

## **J&R Care Ltd - Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been developed to ensure that all adults at J&R Care are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy describes the management systems and arrangements in place to create and maintain a safe living and learning environment for all our children and staff. It identifies actions that should be taken to redress any concerns about child safety and welfare including protecting children and staff from extremist views, vocal or active, which are opposed to fundamental British values. All opinions or behaviours which are contrary to these fundamental values and the ethos of the organisation will be vigorously challenged.

**The Safeguarding Director of J&R Care, Jane Parish** has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Jane can be contacted on 01474 871999 or 07736774491 (out of office hours).

The designated Safeguarding Lead is **Eric de Mel** who is the Acting Registered Manager of Pembroke House and is on site full time. Eric can be contacted on 01322 618776

The deputy Safeguarding officer is: **Brendan Aherne**, who is the part time head teacher at The Annex School and he can be contacted on 01474 871999/ 07742916400

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children goes beyond implementing basic child protection procedures. It is an integral part of all activities, functions, culture and ethos of J&R Care Ltd.

This policy complements and supports other relevant home and school and Local Authority policies including: Anti-bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy, E-Safety Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

Under the Education Act 2002 schools/settings have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and Under the Children Act 1989 children's homes have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children or young people it is caring for.

In accordance with guidance set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015', The Children's Homes Regulations 2015 and Quality Standards for Children's Homes 2015, J&R Care Ltd will work in partnership with other organisations where appropriate to identify any concerns about child welfare and take action to address them.

## **ETHOS**

J&R Care Ltd aims to create and maintain a safe living and learning environment where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously. Our organisation is committed to the principles outlined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015' and implements policies, practices and procedures that promote safeguarding and the emotional and physical well-being of children and staff.

Access to cross curricular activities will provide opportunities to develop self-esteem and self-motivation and to help children respect the rights of others, particularly those groups who may be considered a minority.

J&R Care Ltd will exercise diligence and prevent any organisation or speaker from using the organisations facilities to disseminate extremist views or radicalise children and staff.

All children have access to a curriculum within our school and activities within the home which is broad and balanced and differentiated to meet children's individual needs. This enables them to learn to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, defend those in need, resolve conflict without resorting to violence, question and challenge and to make informed choices in later life.

Children are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect, understanding and empathy for others.

Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education and Religious Education lessons within the school will provide opportunities for children to discuss and debate a range of subjects including lifestyles, forced marriage, family patterns, religious beliefs and practices and human rights issues.

J&R Care Ltd will take account of the latest advice and guidance provided to help address specific vulnerabilities and forms of exploitation eg CSE, Grooming, Radicalisation and Extremism, Forced Marriage and FGM.

All children will know that there are adults in the school and the home whom they can approach in confidence if they are in difficulty or feeling worried and that their concerns will be taken seriously and treated with respect.

### **The following definitions of abuse are from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)**

**Significant Harm** - The threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life and gives Local Authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

**Physical Abuse** - A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

*Updated: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Review date: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017, or before depending on legislation updates and changes. Written by Jane Parish - Director of J&R Care Ltd*

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse** - The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, 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 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 children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching 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 also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect** - The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

**(SEE APENDIX ONE FOR SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE)**

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Safeguarding Director will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures of J&R Care Ltd safeguard and promote the welfare of children and are fully implemented and followed by all staff including volunteers.
- Safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers is practised.
- Designated Senior Members of staff for child protection are identified and receive appropriate on-going training
- Sufficient time and resources are made available to enable the designated members of staff to discharge their responsibilities, including attending inter-agency meetings, contributing to the assessment of children, supporting colleagues and delivering training as appropriate.
- All staff and volunteers receive appropriate training which is regularly updated.
- All temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the organisations safeguarding policy and arrangements.
- All staff and volunteers feel safe about raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to the safeguarding and welfare of the children and such concerns will be addressed sensitively and effectively.
- Parents are aware of and have an understanding of the organisations responsibilities to promote the safety and welfare of its children by making its obligations clear in the school prospectus and homes Statement of Purpose.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available on the schools and homes web-site.
- Ensure that the organisation is pro-active and co-operates with appropriate agencies and risk based approaches to ensure children are safeguarded against any potential grooming activities which may attempt to draw them into harmful activities eg CSE and radicalization and extremism.
- Ensure that any referrals are actively followed up; and that the procedures for escalating a concern are followed if and where the Designated Persons feel it necessary, in consultation with each other and the LSCB.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers and these are in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015', 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' and 'Children's Homes Regulations 2015' and Local Authority procedures.

### **The Designated Senior Members of Staff for Child Protection are**

Eric de Mel (Acting Registered Manager of Pembroke House) – Designated Safeguarding Lead

Brendan Aherne (Head Teacher of The Annex School) – Designated Deputy safeguarding officer

They have a specific responsibility for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within both the home and the school.

### **The Designated Persons will:**

- Act as the first point of contact with regards to all safeguarding matters.
- Attend up-dated training every two years.
- Provide relevant information to the LA on how the home and school carries out its safeguarding duties.
- Provide support and training for staff and volunteers
- Ensure that the schools actions are in line with the local Safeguarding procedures
- Support staff to make effective referrals to the Children and Families Services and any other agencies where there are concerns about the welfare of a child.
- Keep copies of all referrals to Children and Families Services and any other agencies related to safeguarding children.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive information on safeguarding policies and procedures from the point of induction.
- Ensure that any staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding children receive the appropriate training to undertake this role.
- Manage and keep secure the homes and school's safeguarding records.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and are aware of the home and school's reporting and recording procedures and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child or an adult; including that they pass all concerns on to the Safeguarding Directors central record and The Local Safeguarding Children's Board for consideration of patterns and themes.
- Liaise with all relevant professionals about any safeguarding issues.
- Keep up to date with changes in local policy and procedures and are aware of any guidance issued by the DfE concerning Safeguarding.
- Send a child's child protection or safeguarding file separately from the main file to a new establishment if a child leaves the school or home. Keep a copy of the file.

### **SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF**

J&R Care's recruitment and selection policies and processes adhere to the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015', 'Working together to Safeguard Children 2015' and 'Children's Homes Regulations 2015'

J&R Care has in place a comprehensive series of systems and checks which assist in the safe recruitment and selection of staff. Prior to appointment all staff are subject to a Disclosure & Barring Service check at the enhanced level and candidates must provide proof of identity through official documents and qualifications and references are checked for authenticity. Teachers are also subject to a Teachers Status Check. A Single Central Register is kept for the school and the home.

