



21a Queenhill Road, Selston
South Croydon, CR2 8DU

CHILDREN AT RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Selston Tennis Club operates in the Borough of Croydon and is affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

1. POLICY STATEMENT

All children have the right to be cared for, protected from harm and abuse.

STC is committed to safeguarding all children by ensuring that activities at the club are delivered in a way which keeps them safe and that safeguarding concerns or allegations are taken seriously and are acted upon appropriately.

This policy demonstrates the commitment of STC to ensure that all children can participate in a tennis environment which is safe and enjoyable.

This policy is renewed every three years or sooner if there are changes in legislation, government guidance or as a result of any other significant change or event.

2. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility
- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Safeguarding concerns are taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriate support provided to those involved wherever possible.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING

- The Welfare Officer is responsible for ensuring STC complies with safeguarding standards and acts as the first point of contact for any safeguarding issues at the club
- Coaches and Management committee members and Directors of the club are responsible for upholding high standards of conduct and professionalism in accordance with the STC Code of Conduct
- All Participants (see Appendix B for definition) are responsible for raising safeguarding concerns in accordance with the 'Reporting a safeguarding concern' procedure (see Appendix A) They should also be aware of and uphold the STC Code of Conduct

4. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all directors, volunteers, committee members, coaches, club members and any visitors. It is in line with the legislation applicable to England under the Care Act 2014.

STC Directors have overall accountability for the policy and its implementation. The Welfare Officer is responsible for updating the policy in line with new legislation and club developments.

5. POLICY AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children (anyone under the age of 18) from harm
- Provide a copy of the policy to enable participants to meet their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensure that good practice and high safeguarding standards are maintained.

6. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND COACHES AT THE CLUB

At STC, the officers of the club are volunteers. The Welfare Officer is obliged to undergo a Criminal Records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Coaches at the club have to be Accredited by the LTA which also involves them having a DBS check.

Any volunteer at the club who is working with children on a regular basis must also have a DBS check.

The Welfare Officer and Accredited Coach(es) are required to complete Safeguarding training as set out by the LTA every 3 years.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

All Participants are expected to always act in the best interests of children and ensure that their safety, welfare and well-being is the primary consideration.

All club members and participants must adhere to STC Code of Conduct as well as other safeguarding procedures or guidance that may be issued from time to time by the Welfare Officer. A record of dissemination of these updates is kept by the Membership Secretary.

8. POSITIONS OF TRUST

A person aged 18 or older who holds a position of authority or responsibility over a child is in a position of trust.

Positions of trust are not defined by a qualification or job title, but by reference to the activity which the adult is carrying out in relation to the child, namely, coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing (including as a volunteer) on a regular basis.

Participants who are in a position of trust must be aware of the power imbalance they hold over children and not use this for personal advantage or gratification.

In June 2022, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 was changed to extend the abuse of position of trust offences to include where an adult is coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing a child under 18 years old within sport or religious settings. This means that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, in England and Wales it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to have a sexual or intimate relationship with a child under 18 years old, even if the relationship is deemed consensual. This means that any sexual activity (including online activity) between someone in a position of trust and a child under 18 years old will be formally reported as it may be a criminal offence

9. TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

There are four main types of child abuse

Sexual

Physical

Emotional

Neglect

Detailed description of these types of abuse along with other forms of harm can be found in Appendix B.

10. INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE

Vulnerability is a changeable and contextual state, but may include children with a physical disability or diagnosed condition such as learning difficulties, or mental health conditions such as severe anxiety or depression.

Children in these groups may:

- Have a smaller network of friends and peer group to support and protect them
- Require intimate/physical and or invasive medical care required which can allow abuse to be hidden
- Have communication difficulties
- Be less able to resist inappropriate or abusive behaviour, either verbally or physically
- Be dependent on the abuser for a service or basic need
- Have medical conditions that are used to explain injuries

Personal circumstances away from tennis such as domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse, homelessness and social exclusion may also have an impact on vulnerability.

