

G90 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1. About this policy

The Jack Petchey Foundation (JPF) is committed to protecting young people from harm. All JPF staff, volunteers, contractors, freelancers, consultants and trustees are required to ensure the welfare of young people within our work and within the work we fund. JPF staff, volunteers, contractors, freelancers, consultants and trustees are required to abide by and adhere to this policy and JPF's safeguarding practice. JPF requires that all partner organisations and grantees have their own effective and up-to-date safeguarding policies and procedures in place. This is a requirement of receiving any funding from JPF or delivering any work on our behalf.

This policy is updated annually or sooner if any statutory or best practice guidance changes, or if improvements are identified. Reference is always made to the latest guidance and legal updates from the Charity Commission and the London and Essex Children's Safeguarding Boards.

It is everyone's responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns to us so that we can ensure that young people are effectively protected from any harm.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect young people who participate in JPF programmes or any programme/organisation connected with JPF.
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding young people.

The JPF Health and Safety policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policies. Both are freely available to staff in the general policies folder. The JPF Health and Safety policy is available to external parties on request from 020 8252 8000 or info@jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk. JPF's safeguarding policy is available on our website or on request.

2. What do we mean by safeguarding and protection?

JPF believes that all young people, without exception, have the right to protection from harm. We use the term safeguarding to refer to the steps that we expect JPF, as well as the organisations we fund, to have in place to protect young people from harm or abuse.

In this policy, the term Young People refers to those aged 18 and under, as well as those under 25 who may be considered vulnerable as a result of illness, disability, or mental health problems.

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect young people.

Safeguarding procedures and systems

JPF seeks to work within the guidelines outlined by the London Safeguarding Children Board (www.londonscb.gov.uk), and the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (www.escb.org.uk).

All organisations and schools applying to JPF for funding are subject to rigorous due diligence checks. It is a requirement of receiving JPF funding that all organisations have a comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policy, and funding will only be awarded to organisations that can demonstrate this. If an organisation does not have a policy in place, JPF will signpost them to organisations such as the NSPCC or the local CVS, who can provide further information on safeguarding. All organisations are regularly reviewed as part of JPF's commitment to ongoing due diligence.

If young people are applying for a grant (Individual Grants for Volunteering), the organisation they will be working with is checked against Companies House and/or the Charity Commission to ensure that they will be undertaking work with a registered UK organisation. The Head of Grants Team will obtain further information about the

organisation to ensure relevant safeguarding policies and procedures and liability insurances are in place.

3. Responsibilities

All staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors, freelancers and consultants must:

- Be familiar with this policy and apply it in their work for or on behalf of JPF;
- Consider safeguarding when assessing potential grantees and projects for funding;
- Report any safeguarding concerns using the procedure set out below;
- Co-operate with any safeguarding investigation;
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of young people and adults at risk;
- Attend safeguarding training as required;
- Know what to do if a child, young person, or adult at risk makes a disclosure to them;
- Be vigilant to potential signs and indicators of abuse and alert a manager or colleague if they have concerns about a child, young person, or adult at risk; and
- Help create a listening culture and help to ensure that young people and adults at risk know that they can come to them and be listened to.

Board of Trustees

The JPF Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for safeguarding and for ensuring that staff are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities. The Trustees discuss safeguarding at board meetings as a standing item on the agenda and receive reports on any safeguarding issues through the CEO's report to them. If the Lead Safeguarding Trustee believes a safeguarding issue should be communicated to the Board sooner, they can require that. The Trustees review this policy annually or (sooner) when there are any material changes to relevant legislation or guidance.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The JPF Board of Trustees has appointed the Chief Executive Officer as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All concerns and queries relating to safeguarding should be raised with the Chief Executive Officer, Head of Operations or Executive Assistant (both Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for JPF).

If an allegation is made against the Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer, all concerns and queries should be raised with the Chair of the JPF Board of Trustees.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Safeguarding Leads is the primary point of contact within JPF for safeguarding questions, concerns, or complaints. They will:

- Ensure that concerns are investigated appropriately and in line with this policy;
- Maintain a record of all safeguarding incidents, concerns, reports, and referrals; and
- Liaise with grantees and/or other external bodies on safeguarding issues.