All staff must provide a full employment history with any gaps fully explained and all appointments will be subject to a minimum of two references having being received (one of which must be the most recent employer) and checked. Referees will be reminded that

references must not contain any material miss-statement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant.

Even the most careful selection process cannot guarantee the suitability of candidates and all new appointments will be subject to a probationary period. On commencement of duties all staff participates in the staff induction, support and development programme which provides regular, planned and supportive supervision, guidance and development opportunities.

No member of staff will begin working at the home or school without an up to date enhanced DBS and have completed an Induction which includes the organisations Safeguarding procedures and Child Protection training course.

J&R Care Ltd works with all agencies with regards to any enquiries regarding child protection issues this includes the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Local Authorities and any other agency where it is required to be transparent and work together to safeguard children.

No member of staff will have authority to provide references on behalf of the organisation. The person permitted to provide references for J&R Care is:

Jane Parish – Safeguarding/Managing Director

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING**

Staff ensure that confidentiality protocols are followed and information is shared appropriately. The staff disclose any information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff and volunteers must understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff and volunteers must be clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

## **TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

J&R Care Ltd is committed to the training and updating of the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) as a priority. This includes dedicated safeguarding training with the NSPCC and LSCB Safeguarding training for Dedicated Persons and these are refreshed every two years

## **SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR STAFF**

Prior to a member of staff starting work at J&R Care in either the home or the school they have a week's intensive induction at Head Office with the Safeguarding Director and Head of Education and Training who both have completed the train the trainers Safeguarding training with the NSPCC and delivers training in this first week on Safeguarding procedures in J&R Care Ltd and the LSCB procedures.

During their induction period all staff complete the following training:

- Child Exploitation and online safety
- Child Neglect
- Risk Assessment
- Child Protection
- Equality and Diversity
- Food Hygiene and safety
- Preventing Bullying
- Safeguarding Young People
- Safer Recruitment
- Supervisory Management
- The PREVENT duty
- First Aid
- Health and Safety

J&R Care mandates that all staff working in the school or home must have annual refresher training in Child Protection.

All staff will be supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific safeguarding issues and will receive up to date briefings on for example:

- Guns and Gangs
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Domestic Abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Trafficking
- Preventing Violent Extremism

### **Aims and Objectives of our training:**

The primary aim of this training is to raise awareness amongst all staff in relation to child abuse in order to equip them with relevant knowledge and skills which will enable them to identify, prevent and respond appropriately to Safeguarding issues, whilst enabling them to implement our policy and to:

- Examine the values and attitudes underlying concerns about child abuse;
- Identify personal values and attitudes to child abuse. e.g. 'Am I aware of my personal prejudices? Will I transfer them to the child or young person? Will this affect my ability to function effectively in this situation?;
- Explore personal feelings about cases of abuse.

### **Links with other Policies**

This document must be considered within the context of other policies, which pertain to working with children. Other key policies to be considered in relation to safeguarding include:

- Safe Recruitment & Selection Policy;
- Complaints policy;
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Risk Taking Policy,
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Countering Bullying Policy

## **RECORDING AND REPORTING CONCERNS**

All staff, volunteers and visitors have a responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare and safety of a child and all such concerns must be taken seriously. If a concern arises all staff, volunteers and visitors must:

- Speak to the Designated Persons or the person who acts in their absence
- Agree with this person what action should be taken, by whom and when it will be reviewed.

## WHISTLEBLOWING

J & R Care Ltd understands that it can be very difficult for staff to challenge the bad practice of colleagues or senior workers. Some staff, especially junior staff, sometimes feel they are not in a position to suspect or report bad practice.

The legislation which theoretically provides protection for whistle blowers is contained in the Employment Rights Act 1996, as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, commonly known as PIDA. Where a worker makes a protected disclosure, he/she has a right not to be subjected to any detriment by his employer for making that disclosure.

J & R Care Ltd has a Whistle Blowing Policy, which encourages ALL staff to report any concerns they may have with regard to bad practice and abuse. J & R Care Ltd ensures that all concerns will be fully investigated and acted upon.

The policy may deal with specific concerns, which are in the public interest and may include:

- A criminal offence
- Failure to comply with legal obligations
- Financial or non-financial or malpractice or fraud
- A risk to the health or safety of any individual, including, abuse, bullying of Children or staff
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- Attempts to suppress or conceal any information relating to any of the above.

### **J&R Care Ltd agree with the principles outlined in Sir Robert Frances Freedom to Speak up review**

It is J&R Care's aim to create a culture of safety throughout the organisation. We ensure that all staff understands that this is the most important principle in working within either the home or the school. All staff are actively encouraged to report concerns. J&R Care recognise that difficulties arise throughout staff teams and at times it is difficult to speak about concerns regarding a colleague.. The Child Protection procedures of the organisation advises all staff of what to do if they have a concern and this policy protects any member of staff from negative repercussions should they do so. The home and school should be free from bullying and it values all staff. Leaders are visible and there is an open door policy for management and Directors.

Part of the ethos of the home and school is reflecting on practice. To this end every two weeks at the homes staff meeting there is a reflective practice space of two hours where staff discuss particular issues that may be present with each other , concerns are discussed in an open forum with management present. In individual supervision sessions, staff are encouraged to discuss concerns they have. With regards to the school, the Head Teacher meets with the school staff regularly to reflect on practice and discuss any concerns. The LSA's attend the fortnightly staff meeting on a rotational basis.

'Freedom to speak up about concerns depends on staff being able to work in a culture which is free from bullying and other oppressive behaviours' – J&R Care will ensure that any

bullying within the organisation is dealt with swiftly and this would include disciplinary procedures and dismissal of any employee who is intentionally bullying another colleague.

Safeguarding procedures, including Child Protection and how to report concerns are part of any staff member's induction and ongoing training and enshrined throughout training is the underlying principle of the staff's responsibility to report concerns they have with regards to children within the organisation.

## **Procedure**

Reporting a concern – The employee should in the first instance report a concerns to the Safeguarding Lead within either the house or the school.