In addition, children from LGBTQ+ and /or Black, Asian and Other Minority Ethnic groups can:

- Be subjected to bullying, emotional abuse and physical abuse due to their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Experience racism and racist attitudes
- Engage in cultural practices, which are classed as abuse within the UK (e.g. honour-based violence, female genital mutilation)
- Expect to be ignored by people in authority due to experience of institutionalised racism.
- Be afraid of further abuse or racist abuse if they challenge others
- Be subjected to myths based on racial stereotyping
- Be using or learning English as a second language and therefore find it more difficult to communicate

Elite child athletes may also be more vulnerable to abuse because they may:

- Have increased dependency on coaching and other support staff for funding, selection and progression
- Be segregated from protective factors such as their family and peer groups
- Feel less able to report concerning behaviour due to a fear of impacting on their sporting development
- Be exposed to unhealthy cultures and competitive performance ideologies, where inappropriate practices may be accepted or even encouraged under the belief that they deliver success
- Be subjected to intense training and pressure to play/succeed even when injured and achieve unrealistic image, body and weight expectations.

11. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

A low level concern (which can also be known as poor practice) is behaviour that falls short of abuse towards a child and does not meet the allegation threshold or a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO in England and Wales), but which nevertheless places a child at risk of harm and has a negative effect on their safety and/or their wellbeing.

A low level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which is not consistent with the Code of Conduct and/or has created a sense of unease about that person’s ability to work with children.

Low level concerns are not acceptable and should be reported to the Welfare Officer who will then contact the LTA Safeguarding Team. If the concern involves the Welfare Officer then you need to contact the LTA directly (See Appendix A). All low level concerns must be reported to the LTA in order that concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour is identified and to ensure that no information is potentially lost. Upon receipt by the LTA, low level concerns will be triaged and managed through LTA Safeguarding Regulations which form part of the LTA Disciplinary Code.

The LTA may decide that the low level concern is suitable to be dealt with by the venue directly in which case the LTA will support the Welfare Officer to manage the situation. If further information comes to light which raises the level of concern, the matter must be referred back to the LTA.

12. RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Everyone has a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of children and to take the appropriate steps to ensure that safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse and poor practice are taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately, even if it may not have occurred recently.

Upon becoming aware of a safeguarding concern, Participants must follow the How to report a safeguarding concern (see Appendix A) procedure.

It is not the job of the Participant to investigate any safeguarding concern or allegation, nor determine whether abuse or poor practice has taken place.

Once a safeguarding concern has been reported to the LTA it will be triaged and managed through LTA Safeguarding Regulations which form part of the LTA Disciplinary Code. These can be found at www.lta.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations

13. RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE OR ABUSE

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused or is at risk of abuse:

- Listen carefully and calmly to what is said
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing and what they have told you is very important
- Avoid questioning where possible and never ask leading questions.
- Let them know that you will need to speak to the Welfare Officer because it is in their best interest. If you intend to speak to the police or social care, you should let them know this too.
- Report the safeguarding concern. In an emergency, call the police on 999, otherwise talk to the Welfare Officer/LTA Safeguarding Team as soon as possible. Do not seek to investigate it yourself or let doubt/personal bias prevent you from reporting the allegation
- Record details of the disclosure as soon as possible after (not during)the disclosure. The recording of details should be impartial i.e. you should write down what you see and hear from the child and not what you feel. Then pass the details on to the Welfare Officer who will submit the details to the LTA via <https://safeguardingconcern@lta.org.uk/>
- Ensure that the child's immediate needs are met and that the priority is their safety and protection from further risk of harm.
- It is also advisable to discuss safeguarding concerns with the parents in the first instance, except where this may place a child, or someone else, at increased risk. Always seek advice from the Welfare Officer or the LTA Safeguarding Team.
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14. CONFIDENTIALITY

All safeguarding concerns and allegations at Selsdon Tennis Club must be dealt with confidentiality by all Participants involved. The LTA Safeguarding Team will also maintain confidentiality. However, there may be a situation where the individual raising a concern or allegation does not wish to be named, but it may not be possible for the LTA to assure anonymity, e.g. where it is necessary to carry out a fair disciplinary process.