Contacts

	Name	Contact No	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gemma Juma	020 8252 8000	Gjuma@jackpetchey.org.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Hannah Ellis	0208 252 8000	hellis@jackpetchey.org.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Carys Bevan	0208 252 8000	cbevan@jackpetchey.org.uk
Chair of Trustees (in the event of a concern about the CEO/DSL)	Matt Rantell	0208 252 8000	mrantell@jackpetchey.org.uk

5. Safer recruitment and training

All positions, paid and voluntary, will be subject to JPF vetting procedures that include checks into eligibility and suitability for work with young people.

JPF selection procedures will include completing an application form or CV, self-declaration regarding criminal record, at least two satisfactory references and an Enhanced DBS check. Because of the nature of the work at JPF, most posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and applicants will have to declare all criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent'. Information about recruiting offenders and managing the DBS Disclosure information is available to all job applicants on request.

All staff and volunteers over 18 who have regular and/or lone contact with young people will be required to complete a DBS check every three years and to sign up for the DBS renewal service (JPF will refund the annual renewal fee).

All over 16's who regularly engage with JPF as volunteers and have regular and/or lone contact with other young people, including AN Leaders and YCP panel members will be required to complete a DBS check.

All administrative staff (who do not have regular face-to-face contact with young people) will renew their DBS every five years. All staff with an extended period or unexplained absence will be required to renew their DBS.

All JPF Board members will be required to renew their DBS check every five years (sooner if there has been an extended period of unexplained absence). In addition, all Trustees must sign a declaration to confirm that they are not disqualified under the Charity Commission's automatic disqualification rules.

All DBS checks are completed by an external provider (Disclosures/Atlantic Data).

All JPF staff and volunteers, who have direct contact with young people as part of their duties, are responsible for being familiar with what may constitute child abuse. Basic training will be provided for all those carrying out such roles on a paid or voluntary basis as a part of their induction to JPF. After completing the basic training, it will be considered mandatory and a priority for all staff and volunteers to complete annual training. Hannah Ellis, Head of Operations and Deputy Safeguarding Lead, is responsible for arranging training and for keeping up-to-date records showing the history of training for Governors, staff, and Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Leads as well as the dates of DBS checks.

6. Grant making

JPF's grant funding terms and conditions require that every charity that applies for funding provides a copy of its safeguarding policies as part of the application procedure.

Our grant agreement with the charities, schools and youth organisations that we support requires them to have and maintain appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures and to comply with relevant statutory and regulatory safeguarding obligations. Charities must also inform JPF if any serious safeguarding issues or concerns arise, or if they make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission, during the term of the grant funding.

If a safeguarding report is made directly to JPF about an organisation that we support, we will make contact and expect them to respond appropriately. JPF will require the organisation to provide information on the outcome of its safeguarding investigations (to the extent permitted under GDPR). If we have reason to believe that an issue has not been dealt with appropriately and/or if the investigation uncovers serious issues relating to the governance or management of the organisation, JPF may cease grant funding. In addition, the JPF Board of Trustees, Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Officers may report concerns to the appropriate governing body, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Social Care, Police, or to the Charity Commission or other official body, as appropriate.

7. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding risks can take many different forms. We have listed detailed examples in Appendix 3.

Safeguarding reports may reach JPF through various routes, including telephone conversations, text messages, social media, or through face-to-face discussions. All concerns will be taken seriously.

If you have any concerns that someone may be experiencing, has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse or exploitation you should make a report to the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Officer without delay – you can find their contact details in Section 4 of this policy. You should report all safeguarding concerns, even if your concern relates to an incident that occurred some time ago.

When you make a report, you will need to provide details of your concerns including: the name(s) of the people involved; a description of each incident; and the dates, times and location of each incident.

If you witness a safeguarding incident, or if an incident has just taken place, and you believe someone is at imminent risk of significant harm, you should call the emergency services by ringing 999 and then report the matter to the lead Safeguarding Officer or most senior manager on site at the time.

If you are a member of staff or volunteer and you feel unable to raise concerns through the process set out below, you can raise your in accordance with the Protected Disclosures or "Whistleblowing" Policy freely available in the JPF J Drive – also available from the JPF Executive Assistant.

JPF will treat all safeguarding reports as confidential. Information will only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.

In most circumstances, JPF staff, volunteers, or contractors will have contact with young people who are in the primary care of another organisation, such as a school or youth organisation. It is essential that when concerns are raised, they are therefore also raised within the safeguarding procedures of the relevant organisation.