If the disclosure is about either of those Officers, the member of staff may raise the concern with the Safeguarding Director. If the concern is serious and involves the Safeguarding Director, the staff member should report concerns to LSCB or Ofsted.

Some matters following investigation, will need to be referred to the relevant outside body, e.g. the Police, LADO, Ofsted. If the person to whom the disclosure is made decides not to proceed with an investigation, the decision will be explained as fully as possible to the individual who raised the concern. It is then open to the individual to make the disclosure again to another of the persons specified above if not satisfied.

Where disclosure is made the person or persons against whom it is made will be told at an early stage of it and of the evidence supporting it, and they will be allowed to respond (subject to child protection procedures with regards to alerting a staff member of an allegation).

The individual making the disclosure will be informed of what action is to be taken.

Should an investigation lead the appropriate authority to conclude there has been a breach of J & R Care Ltd discipline, the member or members of staff responsible may, in addition to any civil or criminal proceedings, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary procedures for the relevant category of staff.

## **Records**

An official written record will be kept of each stage of the procedure

## **Reporting of outcomes**

A report of all disclosures and subsequent actions taken will be made by the persons deciding on the issues. This record should be signed by the investigating officer and the person who made the disclosure, and dated.

## **Advice to staff**

Concerns must be raised without malice and in good faith, and the individual must reasonably believe that the information disclosed, and any allegations contained in it, are substantially true. The disclosure must not be made for purposes of personal gain, and in all the circumstances it must be reasonable to make the disclosure. J & R Care Ltd will ensure that any member of staff who makes a disclosure in such circumstances will not be penalised or suffer any adverse treatment for doing so. However, a member of staff who does not act in

good faith or makes an allegation without having reasonable grounds for believing it to be substantially true, or makes it for purposes of personal gain, or makes it maliciously may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

## **CHILDREN MISSING FROM CARE**

### **Definitions of a Missing Child**

**Looked After Child** - An individual who is or claims to be under the age of 18 years and who is Looked After by the Local Authority under S20 or S31 of The Children Act 1989.

**Missing** - For the purposes of this procedure a child under the age of 18 years is to be considered missing if absent from their home or school without authority to an extent or in circumstances where the absence causes concern for their safety or there is potential danger to themselves and/or the public.

Absences that cause concern are those where the staff have no indication that the child is likely to return within a short space of time or where there is immediate concern for their safety. They will be considered missing until they are located and their well-being or otherwise is established. In terms of the steps which need to be taken to locate these children and safeguard their welfare, this procedure includes them as missing children.

**Unauthorised Absence** - This category is important when clarifying the roles of the Police and family. Some Looked After children may leave their placement for a short period and then return. Often their whereabouts are known or may easily be established through contact with family or friends, or are unknown but for specific, recorded reasons they are not considered to be at risk. Sometimes children stay out longer than agreed, which may be regarded as behaviour that is within the range of normal teenage behaviour. These children's absence may be regarded as an unauthorised absence, and would not usually come within the definition of missing for this Procedure. Unauthorised absences must be carefully monitored however as the child may subsequently be regarded as missing.

Risk Assessments must be completed if a child 'goes missing' so that precautions can be put into place to prevent future possible harm.

### **Planning before the event**

When a child becomes Looked After, the placement planning process should consider the likelihood that they may go missing or take unauthorised absence and a Provisional Risk Assessment, pre-placement, should be completed by the placing social worker in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Director.

This assessment should address the following:

- The likelihood of the child absconding
- The level of supervision/support offered to the child in this regard
- The parents' advice on what action they feel should be taken if the child goes missing
- The level of risk presented if the child absconds

- Any known addresses that the child may frequent or
- Any known adults known to the child who may place him/her at risk.

The discussion should be recorded in the Care Plan and be subject to regular review – at a minimum at every Looked After Child Review.

### **Action when a child goes missing**

When a child goes absent without permission the response of the relevant adults, especially those who are caring for the child, should be directed towards securing their safe return as quickly as possible and to this end should demonstrate that the child will not be punished or treated negatively upon their return.

### **All staff**

Whoever discovers that a child has gone absent without permission should inform the duty (or on-call) manager. The manager on duty will need to decide whether the young person is having an unauthorised absence or is missing.

If a decision is made that the young person is missing, the person making the report should inform:

- The Police, who will subject the report to an assessment of vulnerability.
- The parents or any persons having Parental Responsibility, unless there are serious reasons why this should not be done. If a Looked After Child becomes missing late at night it might not be appropriate to wake parents to inform them, although the Police may decide to do so in order to conduct a search of their premises. However, the parents should be notified the next day or immediately if there are serious concerns about the child's safety.
- The social worker or duty social worker. When this occurs out of hours the Out of Hours Service (OOH) should be informed. Where the absence occurs out of hours it remains the responsibility of the residential worker to inform the social worker of events, at the first opportunity.
- The social worker or duty social or OOH social worker will decide with the staff whether to notify members of the child's extended family, and any other parties that need to be informed.

### **THE SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR MUST BE MADE AWARE OF ANY CHILD WHO HAS GONE MISSING**

Where, initially, assessment has been made that the young person is not missing but having an unauthorised absence, this decision should be reviewed frequently if the child does not return. This should be at least, at 8 hourly intervals or more frequently if further information regarding the child's whereabouts/circumstances becomes known. Within office hours the social worker will also be consulted.

Any unauthorised absence lasting for 24 hours must be reported to the police. This will generally be regarded as the maximum period for which a young person will be considered to be having an unauthorised absence from their placement. Beyond 24 hours, any child or

young person still absent will have their status changed to Missing. Any case of an absent child that causes particular concern should be brought to the attention of the Police who will then decide on further action

In all cases, the social worker of the child should be kept informed of the child's absence from the home.

### **Information that should be made available to the police**

The Police, as the lead agency investigating missing children, should be notified as soon as possible when it has been decided that a child is missing.

The person making the missing report should supply the Police with a copy of the MISPER Information Form. This form should have the following information:

- The full name of the child, date of birth, sex and ethnic identity
- A description of the child, including height, colour of eyes, clothing, etc.
- A recent photograph
- Family addresses and information from family members if they have already been contacted
- Known acquaintances
- Any previous history of absconding
- Name and phone number of social worker
- Details of any court order
- The basis of the risk assessment and classification of High Risk
- When the child was last seen, in what circumstances, and by whom
- The name and address of the child's GP and dentist
- Any circumstances which might increase the risk to the child (allergies, medication, medical condition, injury, etc).