15. INFORMATION SHARING AND RETENTION

- Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will or could be shared and seek their agreement unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Where individuals and other relevant parties do not consent to their information being shared, it is still possible to share confidential information where there is good reason to do so, e.g. where safety may be at risk.
- Consider safety and well-being: Base any decisions on information sharing on considerations for the safety and well-being of the child, primarily, but you may need to consider the impact on others too.
- Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it (in this case the Welfare Officer), that it is accurate and up to date and is shared in a timely fashion and is always shared securely.
- Any decisions must be recorded including the reasons behind it. Record who it has been shared with and why.

16. WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing is when someone reports wrongdoing on the basis that is in the public interest for the wrongdoing to be brought to light. This can include:

- An organisation which doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures to follow
- Concerns that aren't dealt with properly or may have been covered up
- A concern was raised but hasn't been acted upon
- Being worried that repercussions are likely to arise if raising a safeguarding concern or allegation (This applies to incidents that happened in the past, are happening now, or may happen in the future).

Whistleblowers should contact the Welfare Officer in the first instance unless they feel uncomfortable to do so or if the concern is not about Selsdon Tennis club. In this instance they should contact the LTA Safeguarding Team. If the Whistleblower doesn't want to speak to the WO or the LTA then there is a Whistleblowing advice line which can be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

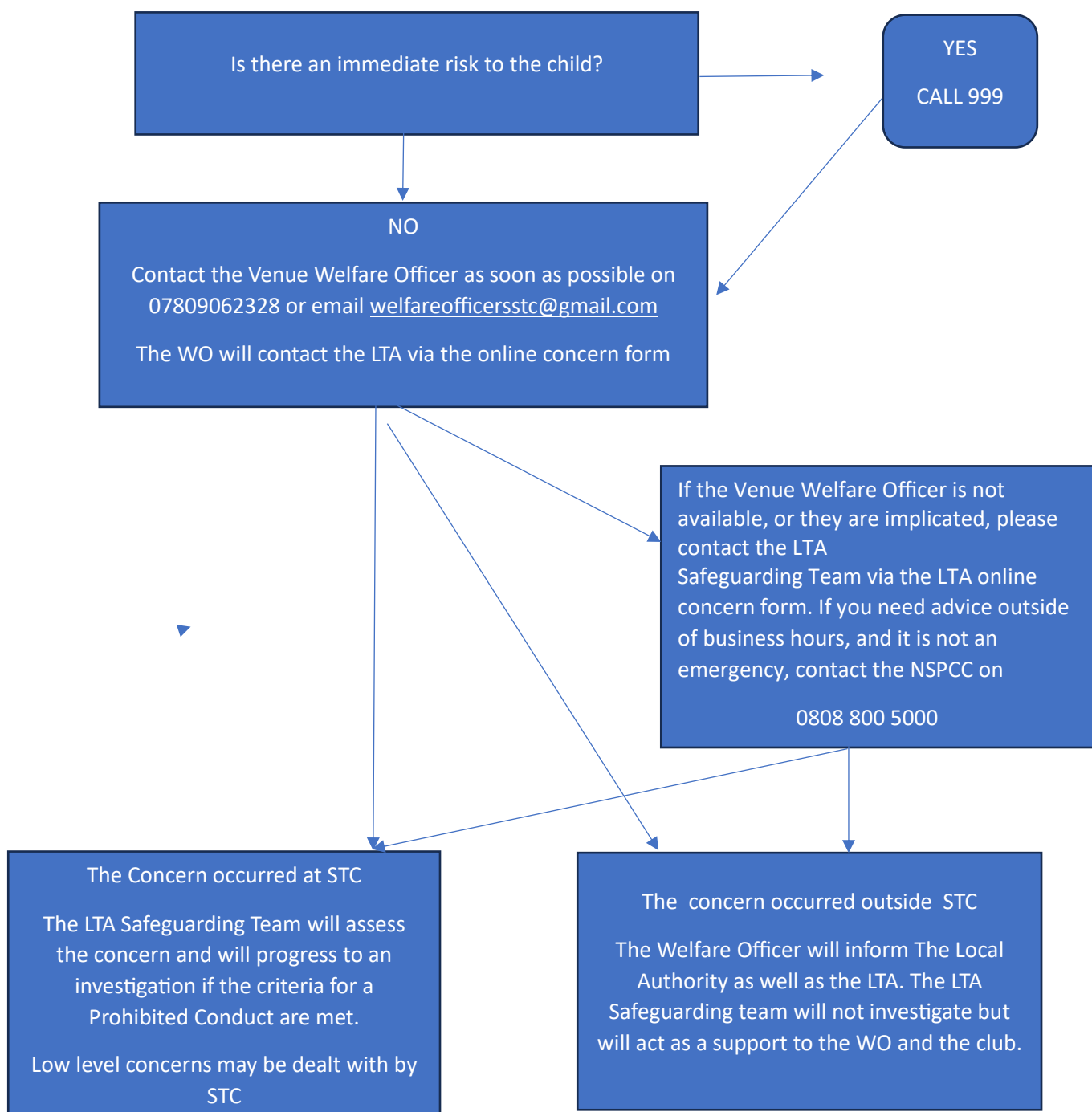
Safecall is an independent, confidential and potentially anonymous reporting service provided by the LTA if there are serious concerns regarding any of the public interest areas listed below.