In many circumstances, the concerns may be less immediate, i.e. the young person is not at immediate risk of serious harm, but there remains some concern. In these circumstances, the JPF staff member should discuss the issue within 24 hours with the JPF Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer.

8. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

The JPF staff member/volunteer/contractor will discuss the incident with the JPF Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead and agree on what further action, if any, may be necessary. A copy of the concern form (Appendix 1) must be completed and saved securely on the J drive in the JPF Safeguarding Folder.

The Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will inform the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding that a report has been received and will decide how to take the matter forward. This could include:

- seeking support from external advisers
- taking action under relevant staff policies, including our Disciplinary Rules and Procedures (up to and including dismissal of employees)
- carrying out an internal investigation (or appointing a suitably qualified person to conduct an investigation)
- bringing voluntary roles to an end
- termination of grant agreements or other relationships with third parties
- making a report to external agencies (see below)

In reaching this decision, the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will review all available information and, if necessary, discuss the matter further with the person who reported the concern.

If there is insufficient information to follow up on the report and no way to obtain additional information (for example, if the person making the report did not leave their name or contact details), the Safeguarding Lead will keep a record of the report. Wherever possible, records will be anonymised and used for organisational learning and reporting purposes.

The Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead and the Lead Trustees will decide whether the matter should be reported as a serious incident to the Charity Commission and/or to other external agencies (for example, children's

social care services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Local Safeguarding Adults Board, the DBS or equivalent barring authority) or JPF's insurers.

JPF will ensure that a full account of any safeguarding concern or incident is completed and stored in a secure folder securely stored in a restricted and protected folder in the J/Drive/Child Protection & Safeguarding folder.

9. JPF expectations of behaviour for working with young people

All JPF Trustees, staff, volunteers, freelancers and contractors are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately. We expect people who take part in our activities to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

All JPF Trustees, staff, freelancers and volunteers must act in accordance with JPF's Behaviour Code and in a manner consistent with good youth work practice and professional values:

- they must behave responsibly in their discussion and contacts with young people and be mindful of the position of trust and power in relation to the young person.
- they must never share personal addresses, personal telephone contacts, email, or social media connections with young people.
- they should endeavor not to work alone or on a one-to-one basis with a young person. However, if one-to-one work occurs (such as mentoring), JPF staff must ensure that the contact is detailed within their outlook diary and that their line manager is made aware. Furthermore, all one-to-one meetings must be held in an open public space.
- When working with young people directly, they should ensure an absolute minimum staff ratio of 15 young people to 1 adult and have access to a second adult should an emergency arise.
- they should not give lifts to young people except in an immediate emergency and with prior permission from the Designated Safeguarding lead or Deputy.
- must complete and adhere to the Risk Assessment policy and procedures for any event which young people will be attending. Appropriate public liability and other necessary insurance must be in place.

JPF staff and volunteers who breach these guidelines or anything in JPF's Behaviour Code, which all JPF staff, volunteers and freelancers are required to comply with, may be subject to the JPF disciplinary and grievance procedures.

10. Social Media and Online Safety Precautions

JPF has an online presence through our website, social media platforms, and YouTube channels. Guidelines to ensure the safety of young people staff and volunteers are outlined in the JPF Social Media Policy.

11. Review

This policy is agreed by the JPF Board of Trustees. It is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and best practices in safeguarding the welfare of young people.

The JPF board of trustees has identified a Trustee with lead responsibility for Safeguarding.

Date of last review: September 2025

Date of next review: February 2026

This Policy should also be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- JPF staff handbook
- Induction Checklist – G127
- Social Media Policy – G116

- Complaints Procedure and Policy – G155
- Whistleblowing – G142
- Confidentiality – G164
- Data Protection/Privacy Policy – G160
- Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy – G80
- DBS checklist – G92
- Photo Consent Form – G117
- Health & Safety – G177
- JPF Behaviour Code for Adults Working with Children and Young People – G198

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Safeguarding Concern form

Appendix 2: Contacts for advice on safeguarding young people

Appendix 3: Definitions of abuse

Appendix 4: Internal Guidance for Staff/Volunteers/Contractors: How to respond to a safeguarding disclosure from a young person

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Concern Form

This form is designed to record a safeguarding concern internally.

Please complete the form and send it to the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead electronically.