### **Recording**

- All MISPER forms must be completed
- A timeline/chronology of events must be listed in the daily log book from the moment the child has not returned to the home and what action has been taken and this should be transferred onto the Clearcare Absconding form.

### **Planning for return**

If a child is missing, the residential manager (with the social worker in office hours), If possible in consultation with the parents and Police, should commence contingency planning for when the child is located. Such plans should include:

- Whether the child will return to the previous placement
- Arrangements for securing their return
- Whether the Police wish to interview the child before return
- Who would be an appropriate "independent person" to talk to the child on return, this would be done in liaison with the police and the child's social worker.

Children who have repeated ‘unauthorised’ absences should also be offered to talk to an ‘independent person’.

The Police will co-operate in the plans developed by Children’s Social Care to return a child to placement. Children’s Social Care will make arrangements for the transportation of the child.

Occasionally, however, especially if the child is over 16 and is being Looked After, the Police may have limited power to enforce a return if the child resists this and is not apparently at any risk. Where a missing child is over 16 and is being Looked After by Children’s Services, prior discussions should take place between the Police and Children’s Services regarding Police/Children’s Services’ powers to enforce a return.

### **The Return**

**Police interview** - The Police will interview all children when they return from being missing by means of a series of simple questions about where the child was, who they were with, etc.

**Independent interview** – The Local Authority for the child has a duty to conduct an Independent return interview. In some cases, and in consultation and discussion with the child’s social worker this duty can be delegated. If this is the case, a written consent needs to be sent to the person that the duty has been delegated to.

This interview should provide a safe opportunity for the child to discuss any concerns regarding his or her care, understand and address the reasons the child ran away, try to avoid it happening again and deal with any harm the child has suffered whilst they were missing. The interview must take place without parents, or residential staff being present or in close proximity, unless the young person expresses a wish to the contrary.

The child’s medical condition should be discussed immediately, and an offer made to arrange medical attention. Where there is a Safeguarding issue, the local Safeguarding procedures are to be initiated and followed.

### **Missing during external activity of the home or school**

If a child goes missing during an external activity arranged by the residential home or school, the person in charge of the activity will:

- Notify the local Police in that area
- Notify a Duty Senior at the residential home
- Institute a local search if possible
- Notify the Social Worker or Out of Hours service.

The Duty Senior at the residential home will be responsible for ensuring that the general procedures in relation to a missing child are followed and what further immediate action may be taken.

The Registered Manager of the home must be informed. The residential home will need to maintain communication with the local Police where the absence occurred.

### **Statutory Guidance and Legislative context**

This policy has been written in conjunction and including the Kent and Medway “Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) Protocol

The Missing from Care policy should also be read in line with the North Kent Missing Persons protocol which has been devised in consultation with the home for specific children residing there.

### **INFORMING PARENTS/CARERS**

Our approach to working with parents is one of transparency and honesty and our responsibility is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children in our care. We aim to do this in partnership with parents. In most cases parents will be informed when concerns are raised about the safety and welfare of their child.

Parents will usually be informed if a referral is to be made to the Children’s Social Care Service or any other agency.

Parents will not be informed if it is believed that by doing so would put the child at risk. In such cases the Designated Persons will seek advice from Children’s Social Care.

### **FORCED MARRIAGE**

Forced Marriage became a criminal offence in June 2014. It is a form of child, adult and domestic abuse and, in line with statutory guidance, is treated as such by this organisation. The home and school is sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and child - rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Child abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons.

Information about Forced Marriage will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings and the home and school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be used to protect a victim or potential victim of forced marriage.

If a case of forced marriage is suspected it will be viewed as a safeguarding concern, parents will not be approached or involved about a referral to any other agencies.

## **FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the United Kingdom and is a violation of human rights of girls and women. Information on FGM will be incorporated into staff Safeguarding and Child Protection training and briefings.

Any concerns that a young person may be at risk of FGM will be referred to the appropriate safeguarding agencies.

## **THE PREVENT DUTY**

As an organisation we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for young people. Our children see the home and school as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely; developing balanced and informed views. The current threat from terrorism and extremism in the UK is real and severe and can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children and young people.

### **What is PREVENT ?**

Awareness of PREVENT and an understanding of the risks it is intended to address, are both vital to help identify children and young people whose behaviour suggests they are being drawn into terrorism or extremism. PREVENT is a key part of the Government's strategy to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Early intervention is at the heart of PREVENT in diverting people away from being drawn into terrorist activity. PREVENT happens before any criminal activity takes place. It is about recognising, supporting and protecting people who might be susceptible to radicalization in whatever form that may take e.g. developing and pursuing political and religious beliefs that may harm and endanger others.

### **Warning Signs and Risk Factors**

There is no such thing as a 'typical extremist' and those involved in extremism come from a range of backgrounds and backgrounds and sections of society. Research shows that the following indicators may help to identify factors that suggest a young person or their family may be vulnerable or involved with extremism:

- Peer, social , family or faith group rejection
- International events in areas of conflict and civil unrest having a personal impact on the young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour
- Verbal or written support of terrorist attacks or extremist views
- First-hand experience of racial or religious hate crime
- Extended periods of travel to international locations known to be associated with extremism
- Evidence of fraudulent identity/use of documents to support this
- Experience of disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion

- History of criminal activity
- Pending a decision on their immigration/national status
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters

**It is our duty to be vigilant and share concerns appropriately.**

**Concerns should initially be reported through our usual safeguarding channels:**

**Designated Safeguarding Director:** Jane Parish

**Designated Safeguarding Lead for Pembroke House:** Eric de Mel

**Designated Safeguarding Lead for The Annex School:** Brendan Aherne

Concerns about home or school staff links to violent extremism should be passed to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Concerns about suspicious activity or behaviour can be reported to the Confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321. In the case of an immediate threat, always dial 999

## **E - SAFETY**

J&R Care has an E-Learning Policy which recognises that E-safety is a safeguarding issue not an ICT issue and includes safety at home as well as in school.

The purpose of internet use in school and the home is to help raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, and support the professional work of staff as well as enhance the homes and school's management information and business administration.

The internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction and J&R Care has a duty to provide children and young people with quality access as part of their learning experience.

