

Title: Safeguarding Children and Young People

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Contents

		Page
1.	Purpose	3
2.	Scope	3
3.	Legislation and References	3
4.	Legislative Context	4
5.	Stakeholder Consultation	5
6.	Monitoring against the Customer Top 10	5
7.	The Policy	5
7.11	Key Points for Staff and Managers	6
7.12	Duty of Care to Staff	7
7.13	Training	7
8.	Categories of Child Abuse	8
9.	Process	9
9.2	Lead Officer	9
9.3	Common Assessment Framework (CAF)	9
9.4	Formal Notification & Steps to Follow	9- 10
10.	Appendices	11
10.1	CAF pre assessment checklist	11
10.2	Standard form for formal notification	12
10.3	Single Equality Impact Assessment	13

1.	<p>Purpose</p>
	<p>St Vincent's Housing Association recognises that everyone, including ourselves has a key part to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.</p> <p>We accept a shared responsibility to work across agencies to get the best possible outcome for children and young people.</p> <p>The child or young person must always be kept central in any work that we undertake with them or their families. Work undertaken with children and young people should be focused on the desired outcomes.</p> <p>We are required to share information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and their health, development and exposure to possible significant harm • Parents who may not be able to care adequately and safely for children • Individuals who may present a risk to children
2.	<p>Scope</p>
	<p><u>Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children</u> is defined for the purpose of this policy as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing impairment of children's health or development. • <u>Child protection</u> <p>Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.</p>
3.	<p>Legislation and References</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children Act 1989 • The Children Act 2004 • Working together to safeguard children – A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children DCSF 2010 • Every Child Matters • The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

4.	Legislative Context
4.1	<p>The Government has defined the term ‘safeguarding children’ as</p> <p><i>‘The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully’</i></p>
4.2	<p>Children can only be safeguarded properly if the key agencies work effectively together. Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards (LSCBs) are designed to ensure that this happens.</p>
4.3	<p>The core membership of LSCBs is set out in the Children Act 2004, and includes Local Authorities, health bodies, the police and others. The objective of LSCBs is to coordinate and to ensure the effectiveness of their member agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p>
4.4	<p>The statutory regulations, which came into force on 1st April 2006, are set out in Statutory Instrument 2006, no 90.</p>
4.5	<p>The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) are committed to supporting the development and continuous improvement of LSCBs. Statutory Guidance is set out in Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010): which is a guide for interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This document offers core guidance on how agencies should cooperate in child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Working Together is part of an integrated set of guidance to support the Children Act 2004.</p>
4.6	<p>The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a national standard approach to conducting an assessment of the needs of a child or young person, and deciding how these needs should be met, ensuring early intervention for children, young people and families. The completion of a CAF should enable a picture of a child or young person’s needs to be built over time, a timely allocation of services and improved information sharing.</p>
4.7	<p>Where the criteria for ‘significant harm’ is not met but there are still concerns regarding a child or young person’s safety and/ or promoting their welfare, Children’s Services can assess if the ‘Child is in Need’ according to section 17 of the Children’s Act (1989). Social Services can undertake an initial assessment to determine if the criterion under Section 17 is met.</p>

4.8	<p><u>Section 47</u> of the Children Act 1989 is at the heart of the Local Authorities (LA) safeguarding responsibilities. It requires LA's (in partnership with other agencies) to initiate enquiries if they become aware that a child in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. If, following an initial assessment, concerns about a child's or young persons safety are identified, local authority social workers should convene a strategy discussion with the police and others to decide whether to undertake a Section 47 core assessment and to take other action to protect the child.</p>
4.9	<p>Children and young people living within the Foyer may have been referred by Children's Services to meet an identified duty under Section 47 of the Children Act or to meet any of the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act –their support needs will be identified within the Support Planning and Individual Risk Management Planning process. Staff will work closely with these statutory agencies as per policy and procedure within the Foyer/s to ensure Safeguarding and ensure effective information sharing at all times.</p>
5.	Stakeholder Consultation
	<p>Key stakeholders have been consulted regarding this policy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Safeguarding Children's Board • Supporting People Team • Youth Offending Team • Connexions
6.	Monitoring against the Customer Top 10
	<p>This policy is cross cutting within both our 'Vision' and 'Offer' for children and young people.</p> <p>It also contributes towards the following areas of our Customer Top 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety • Getting the basics right and going the extra mile
7.	The Policy
7.1	<p>This policy covers all children and young people (<u>until the child's 18th birthday</u>) that any of St Vincent's Housing Association staff (or our contractors) comes into contact with.</p>
7.2	<p>Staff may become aware of children who have additional needs or Child Protection issues in a number of ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From a customer who has concerns about a member of their family or another family - Through observation at a visit to the home - By a child or young person disclosing their abuse - From another member of staff or agency expressing their concerns - Social Services or the Police may approach staff for information - Staff could be required to provide information for use as evidence in an

