



FUSION FAMILY AND YOUTH PROJECTS CHARITY NUMBER: 1159563

Fusion Family and Youth Projects Child Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed September 2025

Designated Safeguarding lead - Angela Linton.

Email - fusion.coordinator@gmail.com

Phone number - 07938026623

Safeguarding Trustee - Steph Webb

E-mail -

Stephaniewebb@btinternet.com Phone

number - 07368679368

Contact details for Cambridgeshire Constabulary (Police)

Emergency: 999

Use if a child or vulnerable person is at immediate risk of harm or a crime is in progress.

Non-Emergency: 101

Use for safeguarding concerns, welfare checks, reporting incidents, or seeking police advice where there is no immediate danger.

Contact details for Social Care

0345 045 5203 8am-5.30pm (Mon-Thu)

8am-4.30pm (Fri)

01733 234724 Emergency Duty Team

(out of hours)

fusion.coordinator@gmail.com

HYCFC, Sallowbush Road,

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Introduction:

All organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and/or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (whether paid or unpaid) working for the organisation have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.
- Staff / volunteers are not trained to decide whether abuse has occurred but to refer on concerns to Children's / Adults Social Care for further investigation.

Policy statement:

Fusion Family and Youth Projects has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people involved in Fusion Family and Youth Projects. This policy is compliant with Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and the Working together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance.

All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

Fusion Family and Youth Projects will ensure the safety and protection of all children and young people involved in Fusion Family and Youth Projects through adherence to the safeguarding guidelines adopted by Fusion Family and Youth Projects.

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A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy aims:

The aim of the Fusion Family and Youth Projects safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice within the organisation and with any partner agencies:

- providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Fusion Family and Youth Projects.
- allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.

Promoting good practice:

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

- Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, and the community.
- Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children and young people to harm them.
- A coach, youth worker, counsellor, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with children and young people and can be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection.
- All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone within Fusion that includes committee members, staff, volunteers and service users. Fusion recognises that every organisation has a crucial role to play in the support, identification and reporting of a child that may be at risk of abuse or neglect. **Doing nothing is never an option.** All staff have basic safeguarding qualifications and complete a refresher course every two years, they are also updated on any policy changes and supported by the designated safeguarding leads available at every session in person or by phone.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** responsible for safeguarding is Angela Linton.

E-mail - Fusion.coordinator@gmail.com

Phone - 07938026623

If the DSL is unable to be contacted, or may have a conflict of interest, or be implicated, then report your concerns to the Deputy DSL Steph Webb (Trustee).

E-mail- Stephaniewebb@btinternet.com

Phone – 07368679368

Types of abuse and recognising the signs:

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is when a child is deprived of love, warmth and affection or is persistently treated negatively, inconsistently, inappropriately or is rejected. This may include the child being constantly told that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate or the parent or carer having unreasonable and unrealistic expectations of the child's abilities or making the child being made to feel frightened or in danger.

Recognising emotional abuse

Signs of emotional abuse include:

- very low self-esteem, often with an inability to accept praise or trust in adults.

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- excessive clinging and attention seeking behaviour.
- overanxious – being excessively ‘watchful’, constantly checking or being overanxious to please withdrawn and socially isolated

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning or suffocation.

Recognising physical abuse

Bruising is a concern when bruises:

- can be seen on parts of the body not normally harmed through play.
- appear in or around the mouth (especially in young babies)
- appear as small ‘grasp’ or finger marks to a child’s arms or legs.
- look like they have been caused by a stick or belt.
- appear to be of different ages (colour) in the same area.
- appear the same on both sides of the body, legs, head or arms.
- appear as bite marks especially when the marks appear to be those of an adult or older child (more than 3cm across)
- are seen in a baby which is not mobile.

Most fractures are treated by a hospital. It is concerning when a child is not taken for treatment if they are suffering pain, swelling or discolouration over a bone or joint. Although it may not always be possible to know whether a child has a fractured bone it is difficult for a parent or carer to be unaware that the child has been hurt. It is rare for children under the age of one to sustain a fracture accidentally.