It is the duty of J&R Care to ensure that every child and young person in its care is safe and this applies equally to the 'virtual' or digital world.

J&R Care will ensure that appropriate filtering methods are in place to ensure that all children and young people are safe from all types of inappropriate and unacceptable materials, including terrorist and extremist material.

E – Safety training will be incorporated into all staff training.

## **CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES / STRATEGY MEETINGS**

Members of staff may be asked to attend a child protection conference or other relevant meeting for example, a Child Protection Strategy meeting about an individual child or young person and will need to have as much relevant updated information about the child as possible.

The Safeguarding Director along with the Registered Manager of Pembroke House and the Head Teacher of The Annex School will attend meetings held for the child/children who are suffering or at risk of significant harm.

All reports for such a meeting should be prepared in advance of the meeting and will include information about the child's physical, emotional, intellectual development and well-being as well as relevant family related issues.

## **MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

J&R Care follows the government guidance 'Keeping children safe in education –2015' and 'Children's Homes Regulations 2015' along with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures when dealing with allegations made against staff and volunteers.

All allegations of abuse of children by staff member must be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the procedures set out below.

It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may be unsuitable to work with children

These concerns must be immediately passed to the Designated safeguarding person who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Managing Allegations.

### **Reporting Allegations Against Staff**

Upon receipt of the report/allegation, the Designated Safeguarding person must consult the Safeguarding Director.

However, the first priority must be to ensure the immediate safety of the child and any other children affected or in contact with the individual and to consider what supervision arrangements are required to safeguard the child.

Procedures need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to Children's Services/LADO and the Police for investigation. Others may be much less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a Police investigation, or enquiries by Children's Services/LADO.

However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are examined objectively by someone independent. This person will be either the Registered Manager or

Head Teacher in conjunction with The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations who will provide the overall independence.

The Registered Manager / Head teacher will always consult the relevant LADO of all allegations that come to his/her attention and appear to meet the criteria described above. This consultation with the LADO will aim to establish the following:

- That the allegation is within the scope of procedures for a LADO discussion.
- That the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded
- The nature of the concern, how and why it has arisen, and any previous information about the child/ accused person and their relationship with the accused person.
- Any background information relevant to the allegation
- Any arrangements taken to secure the immediate safety of the child
- Necessity for a Strategy Meeting and whether the police and children's services should be contacted.
- If the parents/carers of the child concerned are not already aware of the allegation, there will be a discussion about how and by whom they should be informed. In some circumstances the manager may need to advise parents of an incident involving their child straight away. Thus consideration on how to consult formally with them about the investigation needs to be agreed, deciding on how this should be done, balancing this with the overriding need to ensure the child's safety.

### **Referrals to The Independent Safeguarding Authority**

If staff are suspended from work as a result of an allegation, or otherwise removed from or cease working with children (e.g. given 'Garden Leave', leave J&R Care's employment or retire), the LADO must be consulted and consideration given to making a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

### **Notifying the Staff Member Concerned**

The Registered Manager or Head Teacher should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO. However, where a Strategy Meeting is needed, or it is clear that police or children's Services may need to be involved, that should not be done until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the person. If the person is a member of a union or professional association s/he should be advised to seek support from that organisation. However it is anticipated that even if Police /Children's Services involvement is required; the person will be notified of the allegation's existence within 3 working days.

If a Child Protection Enquiry is conducted, the staff concerned may be suspended from work or asked to take 'Garden Leave'. In any case, staff will remain on full pay (excluding payments you may have been made for sleeping in etc.).

During the enquiry the staff concerned will be asked not to contact or to discuss the matter with colleagues or children or visit the home.

The member of staff will have a nominated 'support person' who they can contact and who will keep them up to date on progress.

## **Considering Whether Suspension is Appropriate**

The suspension of an employee, particularly in situations of potential child protection allegations will have a significant impact on the individual and therefore it is essential that the facts of the case, as they are known and alternative courses of action are carefully considered in deciding whether to suspend.

Suspension at J&R Care is considered a neutral act to protect the interests of both parties and not an assumption of guilt. It is also essential that appropriate support to the individual is offered throughout the period of suspension.

The decision to suspend is taken by the Directors of J&R Care and not by the Police or Social Care. However, Social Care, in collaboration with other agencies, may advise the Directorate of any action recommended to ensure the protection of children, protection of employees and safeguarding of information.

Being suspended or asked to refrain from work can give rise to great anxiety in the individual subject to the allegations. They may fear that colleagues and others within the organisation will have interpreted the very act of suspension as an indicator of presumed guilt from an early stage, and may feel particularly isolated and vulnerable.

Any member of staff subject to an allegation should be encouraged to seek advice and support at the earliest opportunity from their professional association or trade union. It must also be acknowledged that the whole organisation may be affected by a staff member's suspension, and consideration should be given to necessary support strategies to address this.

The need for support is equally applicable when considering a staff member's return to work. Suspension should be retained for as short a length of time as possible and if it is agreed a staff member is to return to work, careful planning needs to take place as to how this situation can be managed as sensitively as possible.

### **Initial considerations**

It may not be immediately obvious that suspension should be considered, and this course of action sometimes only becomes clear after information is shared with, and discussion had, with other agencies.

In some cases early or immediate suspension may impede a Police investigation, and therefore the decision whether to suspend may have to be delayed until sufficient evidence has been gathered. Suspension will be avoided in such cases wherever possible, and will not be seen as an automatic response to an allegation. This applies to the possible suspension of a Manager as well as other staff. Suspension should only follow after discussion with the Directors. The decision to suspend is the responsibility of the Directors depending on the staff member concerned.

**When considering suspension it is important to have regard to the following factors:**

- The nature of the allegation
- Assessment of the presenting risk
- The context in which the allegation occurred
- The individual's contact with children
- Any other relevant information
- The power to suspend
- Alternatives to suspension

**Suspension should only be applied if one or more of the following grounds apply:**

- A child or children would be at risk
- The allegation is so serious that summary dismissal for gross misconduct is possible
- It is necessary to allow any investigation to continue unimpeded

**Alternatives to suspension**

While weighing the factors as to whether suspension is necessary, available alternatives to suspension should be considered. This may be achieved by:

- Leave of absence
- Undertaking different duties which do not involve direct contact with the individual child or other children
- Providing a colleague to be present throughout contact time with children.