	enquiry into alleged abuse – during the course of their duties
7.3	Information will be open and shared with the appropriate people / agencies when a child protection issue is suspected
7.4	People involved will be treated with respect and courtesy
7.5	The policy reflects St Vincent’s commitment to identify and help to reduce the incidence of child abuse
7.6	The policy aims to enable staff to access relevant information and support
7.7	The policy will be reviewed in line with best practice principles and legislation
7.8	St Vincent’s Housing Association recognises that the safeguarding of children is of paramount importance and our confidentiality policy can be overridden where ‘immediate risk of harm’ is likely or where the seeking of consent to share info will place additional risk to the child/ young person – in all other circumstances agencies need to obtain consent before making a referral
7.9	Any member of staff who has cause for concern that a child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm must refer the matter to their Local Authority Referral and Assessment Team and adhere to the safeguarding guidelines and procedures issued by the Local Authority and ensure that any relevant authorities are advised in line with regulations (e.g. OFSTED)
7.10	St Vincent’s Housing Association recognises its duty to the children, parents / carers, and other key agencies involved in the care and support of the child/ young person and staff to act quickly without delay and responsibility in any instance that may come to our attention.
7.11	<p>Key points for staff and Managers – When a matter of concern comes to the attention of a member of staff:</p> <p>Do not place yourself at risk.</p> <p>Discuss your concerns with your line manager and take action as in 9.3 onwards.</p> <p>The out of hours contact number for Children’s Services is available from the local police station</p> <p>You must keep the matter confidential. It is not within your authority to discuss this matter with anyone other than your line manager, the Police and Children’s Services.</p>

	<p>If the child or young person is living within the Foyer and key statutory agencies are also working with them and are identified within the Individual Risk Assessment Plan IRAP/ Support Plan (such as Leaving Care, YOT, CAMHS etc) you should also make them aware of the situation as soon as possible.</p>
7.12	<p>If you are concerned that the matter that has been referred is not receiving sufficient attention, this concern should be raised with the Operations Director – who will review the nature and frequency of the concerns and will raise the matter with the relevant team leader or Head of Service in writing.</p>
7.13	<p>Duty of Care to Staff – Members of staff faced with safeguarding children concerns during the course of their work must discuss the matter with their line manager who in turn will discuss the situation with their line manager.</p> <p>Staff may have a general level of concern about a child's welfare and feel uncertain about reporting the matter. It is essential that these concerns are discussed with their line manager.</p> <p>Line managers will be aware of the potentially distressing effect on staff and will ensure the availability of counselling is available. It is part of the one to one meeting process so that incidents can be debriefed and so that lessons can be learnt and good practice can be recognised.</p>
7.14	<p>Training – There are two levels of training:</p> <p><u>Level One</u> is aimed at awareness raising and the ability to act upon concerns about safety and welfare - and is suitable for all staff that come into contact with children and young people in their day to day roles.</p> <p><u>Level two</u> is aimed at specialist training for support staff working within Young People's Services (Foyers), and will look at multi agency working in order to protect children and young people, in addition YPS staff will be required to attend CAF training through the Local Authority.</p> <p>Other training may focus upon CAF/ Lead Professional Role.</p> <p>There is a range of statutory training available through the Local Safeguarding Children Board as available, or it may be provided through in house training as appropriate.</p>