Date	
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Name of the young person/vulnerable adult			
Name		Date of Birth	
School or Organisation		Age	
		Gender	
		Borough	

Your Details			
Name		Job Title	
Phone number			
Email			

Have you clearly explained the Confidentiality Policy to the Child/Vulnerable Adult:

YES/NO (please circle)

Type of Safeguarding Concern (please tick or highlight)			
Neglect	Emotional	Physical	Sexual
Self Harm	Suicidal Ideation	Suicide Attempt	Domestic Abuse
Sexual Exploitation	Sexual Assault	Financial	Hate Crime
Risk to Others	Radicalisation	FGM	Abuse by Professional
Other:			

Who have you spoken to about your concerns?	Name	Contact details
Parent/Carer		
Line Manager		
Supervisor		
Youth Organisation		
School/Academy		
Other		

Summary of your concerns

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Any actions agreed?

Signature:

Appendix 2: Contacts for advice on Safeguarding and Child Protection

Organisation	Notes	Telephone	Website
London Safeguarding Children's Board	General advice, online resources, and contacts for making a disclosure in the London area	020 7364 2063 (Tower Hamlets office)	www.londonscb.gov.uk
Essex Safeguarding Children's Board	General advice, online resources, and contacts for making a disclosure in the Essex area	0333 013 8936	www.escb.org.uk
Childline	Confidential, 24-hour phone line for children in trouble or danger	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Children's Legal Centre	Open weekdays 2.00-5.00 pm	0207 713 0089	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
Family Lives	Free, confidential helpline	0808 800 2222	www.familylives.org.uk
Gingerbread	Advice for lone-parent families	0207 428 5400	www.gingerbread.org.uk
Kidscape	Bullying	-	www.kidscape.org.uk
NSPCC	24-hour confidential helpline for those seeking advice about child protection issues	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Samaritans	Free, confidential helpline	116 123	www.samaritans.org.uk
National Domestic Abuse Helpline	Domestic violence helpline	0808 2000 247	www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
Young Minds	Parents' Helpline Mon-Fri 9.30-4pm	0808 802 5544	www.youngminds.org.uk

Appendix 3: Definitions of abuse

1. What is child abuse?

1.1 Definitions of abuse (England and Wales)

The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999), are as follows:

Abuse and neglect

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or young person.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing deliberate harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child/young person they are looking after. This situation is currently referred to as "fabricated or induced illness".

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child/young person such as causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child/young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying 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 young people. It may involve causing young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child/young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child/young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other young people/peers.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child/young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child/young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Organised abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse young people, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit young people for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child/young person may suffer more than one category of abuse).

Below is a list of specific safeguarding issues that can affect young people that all JPF staff need to familiarise themselves with.

- **Breast Ironing** - Breast Ironing is practiced in some African countries. Girls have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breasts to stop them from growing further. Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse.
- **Child missing from education** - A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.
- **Child missing from home or care** - A child or young person who is missing from home or care is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.
- **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** - Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.
- **Bullying** - Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name-calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or **cyberbullying** online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.
- **County Lines** - County Lines is the term used for drug gangs that move their operation from cities or large town centres, to smaller areas, often using violence to drive out smaller dealers and exploiting children and young people.
- **Domestic violence** - Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse.
Both men and women can be abused or abusers. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.
- **Drugs** - Young people who live with parents/carers who misuse alcohol and drugs may result in concerns such as neglect and physical and emotional abuse against the child, parental domestic abuse and parental mental health issues. Young people themselves may misuse alcohol or drugs.
- **Fabricated or induced illness** - Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent/carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.
- **Faith abuse** - Abuse that is linked to faith or belief may include Witchcraft, spirit possession, demons or the devil, the evil eye or djinns, dakini, kindoki, ritual or muti murders and use of fear of the supernatural to make children comply with being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. This type of abuse is not confined to one faith, nationality or community.
- **Female genital mutilation (FGM)** - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
- **Forced marriage** - A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used (under

age) to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

- **Gangs and youth violence** - A predominantly street-based group of children/young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence are integral to the group's identity.
- **Gender-based violence** - Violence against women (VAW), also known as gender-based violence and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) are violent acts primarily or exclusively committed against women and girls. It is often considered a form of hate crime. The acts of violence are committed against women and girls expressly because they are female.
- **Mental health** - Most parents/carers who experience mental ill health will not abuse or neglect their children. However, mental health problems are frequently present in cases of child abuse or neglect.
- **Private fostering** - Unofficial care arrangements not agreed by authorities such as Social Services.
- **Preventing radicalisation** - Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.
- **Sexting** - Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.
- **Relationship abuse - peer on peer.** Peer on Peer abuse is when there is actual or threatened abuse within a romantic relationship or a former relationship. One partner will try to maintain power and control over the other. This abuse can take a number of forms: physical, sexual, financial, emotional or social. This includes coercive and controlling behavior and sexual assault or harmful sexual behavior within a relationship.
- **Trafficking** - Human trafficking is the trade of humans for forced labour, sexual slavery, or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or others.