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It can be difficult to distinguish between a burn or scald that has been caused accidentally or non-accidentally. As with fractures all burns and scalds should receive medical treatment.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Sexual activities may involve physical contact such as sexual intercourse, buggery or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual activities may also include non-contact activities like involving children in looking at pornography, creating pornography, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Recognising sexual abuse

Signs of sexual abuse include:

- sexually explicit talk or play, especially in prepubescent children.
- sexual behaviour, such as pretending to have sex during play.
- sexually provocative relationships with adults
- itching, redness, soreness or unexplained bleeding from a child's vagina or anus
- bruising, cuts, or marks to the genital area
- repeated genital infections.

Neglect

Neglect is when there is a constant failure to meet the child's basic physical or psychological needs in a way that is likely to cause serious damage to the child's health or development. Neglect can include failing to provide a child with adequate food, shelter or clothing or failing to protect a child from harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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Recognising neglect

Signs of neglect include:

- the child frequently appears hungry.
- the child consistently appearing unkempt or inappropriately dressed for the weather or smelling.
- failure to seek medical attention.
- failure to prevent accidental injury.

Safeguarding Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, bullying, exploitation and discrimination. At Fusion, we recognise the importance of ensuring that all children, regardless of ability or additional need, are listened to, valued and supported appropriately. Staff and volunteers will take extra care to identify any safeguarding concerns, ensure communication is accessible, and work closely with parents, carers and other professionals where appropriate. We are committed to creating an inclusive, safe and supportive environment where every child and young person can participate fully and feel protected.

Good practice guidelines:

All Fusion Family and Youth Projects personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behavior in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and Climate:

Good Practice Expectations with all Fusion Family and Youth Projects staff :

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all children and young people with respect and dignity.

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- Keeping up to date with all training which comes under the safeguarding.
- Always putting the welfare of each child or young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance between children and young people (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or young person or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications, and insurance.
- All devices used within the setting that have image, video, audio recording or sharing capabilities, including mobile phones, tablets, laptops and smart devices are used safely, appropriately and in line with safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection procedures to protect children, young people, staff and volunteers from harm, misuse or exploitation.
- Ensuring that if mixed groups are taken away, they should be accompanied by a male **and** female member of staff. If this is not possible try to ensure that there are male members of staff at the Residential Centre.
- Remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children or young people's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children and young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and young people

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- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if Fusion Family and Youth Projects are required to transport children and young people in their cars.

Practices that should be avoided whenever possible:

The following should be avoided except in emergencies.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the child's parents (or carers) and shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending time alone with children and young people away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child / young person to an event or activity unless this has been agreed in advance and is a barrier to a young person attending a group/activity

Practices that are not appropriate in any circumstance:

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including playfighting.
- Share a room with a child or young person.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun.

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- Reduce a child / young person to tears as a form of control.
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child or young person.
- Invite or allow children / young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised
- Buy/offer to buy gifts for a young person (unless part of a project and agreed by more than one member of staff); all gifts in these cases should be bought using Fusion Family and Youth Projects funds and recorded as to the rationale of why this was deemed appropriate for review by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children / young people, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the child / young person involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with them about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child / young person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Reporting Incidents

incidents that must be reported/recorded:

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the Operations Manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record the incident.

You should also ensure the parents of the child or young person are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or young person during a project session.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child or young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.

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- If a child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.
- If a child or young person discloses any kind of abuse, exploitation, fears of harm, reporting of self-harm or threats to harm others.

How to respond if a disclosure is made to you:

If a child is not in immediate danger and has disclosed information to you that raises concerns of potential abuse or neglect, you should:

- Show you care, help them open up, give them your full attention and keep your body language open. Listen, let them speak without interruptions at their pace. Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible, explain what will happen next, record the date, time, who was present, the place of any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).