- Criminal offences, including fraud
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation
- Legal miscarriage of justice
- Endangering someone's health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Covering up wrongdoing in any of the above categories

Either call 0800 915 1571 or report online at www.safecall.co.uk/report

APPENDIX A – HOW TO REPORT A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Safeguarding concerns (including low level concerns) arise about a child or a person who works with children



APPENDIX B: DEFINITIONS

Child:

a person under the age of 18 years.

Parent:

birth parents, legal guardians and other adults who are in a parenting role.

Participant:

Anyone participating or seeking to participate in tennis in any way whatsoever whether directly e.g. all members of STC or indirectly e.g. as a parent, supporter, carer or just someone who has come to watch tennis.

Safeguarding:

The action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This means protecting children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to their health or development, ensuring that they grow up with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome.

Child protection

The process undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Prohibited conduct:

engage, or attempt or threaten to engage, in conduct that directly or indirectly harms the physical and/or mental welfare and/or safety of one or more child; or pose a risk of harm to the physical and/or mental welfare and/or safety of one or more child or adult at risk.

Abuse:

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. Children may be abused by:

- family members
- friends
- people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings
- people they know
- strangers

Indicators of Abuse

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or neglected. The NSPCC has a comprehensive list of the types of abuse and their indicators at www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse

Examples of signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained change in behaviour
- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Missing belongings or money
- Child is not attending/no longer enjoying their sessions
- Changes in weight
- Truancy
- Sexually explicit knowledge or behaviour
- Being withdrawn
- Genital pain, stomach pains, discomfort, pregnancy, incontinence, urinary infections, STDs
- Dirty, ill-fitting clothes or a lack of appropriate clothing for the weather
- Self-harm
- A fear of a particular group of people or an individual
- Lack of friends
- Lack of growth or development
- Low self-esteem.

Neglect:

Ongoing failure to meet the basic needs of children. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food or shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect them from physical and emotional harm or danger or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse

Any act or other treatment which is persistent and may cause emotional damage and may undermine a child's sense of well-being. This includes persistent criticism, denigration or putting unrealistic expectations on children, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation or use of threats.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve, biting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It's also physical abuse of a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Sexual Abuse

Any act which involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. 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. Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the child's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Grooming

The process of developing a relationship with and the trust of a child, their family, and any other adults around the child, to commit sexual abuse or exploitation against them. Grooming can happen both online and in person.

Child Sexual Exploitation

It occurs where an individual or groups of people take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or 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 can also take place through the use of technology.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and which may be harmful or abusive. It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour. HSB encompasses a range of behaviour, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards.

