the Staff member through the office or the mobile phone or email address supplied to the Staff member by Urban Synergy;
- not communicate with participants on social networking sites using the Staff member's personal pages. Social networking may be used if a project or group page is set up. Further guidelines can be found in the E-safety Policy;
- report to their line manager immediately if they find that they are the subject of a participants' affections or attentions;
- identify risks and agree how to handle everyday interactions with their line manager if they live and work in the same location. This is particularly important in the case of volunteers and apprentices who may have been recruited from within the communities they will be working in, and may require support to separate their personal lives from their professional responsibilities;
- Remember that on rare occasions children and young people themselves can be responsible for abusing their peers, ensure that this risk is assessed during the planning of an activity, and that group ground rules are established in line with Acceptable Behaviour standards.

**Staff should never:**

- engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games with participants;
- threaten participants with serious sanctions or physical punishment;
- take participants to their home or the home of a relative or friend;
- share a room with a participant whilst on a trip or residential;
- allow participants to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g. racist, sexist or homophobic comments);
- make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to a participant, even in fun;

- engage in a sexual relationship with a participant under the age of 18, as such sexual activity is an abuse of the position of trust as defined in the Sexual Offences Act;
- let allegations made by a participant go without being addressed and recorded;
- deter participants from making allegations through fear of not being believed;
- do things of a personal nature for a participant that they can do for themselves;
- rely on their good name to protect them i.e. everyone regardless of position should adhere to these guidelines.

These guidelines are not exhaustive and Staff are encouraged to use their professional judgement in all circumstances in conjunction with this code. If Staff or volunteers are concerned about any situation in which they interact with participants they should speak immediately to their line manager who will seek additional guidance from the Safeguarding Team if necessary.

Breaches of this code should be reported in the same way as an allegation made against a Staff member as outlined, and will be investigated in line with these procedures.

## **Section 7. Recording and information sharing guidelines**

Urban Synergy recognises that information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The following guidelines seek to support Staff to record information, share it, understand its significance and then take appropriate action.

These guidelines are based on the 7 golden rules about information sharing which are taken from Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children and young people; HM Government 2015. This also contains a useful flowchart to assist Staff when making decisions around information sharing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Remember that the Data Protection Act and human rights law are not barriers to information sharing.

1. Be open and honest.
2. Seek advice from other practitioners.
3. Share with informed consent.
4. Consider safety and well-being.
5. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure.
6. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it.

## **Records**

Urban Synergy makes and keeps records relating to its work with participants to support us to comply with health and safety, contractual and funding requirements. Staff will inform participants when they start accessing our services that records will be kept. This may include personal information e.g. registration forms, consent forms; as well as records of their participation as an individual or member of a group e.g. 1-1 record, session record.

Records are also kept when there is a safeguarding concern or disclosure, using a Safeguarding Report Form. Records are clearly marked and kept securely by the Designated Safeguarding Officer in a confidential file. The records are reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team and checked to be chronological, tidy, legible and factual in content. Records may be withdrawn from the organisation in compliance with requests made by the Local Authority Designated Team, NSPCC or Police Teams. Any withdrawal will be noted and signed for.

Where there is a concern that a participant may be in need, at risk of abuse, or pose a risk to other participants or Staff, a note may be placed on other records along with details of how the concerns have been or are being dealt with. Programme managers should decide on how best to arrange this depending on the specific reporting requirements for that programme. This could include a separate note on file or a flagging system which alerts Staff members to further information held in a specific location which must be checked prior to any contact with the participant.

When creating records, Staff should make it clear if any part of the record is based on fact, hearsay or opinion. If opinion is expressed, this should be relevant to the situation, and respectful and appropriate in tone.

### **Storage of records**

Staff will ensure that all records which contain personal information about participants will be kept securely. Written and portable electronic information will be stored in lockable cabinets, and information stored on hard disks and networks will be secured using passwords or other appropriate security measures. Information will not be left lying around on desks and will be secured out of office hours. Records relating to individuals will be kept separately from records relating to the work that is delivered. This is to ensure that confidentiality is maintained where information may have been recorded about an individuals' circumstances.

Records will not be kept for longer than is necessary in accordance with the Data Protection Act. We will keep records for as long as a participant is accessing our services and until all requirements of our health & safety, contractual and funding obligations have been met. Records containing personal information about a participant will be destroyed securely.