1.2 Who abuses young people?

Abusers are:

- Rarely 'strangers'
- Usually someone who knows the child, e.g. parent, babysitter, sibling, relative, friend of the family or peers
- Sometimes someone in authority such as teacher, youth worker, young people's worker or church worker/leader
- Sometimes someone who seeks to join and help in organisations working with young people to obtain access to them

A child may talk about an adult or older child who has befriended him or her. Be aware of the tactics employed by those who seek to offend against young people by gaining the trust of a child through befriending. (Further very helpful information is available from Kidscape and NSPCC)

Appendix 4

Internal Guidance for Staff/Volunteers/Contractors: How to respond to a safeguarding disclosure from a young person

Child abuse and harm is a complex subject that can be hard to accept and even harder to talk about. The perpetrators often threaten children/Young People to keep the abuse a secret. Telling an adult takes a tremendous amount of courage. Young people have to grapple with many issues, including the fear that no one will believe them. So, care must be taken to remain calm and show support throughout the disclosure phase.

It is normal to feel overwhelmed and confused in this situation, so you must be familiar with these procedures detailed below as they will provide you with a systematic approach to managing the situation and will help lessen the risk of causing more trauma to the young person and/or compromising a criminal investigation during the disclosure phase.

Setting

Be mindful of the environment. Ensure that the space is accessible and that you are visible to other colleagues whilst maintaining a safe space for the young person. It is natural to want to provide some 'comfort' for someone when distressed. Listen attentively, be supportive and indicate that you care about the young person and what is disclosed. Be mindful that a caring but professional distance should be maintained.

Receive

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. A common reaction to the news as unpleasant and shocking as abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a young person or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, they may be afraid to continue and shut down. Accept what is being said without judgement and take it seriously. Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable.

Reassure

Reassure the young person, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be all right now". Reassure the young person that they did nothing wrong and take what is said seriously.

DO NOT promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns. Tell the young person that you will need to tell other people, but only those whose job is to protect children and young people. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk and share. It takes a lot for a young person to come forward to disclose abuse.

React

Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the young person is telling the truth; this is not your role. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation.

Let the young person explain to you what happened in their own words, but don't ask leading questions. Do ask open questions like, "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?" Communicate with the young person in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for young people with disabilities and those whose preferred language is not English.

Do not ask the young person to repeat what they have told you to another staff member. Explain what you have to do next (report to the person responsible for Safeguarding) and to whom you have to talk to ensure that the young person is safe.

Refer directly and immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the youth organisation in which you are working and the JPF Designated Safeguarding Lead (CEO) or the Deputy Designated Lead (Director of Programmes and Partnerships/Head of Grants Team). Do not discuss the case with anyone else.

Do not discuss the matter with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy.

Record

Make some very brief notes and write them up in detail as soon as possible.

DO NOT destroy your original notes in case the Court requires them.

Record the date, time, place, words used by the young person and how they appeared towards you – be specific.

Record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang.

Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

Reporting allegations, suspicions or concerns

It is not the responsibility of anyone at JPF to decide whether or not a child/young person is being abused or might be abused. However, there is a responsibility to act on concerns to protect children and young people so that appropriate agencies can make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/person.

If you become aware of any issue or complaint relating to the welfare or wellbeing of children and young people, then you should raise these with the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead, who will be responsible for working with you to document your concern on a Safeguarding Concern Form (see appendix 1). All concerns will be considered, and a decision reached as to whether the matter should be referred beyond the young person's organisation to Social Services. If the staff member continues to have a concern after reporting, they have a duty of care to share this concern with the JPF Designated Lead.

All Safeguarding Concern Forms are securely stored in a restricted and protected folder in the J/Drive/Child Protection & Safeguarding folder. Hannah Ellis, JPF Head of Operations, is responsible for ensuring that information in the folder is restricted access and up to date.