Do not wait until a child or young person tells you directly that they are being abused before acting. If you suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect based on what you have observed or information shared with you, record your observations and discuss your concerns with your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Providing information to Police or Social Services

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours UNLESS you have **immediate concerns** about the wellbeing of a child and it should then be reported immediately to Children's Social Care who are available 24 hours a day.

Not all concerns will require a referral to Social Care, but they should still be discussed

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with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will help to decide what action should be taken. In these instances the information should still be recorded and any actions noted. Decisions will be made on the evidence at hand and any previous reports that have been recorded with regard to the child.

Recorded concerns should include the following:

- The child or young Person's name, age and date of birth.
- The child or young Person's home address and telephone number.
- Whether it is known whether there is any current Social Care involvement with the child / young person.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation/concerns. include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries - body maps can be useful in these circumstances and are available from the DCPO. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child/Young Person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred. Staff must be careful not to ask any leading questions.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child/Young Person was not the person who reported the incident, has the child/young person been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

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- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded. Confirmation of receipt, including names and date. Where there are **immediate concerns** for the safety of a child or young person the referral should be phoned through immediately and followed up in writing.
- Name of member of staff/volunteer and job role

More information regarding making referrals is available at
<https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/concerned/>

For procedural enquiries

Early Years' Service e-mail : Earlyyears.service@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Online Safety:

Fusion Family and Youth Projects takes the online safety of children and young people seriously. Fusion Family and Youth Projects follows the safety protocols set out by the government guide 'Child Safety Online: A Practical Guide for Providers of Social Media and Interactive Services' available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/487973/ukccis_guide-final_3_.pdf

The Principles of this which Fusion Family and Youth Projects follows include:

- Deciding what content is acceptable on our service, and how we make this clear to users.
- We are clear on minimum age limits, and discourage those who are too young from accessing.
- Plan and regularly update how we manage inappropriate or illegal content posted on our site. For under-13s, consider a walled garden environment and pre-moderating content before users see it. Also become familiar with the UK rules to advertising to children.
- Offer privacy settings options, including privacy-by-default, to give control to your users and 'invite only' to access content.
- Educate users about online safety as part of the experience on our platform and

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online sessions

- Integrate safety messages into the user journey – when accepting a friend request, services updates, etc - both for new and existing users and link to online guidance available at <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/onlinesafety/>

Exploitation:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) 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.

Criminal Exploitation Child Criminal Exploitation is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of peer 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.

In line with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LSCB Exploitation Strategy Fusion Family and Youth Projects ensures that all staff are trained to understand the signs of exploitation and identify early concerns that relate to potential abuse and exploitation.

All staff follow Child Protection procedures and refer to Children's Services as appropriate using the

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Effective Support Document as a guide to deciding on the threshold to refer.

All staff are aware of the exploitation risk assessment tool and how it can inform their ongoing work with children and young people.

Fusion Family and Youth Projects follows the guidance set by the Cambs and Peterborough LSCB

at: <http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/child-sexual-exploitation/>

<http://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/criminalexploitation/>

Prevent:

The threat we face from terrorism is real and the Prevent strategy recognises that we can't arrest our way out of the problem. The Prevent strategy therefore aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The focus of Prevent is on the significant threat posed by international terrorism and those in the UK who are inspired by it. But it is also concerned with reducing threats, risks and vulnerabilities posed by domestic extremists such as those from the far right and far left extreme animal rights activists and those involved in Northern Irish related terrorism.

Prevent is supported by three objectives:

- Responding to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it (ideology);
- Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism and ensuring that they are given appropriate advice and support (individuals).
- Working with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address (institutions).

If any staff in Fusion Family and Youth Projects suspects that any children, young people or their family is may be at risk of radicalisation, they would treat this as they would any other safeguarding issue; and escalate it using Fusion Family and Youth Projects normal, internal procedures, by informing the Designated safeguarding lead or by getting further support from the Prevent team:

Prevent@cambs.pnn.police.uk and referring to Children's Social Care as appropriate.