### **Sharing Information - GDPR**

Urban Synergy recognises that participants and their parents or carers have a right to know the information they share with us will be regarded as confidential, as well as to be informed about the circumstances when and the reasons why we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if it is in the public interest. That is when:

- it is to prevent a crime from being committed or to intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child; or
- not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The decision to share information without consent should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of the Safeguarding team. The three critical criteria are:

- Where there is evidence that a participant is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

- Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a participant may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm.
- To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.
- 

Staff will never promise confidentiality or to keep secrets, however, when we share information, this will be done on a 'need to know' basis.

Staff will not discuss personal information given by participants or their parents or carers with other members of Staff, except where it affects planning for the participants' needs.

- Staff will seek consent to share information from participants and their parents or carers in most cases (see exceptions above). Staff will do this in the following ways:
- cover this verbally when the participant starts or include this in the information provided;
- ask participants and/or their parents or carers to give written consent to share information about any additional needs they, their child or the person they care for may have;
- give copies to participants and/or their parents or carers of the forms they sign.

Staff will consider the following questions when they need to share information:

- Is there a legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
- Does the information enable the person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do we have consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order requiring us to share the information?
- If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, or is there sufficient public interest for us to share information?
- If the decision is to share, are we sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have we properly recorded our decision?

All of the undertakings above are subject to our paramount commitment to the safety and well-being of the child or young person.

Where information is shared, Staff will record the reasons for doing so in the relevant file; where it is decided that information is not to be shared Staff will record this too.

### **Access to records**

Participants have a right of access to records which are held about them by Urban Synergy. Full access to records will be provided unless Staff consider the participant to be of insufficient age. Where another agency requests access to information about a participant this will only be provided with the full knowledge and consent of the participant (see exceptions above).

### **Policy breaches**

Staff will support participants throughout any proceedings which follow the disclosure of confidential information, taking on board any requests made by the participant. Staff will give clear information to the participant and their parent or carer where necessary, about the

reasons for and consequences of disclosing confidential information. Where confidential information is disclosed for reasons that are not covered in these procedures, disciplinary action may be considered.

## **Rights and Competency**

### **Children and Young People - The Gillick Principle**

The Gillick case involved the provision of contraceptive treatment for girls under the age of 16. The House of Lords ruling (1985 3A 11 ER 402) had the effect of permitting doctors to provide medical treatment to children under the age of 16, without parental consent, where they were found by the doctor to be competent (Gillick competent). The decision as to whether or not a child is competent depends on a number of factors, including maturity of the child; the child's understanding of the consequences of his/her actions etc.

Competence must be defined by the Staff member involved on a case by case basis; it is not acceptable to have a general policy which defines the age at which children will be deemed competent. Where a child is not of sufficient understanding the consent of the parent (or person with parental responsibility) is required. Even if a child is considered to be Gillick competent Staff need to keep the issue of competence under constant review.

## **Section 8. Prevent Duty**

As a provider of services to children, young people and vulnerable adults, Urban Synergy has a vital role to play in protecting them from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. This is a role which is underpinned by the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: 'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

Prevent is an integral part of Urban Synergy's commitment to safeguarding. We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism.

### **Recognising radicalisation and extremism**

Children and young people are known to be at risk of others attempting to radicalise them. There are many reasons why a person might be drawn to extremism. These may include:

- searching for answers to questions about their identity, faith and belonging;
- being drawn to a group or individual who can offer answers to these questions or provide a social network and support;
- a lack of self-esteem;
- a desire for adventure and excitement;
- a need to promote their 'street cred';
- being influenced by world events by feeling a sense of grievance and wanting to make a difference.

**Often it is vulnerable people who are targeted for radicalisation and can include those that:**

- have low self-esteem;
- feel isolated;
- experience pressure from peers;
- have a lack of direction or purpose;
- feel guilt, loss, isolation, anger or fear;
- have suffered a family breakdown.

**Signs of radicalisation may include:**

- out of character changes in behaviour, peer interactions and dress;
- secretive behaviour;
- losing interest in peer groups and activities;
- showing sympathy for extremist causes;
- possessing extremist literature;
- glorifying violence;
- verbally expressing opinions different to generally accepted views or publicly supporting messages similar to those of illegal organisations.

There is no stereotype for people holding extremist views and the above are only examples or circumstances that can drive someone to terrorism but often the lead is a sense of injustice, which can be on a personal or more far reaching scale. Their vulnerabilities or susceptibilities are then exploited towards crime or terrorism by people who have their own agenda, through face-to-face interactions or online through the internet, social media and mobile phone applications.

