



Safeguarding Policy

May 2020

Review Date: May 2021

1.1 POLICY STATEMENT

Action4Youth, the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer, and staff are fully committed to the belief that all children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect, and fully recognise their responsibility for safeguarding and to promote the welfare of children and young people. The safety and protection of all children and young people that Action4Youth supports is paramount and has priority over all other interests.

Action4Youth acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards a member of staff or volunteer, or towards any disclosures or suspicion of abuse.

Action4Youth recognises its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts' 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Action4Youth believes that:

- The welfare of all children is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, ethnicity, religious or spiritual beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to in a swift and appropriate manner.

Action4Youth will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally, fairly and with respect and dignity.
- The welfare of each child will always be of the highest priority.
- Bullying (in any form) is neither accepted nor condoned.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- There is a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns.
- Staff and volunteers will be kept updated with regards to changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and young people.
- All Trustees, staff and regular volunteers will be DBS checked before being appointed.
- Staff and regular volunteers will undertake relevant and appropriate development and training in relation to safeguarding children.
- All Trustees, staff and volunteers within the organisation are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and their duty to the children and young people in their care. They fully understand the correct process for reporting concerns.

All staff and volunteers working within Action4Youth must:

- Understand the different categories of abuse and neglect, and how to recognise the signs.
- Recognise that some parents/carers may require additional support when raising their children, for example as a result of mental health issues, learning disabilities, substance misuse or domestic abuse.
- Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another staff member or volunteer's behaviour towards a child or children.
- Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns and be fully aware of the organisation's safeguarding lead and their role within the organisation.
- If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings / core groups / conferences.

1.2 RECOGNISING HARM, ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Harm and abuse may occur in different forms and includes, but is not limited to:

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

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. 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 capacity, 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 cyberbullying), 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, although 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. 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 misuse.

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 caregivers) or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Child Sexual Exploitation: This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child Criminal Exploitation: As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Extremism: Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as *“the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for death of members of our armed forces as extremist.”*

County Lines: As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of ‘deal line’.

They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM affects girls particularly from North African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone.

It is illegal in the United Kingdom to allow girls to undergo female genital mutilation either in this country or abroad. People guilty of allowing FGM to take place are punished by fines and up to fourteen years in prison.

FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is important to note that the procedure has no health benefits.

Forced Marriage: A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK. It is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

1.3 RESPONSIBILITIES (ORGANISATION)

Action4Youth will ensure a minimum of three senior members of staff or trustees are appointed with responsibility for child protection and the implementation of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Additional Safeguarding Leads to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Jan Knight, jan.knight@action4youth.org, 07391 408599
- Additional Safeguarding Lead – Sarah Simmons (Training Officer), sarah.simmons@action4youth.org 07391 408594,
- Additional Safeguarding Lead, Caldecotte Xperience – Rich Wyatt, rich.wyatt@action4youth.org, 07711 027668

Action4Youth will ensure that all staff members and regular volunteers receive training to update them on Safeguarding every three years.

Action4Youth will ensure that advice is sought from relevant child protection agencies when dealing with more complex issues.

Action4Youth will ensure that all employees and regular volunteers receive regular monitoring and supervision in their work with children and young people. Other volunteers must be accompanied by a member of staff or a regular volunteer at all times.

1.4 RESPONSIBILITIES (TRAINING OFFICER)

The Training Officer will be trained in the relevant Train the Trainer qualifications needed to deliver the Action4Youth Safeguarding course and will attend yearly safeguarding training to update knowledge

The Training Officer will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers have the relevant Safeguarding training.

Updates to the Safeguarding Policy will be provided by Buckinghamshire

Safeguarding Children Partnership, which will include up-to-date legislation, including Local and National Guidelines.

1.5 RESPONSIBILITIES (EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS)

All employees and volunteers working on behalf of Action4Youth have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and young people that they work with.

All employees have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

Never assume that others are monitoring a child or young person. Others may have doubts but as a member of Action4Youth staff you could be the only person taking action.

If in any doubt about what action to take, employees must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Additional Safeguarding Leads or, in all their absence, the Chief Executive Officer.

Action4Youth frequently takes photographs of children and young people participating in activities and events. Written permission from parent/guardian must be obtained before any photographic material is used in the public domain.

1.6 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Safeguarding Policy has been written in line with the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency policies and procedures - which can be found in the online manual <http://bscb.procedures.org.uk/>.

Staff and volunteers must familiarise themselves with relevant policies and procedures.

The Finance and Operations Director shall undertake to review this policy, its implementation and effectiveness annually.

Any new legislation or developments in existing legislation will be considered as and when required and the policy will be updated to reflect these developments.

1.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

Action4Youth operates under a policy of confidentiality. However, under no circumstances will any individual in the employment of Action4Youth keep confidential any information that raises concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or young person.

This statement relating to confidentiality must be made known to all who access any provision of Action4Youth.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people in accordance with the Information Sharing Policy of the Children's Trust.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep secrets.

Please see the BSCP Information Sharing Protocol which can be found at <https://www.bucksscp.org.uk/professionals/information-sharing/>

1.8 SUPPORTING STAFF

All members of staff and volunteers at Action4Youth will receive regular training and supervision with respect to Safeguarding issues.

All staff and volunteers to whom a young person may have disclosed may be distressed by the disclosure. Non-managerial support and/or counselling will therefore be available. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure this is provided if required.

1.9 EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

Action4Youth ensures that, where appropriate, organisations from which it commissions services have comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and to protect those who are vulnerable and at risk of harm or abuse.

Organisations will be asked to provide copies of their:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Public Liability insurance.