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Honour Based Violence (HBV), including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Fusion recognises that Honour Based Violence (HBV), including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), is a serious safeguarding issue and a form of abuse. Staff and volunteers will be alert to signs that a child or young person may be at risk and will respond in line with safeguarding procedures. In accordance with the mandatory reporting duty, regulated professionals must report any known cases of FGM in girls under 18 directly to the police. All concerns relating to HBV or FGM will be treated seriously, recorded appropriately and referred to relevant safeguarding agencies without delay. Please note FGM training is a mandatory training that all staff undertake every 2 years.

Use of photographic or filming equipment at Fusion Family and Youth Projects:

There is evidence that some people have used sports events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and young people in vulnerable positions. All projects should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any child or young person being photographed by Fusion Family and Youth Projects must first have given consent via a signed statement from their parent / carer. The photographs remain the property of Fusion Family and Youth Projects and should not be held on personal devices of staff /volunteers.

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Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers:

Fusion Family and Youth Projects recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children or young people in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working for Fusion Family and Youth Projects.

Pre selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service, if an applicant already has this from a recognised partner from within the last three years then it is acceptable to use this as long as it has been agreed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Fusion Family and Youth Projects Operations Manager.
- Two confidential references, these references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

interview and induction:

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- Their qualifications should be substantiated.

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- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
- They should be given access to Fusion Family and Youth Projects safeguarding policy .

Training:

In addition to preselection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely and effectively with children and young people.

Fusion Family and Youth Projects requires:

All frontline staff to attend or complete online a recognised basic child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.

Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.

Relevant personnel to obtain relevant first aid training (where necessary). Designated Safeguarding Lead to undergo Designated Child Protection training every 2 years.

All staff and volunteers are required to have their child protection training at least every two years. Where staff have other roles that allows them to attend accredited child protection training this will be classed by Fusion Family and Youth Projects as a refresher if the member of staff / volunteer can provide dated evidence of the completion of the training.

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Responding to allegations or suspicions:

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Fusion Family and Youth Projects in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.

However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

Fusion Family and Youth Projects will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or young person.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Reporting concerns about poor practice from Fusion Family and Youth Projects staff:

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice the Designated Safeguarding Lead will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chairperson who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

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Reporting concerns about suspected abuse:

Any suspicion that a child or young person has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child / young person in question and any others who may be at risk.

The Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer the allegation to the LADO. The LADO has a countywide responsibility for managing allegations against adults who work or volunteer with children across all settings.

LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01223 727 967 (Monday to Friday during office opening hours)

Telephone: 01733 234 724 (Emergency Duty Team - out of hours queries)

The parents or carers of the child / young person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social care. The Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead should also notify the Chairperson who will deal with any media enquiries related to the allegation.

If the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chairperson or in his/her absence the Vice Chairperson who will refer the allegation to Social Care.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social care or the police immediately.

Confidentiality and information Sharing with regards to Safeguarding Enquiries:

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

This includes the following people:

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- the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead
- the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- the person making the allegation.
- social care/police
- the chairperson of Fusion Family and Youth Projects

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek social care advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Enquiries and further action:

Internal enquiries and possible suspension

The Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Trustees will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Trustees must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. **The welfare of the child or young person should remain of paramount importance throughout.**

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, young people,

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parents and members of staff may need.

Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, www.bacp.co.uk

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children or young people).

Where such an allegation is made, Fusion Family and Youth Projects will follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social care or the police. This is because other children and young people, either within or outside projects, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Bullying

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children and young people to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately).
- Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.

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- Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- impose appropriate sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by staff and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the Fusion Family and Youth Projects Designated Safeguarding Lead as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

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Reviewing the Policy and Procedure:

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually or before if there are any changes in legislation, changes within the service or concerns raised. Any changes to the policies will then be shared and read by all staff and volunteers.

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| This policy was adopted by: Fusion Family and Youth Projects Family and Youth Projects | Date: September 2025 |
| To be reviewed: September 2026 | Signed:  |

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