### **Risk Reduction**

The Safeguarding Team will assess the level of risk within the organisation and put actions in place to reduce any identified risks.

### **Procedure**

Keeping children and young people safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding from other risks, as outlined in the policy.

When any member of Staff has concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and complete a Safeguarding Report Form. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will have responsibility for assessing whether the participant may be at risk of radicalisation, and where relevant, for referring the participant to the Police Prevent Team.

If a member of Staff is verbalising views that are considered extremist and that have potential to influence participants and other Staff or is displaying behaviour associated with radicalisation, a safeguarding concern should be raised without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and a Safeguarding Report Form completed.

### **Promoting British Values**

In addition to being alert to radicalisation and extremism, Urban Synergy recognises that it has a role to play in promoting British Values. These values are:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith

We will do this by supporting the people we work with to:

- understand themselves and develop self-esteem and self-confidence;
- respect one another;
- distinguish right from wrong and respect the law;
- accept responsibility for their behaviour;
- make a positive contribution to their community;
- understand and respect their own and others' cultures;
- understand and respect the rights and responsibilities of freedom of speech;
- respect and participate in democracy.

## **Section 9. External contacts**

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Childline: 0800 1111

Mon-Fri 10am – 4pm

Local Authority Child Teams:

<http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/contacts/referrals/>

### **Barking & Dagenham**

Telephone: 020 8227 3811

Out of hours: 020 8594 8356

Fax: 020 8227 3951

Email: [childrenss@lbbd.gov.uk](mailto:childrenss@lbbd.gov.uk)

### **Barnet**

Telephone: 020 8359 4066

Out of hours: 020 8359 2000

Fax: 020 8359 8032

Email: [dutyfrontdesk@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:dutyfrontdesk@barnet.gov.uk)

### **Bexley**

Telephone: 01322 356 302

Out of hours: 020 8303 7777

Email: [safeguardingchildren@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingchildren@bexley.gov.uk)

### **Brent**

Telephone: 020 8937 4300

Out of hours: 020 8863 5250

Fax: 020 8397 1986

Email: [customer.services@brent.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@brent.gov.uk)

### **Bromley**

Telephone: 020 8461 7373 / 7379 / 7404 /7309

Out of hours: 020 8464 4848

Fax: 01689 897 475

Email: [referral.assessment@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:referral.assessment@bromley.gov.uk)

### **Camden**

Telephone: 020 7974 6666

Telephone (north of the borough): 020 7974 6600/1125 Telephone (south of the borough):  
020 7974 4094/4446

Out of hours: 020 7974 4444

### **Croydon**

24 hour service: 020 8726 6400

Fax: 020 8633 9441

Email: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

### **Ealing**

Telephone: 020 8825 8000

Out of hours: 020 8825 8000

Fax: 020 8825 5454

Email: [ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:ECIRS@ealing.gov.uk)

### **Enfield**

Telephone: 020 8379 2507

Out of hours: 020 8379 1000

Fax: 020 8379 2595

### **Greenwich**

Telephone: 020 8921 3172

Out of hours: 020 8854 8888

Fax: 020 8921 3180



Email: [initial.response@greenwich.gov.uk](mailto:initial.response@greenwich.gov.uk)

### **Hackney & City**

Hackney First Response Team, Children's Social Care

Tel: 020 8356 5500

Out of hours: 020 8356 2346 / 2710

Fax: 020 8356 5516

Email: [cscreferrals@hackney.gov.uk.cjsm.net](mailto:cscreferrals@hackney.gov.uk.cjsm.net)

### **City of London Children's Services Team**

Telephone: 020 7332 1224

Fax: 020 8356 4734

Email: [social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

### **Hammersmith and Fulham**

Telephone: 020 8753 5392

Out of hours: 020 8748 8588

Fax: 020 8753 4209

Email: [BusinessSupportOffice@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessSupportOffice@lbhf.gov.uk)

### **Haringey**

Telephone: 020 8489 4592 / 5652 / 5762

Out of hours: 020 8348 3148

Fax: 020 8489 4442

### **Harrow**

Telephone: 020 8901 2690

Out of hours: 020 8424 0999

Fax: 020 8861 1816

### **Havering**

Telephone: 01708 433 222

Out of hours: 01708 433 999

Fax: 01708 433 375

### **Hillingdon**

Telephone: 01895 250 102

Out of hours: 01895 250 111

Fax: 01895 277 266

Email: [ratduty@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:ratduty@hillingdon.gov.uk)