8.	Categories of Child Abuse & Vulnerabilities in Young People
8.1	<p><u>Neglect</u> – this refers to situations where children’s needs are not being appropriately met and this has an undue affect on their health and development. This is usually defined as children under the age of 18 years, who have been persistently, or severely neglected, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger. This could include exposing a child to extreme cold temperatures or starvation or a failure to carry out important aspects of care resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development.</p> <p>Children who are under the age of 18 years who have been medically diagnosed as suffering from non – organic failure to thrive are included. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.</p>
8.2	<p><u>Physical Injury</u> – Children who are under the age of 18 years where the nature of the injury is not consistent with the account of how it occurred or where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted (or knowingly not prevented) by any person. This includes children who have been physically injured or who are likely to be physically injured or where there has been a failure to prevent a physical injury or suffering.</p> <p>Physical injury may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating and accidents which have occurred because a child has been left unattended or inadequately supervised, With vulnerable young people this may involve them engaging in risk taking / self injurious behaviour, which may involve attempted suicide/ suicide.</p>
8.3	<p><u>Sexual Abuse</u> – is the actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent under the aged of 18 years by any person. This includes any form of sexual activity to which the child cannot give true consent either by law or because of ignorance, dependence, development immaturity, or fear. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware what is happening. It also includes non contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, or watching sexually inappropriate behaviour.</p>
8.4	<p><u>Emotional Abuse</u> – has an actual or likely adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child under the age of 18 years, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. Emotional abuse is where a parent or carer behaves in a way that is likely to seriously affect their child’s emotional development. It can range from constant rejection and denial of affection, through to continual severe criticism, deliberate humiliation and other ways of verbally ‘terrorising’ a child.</p> <p>It is not always easy to identify when a child is being emotionally abused, but the effects are damaging and long lasting. They can lead to serious behavioural, learning, emotional or mental disorders. All of which affect the child’s chances of developing into a well- adjusted adult.</p>

9.	Process
9.1	A copy of the local Safeguarding Children Procedures and the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) can be obtained from the Local Children's Services Departments (see appendix 1). Staff should ensure that they have awareness of these local procedures and understand the different processes and procedures and their responsibilities to record and report concerns.
9.2	<p style="text-align: center;">St Vincent's has identified Adele Travis (Foyer Manager) as the Lead Officer for Safeguarding Children.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✉ Adele.travis@svha.co.uk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☎ 01254 222 030</p>
9.3	<p><u>Common Assessment Framework</u> – should be used when you have a concern about a child, or have recognised a child or young person has additional needs that require further exploration and a multi agency response. The CAF assessment will provide further information and understanding of the child's circumstances, following which, a multi agency meeting will be called to plan ongoing support for the child and their family.</p> <p>An assessment is not an end to the process – a coordinated planned and regularly reviewed support package should follow the completion of the CAF.</p> <p>The decision to refer using the CAF must be discussed with the family and/ or young person. Details of a pre assessment checklist are attached (appendix 2). Full details of the CAF process for your area will be available from your Local Authority website or by contacting your local Children's Services Team – you should follow this local guidance.</p> <p>If at any time during the course of this assessment you feel that an infant, child or young person has been harmed or abused, or is at risk of harm or abuse, you must follow your Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.</p>
9.4	<p><u>Formal Notification</u> - staff are required to notify the appropriate authorities of any concern about Safeguarding Children.</p> <p>The appropriate authority will normally be the Children's Services Department for the area. However, where an immediate response is required, e.g. where the situation appears currently to be life threatening or a child is imminently at risk, and then the Police are able to provide a faster response than the Children's Department.</p>

	<p>On identifying any concern relating to a child or young person as set out in this policy the following steps must be taken:</p>
9.4.1	<p>Make an immediate record of what happened including the time, date and context. This record must be completed no later than the end of that working day.</p>
9.4.2	<p>Share and discuss your concern with your line manager who will refer the matter to the head of department. You can contact Adele Travis/ Dawn Simcock for further advice. Agree an appropriate course of action to be followed.</p> <p>N.B Difficulties contacting your head of department should not prevent a referral being made – contact any senior member of staff to discuss the referral.</p>
9.4.3	<p>Where appropriate contact the local Children’s Services department by telephone immediately. (Request to speak to the ‘Duty Officer’ and take their name for your records)</p>
9.4.4	<p>Confirm the notification in writing within 48 hours after a telephone referral and within. (A standard letter for notifying Children’s Services is in Appendix 3) and include a request for a formal acknowledgement and feedback.</p> <p>Within 24 hours of the written referral, Children’s Services must acknowledge a referral and if an acknowledgement is not received within 3 working days, it is the duty of the referring agency to chase and receive an outcome.</p>
9.4.5	<p>Record the concerns on the customers file/ support file including all discussions, written referrals and outcomes.</p>
9.4.6	<p>A record of the notification will be kept in a restricted file – <i>limited access will be held by Charlie Norman (Head of Operations), Lisa Purchase (Supported Services Manager), Dawn Simcock (Young Person’s Services Manager), Adele Travis – Safeguarding Lead (Foyer Manager).</i></p> <p>This file will contain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Full name, date of birth and gender of the child b) Family address c) Identity of those with parental responsibility d) Names, date of birth and gender of all household members e) Ethnicity, first language and religion of child/ children and parents f) Any need for an interpreter, signer or other means of communication g) Any special needs of the child or children h) Any significant/ important recent events/ incidents in the child ‘s or family’s life i) Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their source, timing and location (a full copy of file notes and letter of notification sent to Social Services) j) The action taken and the subsequent action. <p>It is desirable that you are able to provide all the information listed – but you should not delay reporting a concern because of lack of information.</p>