If the member of staff is not based in the home or school then an alternative may be to:

- Undertake office duty
- Undertake non-contact tasks only

## **Outcomes of the Enquiries / Investigations**

### **There are 4 possible outcomes to the first steps of the investigation:**

- 1) There is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm - In this event Children's Services will undertake an Initial Assessment and if there remains concerns that the child is at risk of suffering Significant Harm, a Strategy Meeting is likely to be arranged and this may lead to a Section 47 Enquiry  
The threshold of Significant Harm is not considered to be reached, but there is cause to suspect that a criminal offence has been committed and a police investigation is necessary. In cases where the threshold of Significant Harm is not reached, but further investigation such as police investigation is required the Registered Manager/Director and the LADO will have further discussions with the police, to evaluate the allegation and decide how it should be dealt with.
- 2) This discussion will share all available information about the allegation and the person against whom the allegation has been made, consider whether a Police investigation is needed and if so, agree the timing and conduct of that. In cases where a police investigation is necessary the initial evaluation will also consider whether there are matters which can be taken forward in a disciplinary process in parallel with the criminal process, or whether any disciplinary action will need to wait completion of the police enquiries and/or prosecution. If the initial evaluation identifies concerns about the welfare of a child a referral should be made to Children's social care.
- 3) The threshold of Significant Harm is not considered to be reached and a police investigation is not necessary, but that J&R Care may wish to conduct an internal investigation and consider whether to take disciplinary action in respect of the individual.
- 4) No further action

### **If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, and a referral is made to Children's Services. The Designated person must obtain the following information:**

- The name of the staff member who the allegation is made against
- The staff member's address
- The staff member's date of birth
- The address of the home where they work
- Date of incident and date allegation made
- Nature of allegation

### **The investigation will have three related, but independent strands:**

- Child Protection Enquiries (Section 47), relating to the safety and welfare of any children who are or who may have been involved including the alleged person's own children or children within his/ her care
- A police investigation into a possible offence.
- Disciplinary procedures (including internal investigation) where, where it appears that the allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of staff.

The fact that a prosecution is not possible does not mean that action in relation to safeguarding children, or employee discipline, is not necessary or feasible. The important thing is that each aspect is thoroughly assessed, and a definite conclusion reached that is focused to be in the Child's favour.

### **Allegations made against Children**

These Child protection Procedures also apply to “child on child” allegations.

Immediately it will be necessary to separate the alleged perpetrator and victim but it may not be possible to explain why this is necessary to the perpetrator until the professionals undertaking the investigation have been consulted.

The Designated Safeguarding person should be contacted and will inform the Safeguarding Director. The matter will be referred to relevant authorities including the social workers of all children within the home.

In such circumstances the manager of the home should consider the need to protect the rights of both victim and alleged perpetrator.

Throughout the process, it will be necessary to ensure that children who have had allegations made against them are properly supported and the alleged victim is kept safe which may include removing the alleged perpetrator from the home.

Once the investigation is complete consideration will then need to be given to the needs and interests of both alleged victim and perpetrator, and whether counselling and /or other support should be given.

### **The following should then be undertaken:**

- A risk assessment of the interaction between the children should be undertaken and recorded in both files and the care plans updated if necessary.
- Appropriate preventative measures should be instituted.
- Staff should be briefed at Handover and Staff Meetings.
- A regular reassessment of risk and the success of preventative measures should be undertaken and recorded.
- Also, it is the responsibility of the Registered Manager in consultation with the Safeguarding Director to consider whether both children can continue to live together.

This will also be discussed with the LADO for the home. Where it is necessary for any child to be interviewed by the police, the manager must ensure he/she is accompanied by a supportive and independent member of staff or other appropriate adult of his/her own choice.

It is important that any contacts between children in the same house should be observed and always recorded in the daily log and children's files as a matter of course. This should include any inappropriate sexual activity.

## **Injuries caused whilst using physical intervention**

On rare occasions children will be injured during the use of physical intervention, this can occur even when appropriate techniques are being employed. The techniques that are used at J&R Care are designed by National Federation for Personal Safety to ensure the maximum certainty of achievement in the minimum time with the minimum effort and also the techniques are designed to lessen the risk of injury, however it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally and are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the child remains safe.

Where very minor injuries such as bruising or scratches have occurred Designated Safeguarding Officers will need to use their professional judgement in determining whether the injury warrants referral to the Local Safeguarding Children's board.

If any doubt exists regarding whether the injury has reached the threshold for referral then the safeguarding officer must seek advice and guidance from the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) at the Local Safeguarding Children's team.

However, a referral should always be made if any of the following criteria applies:

- The child receives an injury that is more serious than very minor bruising or abrasions that have arisen accidentally from properly used physical restraint;
- The child wishes to complain about the manner in which they have been restrained;
- The parent of a child makes a complaint about the use of restrictive physical intervention.

## **Power and Position of Trust**

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children are in positions of trust in relation to the children in their care.

Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.

A relationship between an adult and a child cannot be equal especially where it is a professional relationship. There is potential for exploitation and harm of children. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activities.

It is important to note that on occasions there may be a young person residing in the home that has become 18 years old. This young person will be in the process of moving on however while they remain in our care this policy is still relevant. Regardless of age, if staff are caring for a vulnerable young person all professional boundaries must be adhered to.

### **Positive Personal Contact between Staff and Children**

Within J&R Care there is clear and unequivocal expression of normal, positive, physical contact between adults and between adults and children. This is not physical contact that in any way seeks to establish authority over a child, but that which expresses 'parental' affection, to provide comfort, ease distress and signal care as would be expected between good parents and their children.

To deny this would be tantamount to emotional deprivation and we believe that normal adult/child physical contact is a critical therapeutic factor in children's care plans to a greater or lesser degree.

Every adult needs to appreciate the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, and to be aware of touch which poses as therapeutic, but which is actually being used to satisfy the staff members need for contact rather than that of the child's. Naturally adults have to be fully cognisant of touch that is invasive or which could be confusing, re-traumatising, or experienced as stimulating in any way whatsoever. Should any such touch be used, it would be deemed as the most serious breach of professional boundaries warranting disciplinary action.