### **Hounslow**

Telephone: 020 8583 3456 Out of hours: 020 8583 2222

Isleworth, Heston, Central Hounslow, Brentford & Chiswick T: 020 8583 6673 F:020 8583 3245 Bedfont, Cranford, West Hounslow, Feltham & Hanworth T: 020 8583 6672, F: 020 8583 3303

Email: [childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk)

### **Islington**

Telephone: 020 7527 7400

Out of hours: 020 7226 0992

Email: [CSCreferrals@ilsington.gov.uk](mailto:CSCreferrals@ilsington.gov.uk)

### **Kensington and Chelsea**

Telephone: 020 7361 3013

Out of hours: 020 7361 3013

Email: [socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk)

### **Kingston Upon-Thames**

Telephone: 020 8547 5008

Out of hours: 020 8770 5000

Email: [safeguarding@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rbk.kingston.gov.uk)

### **Lambeth**

Telephone: 020 7361 3013

Out of hours: 020 7373 3227

Fax: 020 7368 0228

### **Lewisham**

Telephone: 0208 314 6660

Out of hours: 020 8314 6000

Fax: 020 8314 3447

Email: [referral&assessmentteam@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:referral&assessmentteam@lewisham.gov.uk) hope that my email finds you well.

### **Merton**

Telephone: 0208 545 4226 / 4227

Out of hours: 020 87705000

Fax: 020 8545 4198

Email: [childrensdayservice@merton.gov.uk](mailto:childrensdayservice@merton.gov.uk)

### **Newham**

Telephone: 0208430 2000

Out of hours: 020 8552 9587

Fax: 020 8430 5653

Email: [SSD-IRO@newham.gov.uk](mailto:SSD-IRO@newham.gov.uk)

### **Redbridge**

Telephone: 0208708 3885

Out of hours: 020 8553 5825

Fax: 020 8708 3886

Email: [cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk)

### **Richmond**

Telephone: 0208891 7969

Out of hours: 020 8744 2442

Fax: 020 8831 6450

Email: [spa@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:spa@richmond.gov.uk)

### **Southwark**

Telephone: 020 7525 1921

Out of hours: 020 7525 5000

Email: [RAD@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:RAD@southwark.gov.uk)

### **Sutton**

Telephone: 0208770 4343

Out of hours: 020 87705000

Fax: 020 8770 4798

Email: [cat@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:cat@sutton.gov.uk)

### **Tower Hamlets**

Telephone: 0207364 5606 / 5601

Out of hours: 020 73644079

Fax: 020 7364 2656 / 2655

### **Waltham Forest**

Telephone: 0208496 2317

Out of hours: 020 84963000

Fax: 020 8496 2313

**Wandsworth**

Telephone: 0208871 6622

Out of hours: 020 88716000

Email: [childreferraldutymanager@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:childreferraldutymanager@wandsworth.gov.uk)

**Westminster**

Telephone: 0207641 4000

Out of hours: 020 76416000

Fax: 020 7641 7526

Email: [accesstohildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:accesstohildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk)

**OTHER AGENCIES:**

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

Tel No: 0808 800 5000

## Section 10 Safeguarding Report Form

<b>Urban Synergy Safeguarding Report Form</b>	
<b>Staff Details</b>	
Name	
Position	
Date	
<b>Participant's Details</b>	
Full Name	
Gender	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Phone Number	
Parent or carer's name (if applicable)	
<b>Details of the disclosure, concern or incident</b>	

Describe what has happened and include dates, times, details of any injuries, changes in behaviour or appearance and any other information you think is relevant:

If you are reporting the concerns of someone else please give details of their name and position:

If you have spoken to the participant please provide details of their account or perspective:

If anyone has been alleged to be the cause of the incident or source of concerns please provide details:

If anyone else witnessed the incident or shares your concerns please provide their details:

If you are aware of any previous concerns, disclosures or any current risks or support plans please give details:

Referral Details	To be completed by Designated Safeguarding Officer	
Summary of discussion with Staff member making the report:		
Do you have child or adult protection concerns?		Yes / No
<b>If yes, a referral must be made to statutory child protection authorities</b>		
Date & Time of Referral		
Name and contact details of the person referral made to		
Action agreed with Police or Child Social Care Team		
Details of any follow up with Police or Child Social Care Team		
Details of who else 'needs to know' and who is responsible for informing them		
If the concerns are not about child protection what further support is required?		
	<b>Signed</b>	<b>Date</b>



Staff member		
Designated Safeguarding Officer		