HSB can include:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- sexual activity with other children or adults

Sexual behaviour between children is considered harmful if one of the children is much older

– particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other isn't. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them
– for example, if the older child is disabled

Bullying:

Repeated behaviour intended to intimidate or upset a child and/or make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, for example, name calling, exclusion or isolation, spreading rumours, embarrassing someone in public or in front of their peers, threatening to cause harm, physically hurting someone or damaging their possessions.

Cyberbullying:

The use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, humiliate, spread rumours or target another child.

Child trafficking:

Child trafficking involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. Children may be trafficked for child sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic servitude, forced labour, criminal exploitation and more.

County lines:

The organised criminal distribution of drugs by gangs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using children. Gangs recruit children through deception, intimidation, violence, debt bondage and/or grooming. County line gangs pose a significant threat to children upon whom they rely to conduct and/or facilitate such criminality.

Discriminatory abuse:

Abuse or bullying because of discrimination occurs when motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people. This may be because of an individual's ethnic origin, colour, nationality, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability. Actions may include unfair or less favourable treatment, culturally insensitive comments, insults and 'banter'.

Domestic abuse:

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Female genital mutilation:

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a child is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM.

Hazing:

Rituals, initiation activities, actions or situations that occur with or without consent, which recklessly, intentionally or unintentionally endanger the physical or emotional well-being of vulnerable groups.

Honour-Based Violence: Honour-Based Violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

Infatuations:

Children may develop an infatuation with a person who works with them. Such situations should be handled sensitively to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. People who work with children should be aware, that in such circumstances, there is a high risk that words or actions may be misinterpreted and that allegations could be made against them. These people should therefore ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach. Situations where a child is infatuated should be raised at the earliest opportunity with the Welfare Officer and LTA Safeguarding Team.

Peer-on-peer abuse:

Children can be taken advantage of or harmed by their peers. Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between individuals and within relationships (both intimate and nonintimate).

Radicalisation:

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Anybody from any background can become radicalised. The grooming of children for the purposes of involvement in extremist activity is a serious safeguarding issue.

APPENDIX C USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS**Alcoholics Anonymous**

Free helpline for alcohol issues. 0800 9177 650 help@aamail.org www.alcolicsanonymous.org.uk

Anger Management

0845 130 0286

www.angermanage.co.uk

Beat

Provides support on all aspects of eating disorders.

0808 801 0677 (over 18s)

help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Bipolar UK

Support to enable people affected by bipolar disorder/ manic depression to take control of their lives.

0333 323 3880

info@bipolaruk.org www.bipolaruk.org.uk

ChildLine

ChildLine help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they are going through.

08001111 or you can email or live chat at: www.childline.org.uk/about/about-childline/

Galop

Emotional and practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence.

0800 999 5428 help@galop.org.uk

Men's Advice Line

Information, support and advice to men experiencing domestic violence, offered by Respect. 0808 801 0327

info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Mind

Information, advice, guidance and support for people with mental health problems.

0300 123 3393

info@mind.org.uk

National Domestic Violence Helpline

Run in partnership between Women's Aid & Refuge.

0808 2000 247

NAPAC

The National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC) offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse.

0808 801 0331

napac.org.uk/

NSPCC

The NSPCC can support with any concerns about a child's safety or well-being.

help@nspcc.org.uk

0808 800 5000

One in four

Specialising in working with survivors of childhood sexual abuse and sexual violence.

Offers long-term 1-1 therapy.

0208 697 2112

admin@oneinfour.org.uk www.oneinfour.org.uk

Relate

Counselling and relationship education for couples.

Live chat line service also available.

0300 100 1234

www.relate.org.uk

Samaritans

Call 116 123 for free –

Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.

www.samaritans.org

Sane

Deals with all aspects of mental illness including depression, schizophrenia and anxiety.

0845 767 8000

www.sane.org.uk

The Survivors Trust

The Survivors Trust is the largest umbrella agency for specialist rape and sexual abuse services in the UK

01788 550554

www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Talk to Frank

National organisation providing advice regarding drugs and substance abuse.

On-line live chat service also available.

0300 123 6600

www.talktofrank.com

Document created and reviewed by Felicity Abbott (Welfare Officer)

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