10.	Appendices
10.1	CAF Pre assessment checklist

Re: Safeguarding Children Advice

Family/Person concerned:

Address::

Nature of Concern:

This is to confirm the concerns that were raised by:

with:

on:

Please confirm receipt of this notification and we would be grateful if you would keep us informed about any developments that are of relevance to (Company/service).

Yours faithfully,

10.3	Single Equality Impact Assessment	
Policy/Procedure being assessed:	Safeguarding Children and Young People	
Section:	Corporate Policy	
Date of assessment:	16/5/10	
Person (S) Responsible for assessment:	Dawn Simcock & Adele Travis	
Is this a new or existing policy?	Replaces an existing policy	

1. Briefly describe the function being assessed	This policy and guidance has been developed to ensure that all staff within the organisation who may come into contact with children and young people (that is up to the 18 th birthday) are aware of their roles and responsibilities should they be concerned about their safeguarding or wellbeing– it provides clear guidance of referral processes to Children’s Services which is based upon statutory guidance under the Children Act 1989 & 2004 – and that the guidance document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010		
2. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?	Children, young people, parents/ carers. Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards, Children’s Social Care, multi agency health partners, PCT, commissioners, staff and the organisation		
3. Who will be consulted as part of this EIA? What types of consultation will be carried out?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Safeguarding Children’s Board • Supporting People Team • Elected Member of Children’s Scrutiny Panel • Youth Offending Team • Connexions • Key Stakeholders (Young Person’s Housing Team) • Local Agencies • Staff 		
4. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact on racial groups ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	No negative racial inequality has been identified, the procedures are underpinned by child protection legislation and national standards. Children’s Services Child Protection plans will take into account ethnic/ cultural/ religious considerations – including the need for an interpreter, avoidance of appointments with family on significant religious		

	festivals, issues arising from disability – and they should provide plans in their preferred language Staff receive training on Equality and Diversity and translation services are available as per our Communications Policy.		
5. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to gender ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	Equal consideration for intervention, protection and support will be given irrespective of gender.		
6. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact on disabled people ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	The procedure does not make specific reference to children with a disability as it applies to all children up to their 18 th birthday regardless of disability.		
7. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to age ?	Yes	No ✓	N/A
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	This policy and guidance applied to all children and young people up to their 18 th birthday.		
8. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to sexuality ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	<p>This policy applies to all young people up to their 18th birthday regardless of their sexuality.</p> <p>Within our supported housing services (Foyers) we work with specialist agencies that provide additional support and guidance to young people regarding their sexual health and wellbeing. In addition we work closely with specialist sexual exploitation teams.</p> <p>Staff attend ‘Dealing with Difference’ and ‘Equality & Diversity Training’</p>		
9. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to religion or belief ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	<p>No negative religious or belief inequality has been identified; the procedures are underpinned by child protection legislation and national standards. Children’s Services Child Protection plans will take into account ethnic/ cultural/ religious considerations – including the need for an interpreter, avoidance of appointments with family on significant religious festivals, issues arising from disability – and they should provide plans in their preferred language</p>		

	Staff receive training on Equality and Diversity and translation services are available as per our Communications Policy.					
<p>If the answer is NO to <u>all</u> questions 4-9 and no differential treatment has been found there is no requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Please go back regularly and review the cycle.</p> <p>If the answer is YES to any of the questions 4-9 please continue to question 10</p>						
10. In what areas could the differential impact identified in 4-9 be considered to be an adverse impact in this function? (Please tick if yes)	Race	Gender	Disability	Age	Sexuality	Religion /belief
11. What solutions will be introduced to overcome these adverse impacts and /or create positive impacts?						
12. Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?						

Signed off by (Director):

Date:.....