Bearing in mind the specific context, the following guiding principles should apply:

- Given that a high proportion of children with emotional and behavioural problems may have experienced sexual and/or physical abuse, staff need to ensure that any physical contact is not misinterpreted. If at any time a child demonstrates verbally or otherwise that he is not comfortable with physical contact staff should respond immediately by ceasing that contact.
- There should be no general expectations of privacy for the physical expression of affection or comfort, although this may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances (e.g. bereavement)
- Staff need to be aware that different cultural factors may apply
- Age and maturity are factors to be considered in deciding appropriate physical contact

- Where a member of staff feels that it would be inappropriate to respond to a child seeking physical comfort, the reasons for denying this should be clearly explained to the child. The child should be comforted verbally as necessary.
- Children should be counselled with regard to socially appropriate/inappropriate times/places/situations to seek physical comfort
- Appropriate physical contact should be a focus of discussions with parents/carers and placing authorities through Key Worker (or equivalent one – one) sessions (and Reviews where necessary).
- The issue of Personal Contact in general should be raised in interviews and induction training for staff and discussed in staff development and supervision.
- Physical contact of any kind initiated by staff should be no more than is necessary to fulfil its purpose. For example, in comforting a young person in distress, such physical comfort should be the minimum necessary to assist the young person to regain composure and calm.

## **Intimate Care**

There may be occasions when staff are involved in the intimate care of a child either because of the child's age or level of functioning. For example it may be necessary for staff to supervise the running of a bath with particular regard to temperature and safety.

If a child asks for help when bathing this should take the form of verbal instruction, prior to the child going into the shower or bath.

Some young people may ask for help in washing their hair and this is acceptable providing that it is done over a sink. Any other bodily contact is not appropriate. Never have any contact with a child which may compromise you and allow misinterpretation of your intentions. If you are in any doubt about the appropriateness of your actions seek advice from a senior colleague.

Any variation to the guidance noted above must be recorded and must have been agreed with the placing authority, parents or carers (if appropriate) and all parties must have signed indicating their agreement and consent.

The following are examples of physical contact, which is unacceptable:

- Over affectionate cuddles;
- Kissing, and;
- Any contact likely to be interpreted as sexual in nature.

The kind of physical contacts likely to be acceptable include:

- physical contact which is part of a bespoke therapeutic intervention;
- Holding a hand in situations which might present fear or anxiety;
- Putting an arm around a young person in distress;

- Patting a young person on the back to display approval, and; Reinforcing a verbal request to calm down with a physical prompt such as a hand on a shoulder.

The following areas of activity have been identified as situations in which staff and children could be vulnerable:

- Being alone with a child in their bedroom;
- Examining a young person in case of injury or illness;
- Physical contact arising out of social interactions with SEN children;
- Touching with the intent of providing comfort, and Physical contact initiated by a child

In order to minimise the risks in this sensitive area, the following procedures should be adopted:

All reasonable measures should be taken to avoid being alone with a child in their bedroom. There are many circumstances where this will not be possible. In such circumstances, ensure that a colleague knows your whereabouts and the proposed duration of your 1:1 work. If alone with a child, the door should never be closed and a room with a window should be used;

- All physical examinations of a child should take place with another member of staff present. Intimate examinations should, under no circumstances, be carried out by members of staff and should be done only by medical practitioners;
- In the case of a distressed child seeking physical contact this should be kept to the minimum necessary to fulfil the purpose of the child regaining composure.
- When inappropriate physical contact is initiated by a child staff should seek to disengage from the situation as soon as is possible. In seeking to disengage, staff may need to signal their disapproval of the inappropriate contact. It is possible to disengage from the physical contact without signalling rejection of the young person or their affectionate intentions.

There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. For example, some young people may be particularly sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background or because they have been abused. It is important that all staff have an awareness of these children and their individual circumstances. Physical contact with children becomes increasingly open to question as children approach adolescence, and staff should also bear in mind that even innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can be misconstrued.

If the staff believe their intentions have been misconstrued they should record their concerns on an Incident Report Form and bring the matter to the immediate attention of the senior member of staff on duty.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

On-going risk assessments of the Children's Home or School and all associated activities will be carried out to identify areas and situations of high, medium and low risk to danger;

- In the case of safeguarding they will identify areas where supervision is difficult, where unauthorised visitors may access the children's home, school or residential provision and times when young people may be more vulnerable;
- The assessments will also consider identifying areas where staff may become vulnerable to allegation - being alone with children, specific lonely areas;
- They will also make reference to staff selection procedures and the use of volunteers.

## **CHILDREN AT RISK OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Most children at J&R Care will have special educational needs, poorly developed social skills, emotional vulnerability and impulsivity which can lead to poor decision making and place these children at particular risk. It is a delicate balance between protecting children and promoting independence and self-help skills. Staff need to consider carefully the risks involved and the level of supervision and support required in activities where children engage with members of the public both in person and also electronically via the internet or telephone. Staff must always be vigilant for those who may seek to take advantage of or exploit the children in our care.

Staff working in our homes and school may become aware that children are being picked up regularly by unauthorised older persons in cars, or that there are individuals loitering outside the home or school to meet children. These people and events should always be reported to a senior manager and to the police.

The reports should always be taken seriously and investigated. Reporting procedures should be well known within the home.

In many cases, appropriate responses by the police and other professionals may disrupt this abusive pattern and provide protection for the child. However, police and social services staff should be aware that once concerns have been reported, the child may continue to be at risk from his/her coercers and urgent action may be required to safeguard the child.

Children involved in prostitution may also come to the attention of the police in the course of their duties, such as during the investigation of drug offences, or in the execution of search warrants.

J&R Care has a requirement to report to the police any evidence of children becoming involved in prostitution, or of unauthorised persons picking children up, contacting children in school or at home, or observed trying to make contact with children in public. Staff must report any such incident immediately to a senior member of staff.

Children and young people involved in prostitution are primarily to be treated as the victims of abuse and in many cases will be in need of welfare services or protection under the Children Act 1989. Staff should be aware of the signs and symptoms of possible involvement in prostitution.

### **Possible Signs and Symptoms of sexual exploitation.**

We know that checklist approaches to the identification of possible abuse are far from failsafe. The early recognition of a child's involvement in prostitution is critical in generating a positive outcome.

In respect of possible involvement in prostitution, research does suggest some specific potential indicators although these cannot be viewed, singly or in combination, as conclusive proof.

(Remember, within J&R Care staff have no investigative role; our task is to share information which indicates that a child is in need, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm):

- Physical symptoms of sexually transmitted infections or bruising which may be indicative of restraint or sexual abuse/assault;
- Reports from reliable sources;
- Consorting with unknown adult men outside the usual range of social contact(s) (including via telephone, texts, emails, letters etc);
- Consorting with adults or children known or suspected of being involved in prostitution;
- Accounts of social activities with no plausible account of how they were paid for;
- Acquisition of expensive clothes or possessions;
- Low self-esteem;
- History of child sexual abuse;
- History of absconding from home or Local Authority care;
- Returning from missing from care episodes appearing well cared for despite having no known base

Any concerns of this nature must be reported immediately to the senior member of staff on duty.

### **Bullying**

Few young people complete their education or leave care without having been exposed to bullying. Many will have been bullied at some time, or will at least have seen someone else being picked on. Some will have bullied others, although only a small percentage does so persistently. A significant minority, however, will have experienced regular and routine victimisation.

Bullying generally takes place out of sight of adults; staff and other professionals can underestimate the misery and distress it causes. Victims are often reluctant to speak out for the fear of reprisals, the unwillingness to break a moral code that 'you should not tell', and the fear that nothing will be done to stop it.

It is particularly important to recognise that bullying is not restricted to overt physical aggression, and that indirect persecution can be just as hurtful. Bullying takes many forms but the three main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, spitting and taking or hiding belongings;
- Verbal - name calling, invective, racist remarks;
- Psychological - spreading nasty stories about someone or their families, excluding someone from social groups.

Staff need to examine carefully their own responses to bullying incidents or the suspicion of such. The lack of support to victims is often considered as permission for further attacks. If children are to be protected from bullying, the staff need to ensure that they:

- Respond quickly and unambiguously to it;
- Are continually and persistently observant;
- Do not subconsciously transfer feeling of irritation to groups;
- Actually seek to bring bullying into the open with knowledge that it thrives on secrecy and often fades when discovered and discussed;
- Frequently seek adherence by all to mutually agreed rules;
- Make use of key workers sessions, and other appropriate times to discuss personal relationship problems;
- Make use of appropriate training opportunities, resource material etc. to improve their knowledge and skills in respect of helping both the bullied and the bully; and
- Refer serious incidents to senior staff members or duty managers.

For further information refer to the preventing bullying policy

## **VISITORS**

All visitors, including visiting speakers, are subject to the home and school's safeguarding protocols while on site and will be supervised at all times.

## **CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES – FOR BOTH PEMBROKE HOUSE AND THE ANNEX SCHOOL**

### **WHAT TO DO WHEN STAFF HAVE CONCERNS**

Abuse (which may be physical, emotional or sexual) and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. If you have any reason to suspect that a child has suffered such harm, is in danger of suffering such harm, or if a child makes a disclosure, please observe the following procedures:

- Listen to the child and be supportive, but do not directly question them.
- Do not promise the child confidentiality - explain that you may need to pass information onto other professionals to help keep them or other children safe.
- Do not jump to conclusions, ask leading questions or influence a child's words.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately afterwards, as close to verbatim as possible. Only use words the child themselves used, not your interpretation.
- Sign and date your transcript and hand to A Designated Person – (Jane Parish, Brendan Aherne or Eric de Mel) immediately or as soon as possible.
- Do not discuss the incident with others –information should only be passed on when necessary and we will advise you as to whether this is appropriate.

It is not our responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse. But it is our responsibility to follow safeguarding procedures.

**IF YOU FEEL THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM – DO NOT LEAVE THE CHILD. CONTACT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATELY:**

**THE SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR - JANE PARISH – 07736774491**

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD – ERIC DE MEL (01322 618776)**

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING DEPUTY - BRENDAN AHERNE – 07742916400**

### **REFERENCES**

This policy has been informed by and complies with:

DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015),

DfE advice 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015) from The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

HM Gov advice 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (March 2015)

HM Gov guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2015),

## APPENDIX ONE – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

### Things you may notice

If you're worried that a child is being abused, watch out for any unusual behaviour.

- withdrawn
- suddenly behaves differently
- anxious
- clingy
- depressed
- aggressive
- problems sleeping
- eating disorders
- wets the bed
- soils clothes
- takes risks
- misses school
- changes in eating habits
- obsessive behaviour
- nightmares
- drugs
- alcohol
- self-harm
- thoughts about suicide

### Sexual Abuse

Children who are sexually abused may:

#### Stay away from certain people

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

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

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

#### Have physical symptoms

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

## ***Physical Abuse***

### ***Bruises***

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

### ***Burns or Scalds***

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

### ***Bite Marks***

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

### ***Fractures or broken bones***

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

### ***Other injuries and health problems***

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

### ***Neglect***

- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.
- Poor bond or relationship with a parent, also known as attachment.
- Acts out excessive violence with other children.
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Reluctant to go home after school.
- Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home.

- Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up.
- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school.
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns.
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.
- Wets or soils the bed.
- Drinks alcohol regularly from an early age.
- Is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why.
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Talks of running away.
- Shows challenging/disruptive behaviour at school.
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.

### ***Emotional abuse***

There often aren't any obvious physical symptoms of emotional abuse or neglect but you may spot signs in a child's actions or emotions.

Changes in emotions are a normal part of growing up, so it can be really difficult to tell if a child is being emotionally abused.

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

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery etc.
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

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

### ***Bullying and Cyber Bullying***

It can be hard for adults, including parents, to know whether or not a child is being bullied. A child might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might think that they deserve to be bullied, or that it's their fault.

You can't always see the signs of bullying. And no one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied. But you should look out for:

- belongings getting "lost" or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)

- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

### ***Online abuse***

Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same no matter how the abuse happens.

A child may be experiencing abuse online if they:

- spend lots, much more or much less time online, texting, gaming or using social media
- are withdrawn, upset or outraged after using the internet or texting
- are secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

### ***CSE***

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour.

Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- be involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hang out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- get involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- go missing from home, care or education.

### ***FGM***

A girl or woman who's had FGM may:

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

### ***Domestic Abuse***

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

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

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

### ***Child Trafficking***

Child trafficking is child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation.

Children are trafficked for:

- [child sexual exploitation](#)
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs, bag theft.

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

### ***Grooming***

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of [sexual abuse](#) or [exploitation](#).

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.

Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

## Safeguarding Key Contacts – Updated – November 2015

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