



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding Lead at Future Roots – Julie Plumley

Safeguarding Deputies – Sonya Mogg and Darren Rowe

Jerry Brady – Board Member with Safeguarding background

It is the policy of **FUTURE ROOTS**, registered at Rylands Farm, Boyshill Drove, Holnest, Sherborne DT9 5PS, to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from any form of abuse, whether emotional, physical, sexual or neglect. The Board of Directors of Future Roots, registered at Rylands Care Farm, Boyshill Drove, Holnest, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 5PS, recognise their duty of care to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The child protection policy for Future Roots is based on a template provided by the Dorset Safeguarding and Standards Team; it reflects the Pan Dorset Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures (on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Website) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2018.

Safeguarding Policy

Future Roots recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount; the needs and wishes of each child will be put first. Throughout this document child/young person refers to a young person under the age of 18.

We take seriously our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in our care.

Safeguarding Young People is everyone's responsibility. "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018, HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

- Protecting young people from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances



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It is Dorset Safeguarding Standard (recommended by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board) that Board Members receive an annual report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Nominated Director in order to help monitor compliance with statutory responsibilities. The Board have quarterly meeting where safeguard is a regular agenda item.

All young people have the right to be safeguarded from harm or exploitation whatever their

- Age
- Health or disability
- Gender or sexual orientation
- Race, religion, belief or first language
- Political or immigration status

Policy Statement

- To provide an environment where people feel valued, respected, safe and secure
- Every participant shall feel supported and represent those with greatest need
- To recognise children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- To prevent harm and take action where appropriate.
- To be mindful of the principles of proportion and take the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk.
- To work in partnership with parents, carers, other agencies and government departments responsible for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- To be accountable and transparent in delivering safeguarding.
- To appoint an appropriate person to be responsible for safeguarding of all those associated with this policy.
- To ensure that the procedures relating to safeguarding are robust, fit for purpose, effective and carried out in an appropriate manner.
- To ensure that all staff, volunteers and others who work with, or on behalf of children, young people and vulnerable adults are competent, confident and safe to do so.
- To recruit staff and volunteers using the Safer Recruitment guidelines.
- To ensure that all staff and, where appropriate, volunteers, participate in regular safeguarding training to level 3 standard (at least every 3 years, or when there are changes in the law, policy or procedures).
- To review policy and procedures annually or as deemed necessary with regard to changes in the law, recommendations or government guidance.



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- To ensure that all those who work for or represent Future Roots activities are aware of the underpinning principles of: The Children Act 1989 & 2004: Safeguarding Adults: National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in Adult Protection 2005: Data Protection Act 1998: Human Rights Act 1998: Mental Capacity Act 2005 & Code of Practice.
- Policy should be read in conjunction with “Working Together to Safeguard Children” July 2018

Procedures

Future Roots is committed to ensuring effective, careful and a quick response to any concerns about physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults. To this end these procedures will be strictly adhered to at all times.

Staff

- With regard to the Safer Recruitment guidelines, references will be taken up; a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be carried out; and verification of previous work history.
- Have regard for the “Rehabilitation of Offenders Act”, making applicants aware that positions are exempt from this act.
- Have a probationary period of 6 months for new employees.
- All staff are made aware of the named people responsible for safeguarding at Future Roots: this person is **Julie Plumley (Director) or Sonya Mogg (Deputy) or Darren Rowe (Deputy)**.
- All staff will be inducted into Future Roots safeguarding procedures. They should know how to react following disclosure, including reporting method.
- All staff will be supplied with and expected to read “Child Protection, a Brief Introduction”, and other materials appertaining to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Team meetings will regularly include safeguarding updates and training.
- Formal safeguarding training will be carried out every 3 years.
- Supervision will include discussion about low level safeguarding concerns.
- Provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Seek advice from Dorset Safeguarding Children’s Board/Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board if needed.
- Exercise our duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 by ensuring that all staff attend “Prevent” training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour and by assessing the risk of our young people being drawn into terrorism



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- Appointing at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure there is always someone available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Making sure all staff and volunteers are aware of and committed to the safeguarding policy and children protection procedures and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- Sharing information about young people safeguarding concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving young people and their parents/carers appropriately
- Acknowledging and actively promoting that multi agency working is the best way to promote the welfare of young people and protect them from harm
- Taking the correct action, in accordance with Dorset Safeguarding Children Board inter agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse
- Keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and young people protection records
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements and also making sure that at least one appointment panel member has undertaken safer recruitment training
- Providing effective management for staff through induction, support and regular update training appropriate to role
- Adopting a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/young people relationships and communications including the use of social media
- Ensuring our online safety process includes appropriate filters and monitoring systems
- Ensuring staff and volunteers understand about “whistleblowing” and how to escalate concerns about young people or staff if they think the right action has not been taken to safeguard young people
- Promoting a culture in which staff feel able to report to senior leaders what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the organisation Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken
- Dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance

Volunteers and visitors

Staff and volunteers at Future Roots understand the importance of taking appropriate action and working in partnership with young people, their parents/carers and other agencies in order to safeguard young people and promote their welfare.

The purpose of this policy is to:



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- Afford protection for all young people
- Enable staff and volunteers to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people
- Promote a culture which makes this organisation a safe place to learn and in which young people feel safe

This policy applies to all staff including regular volunteers and anyone else working on behalf of Future Roots

- Visitors to all Future Roots sites will be asked for identification before being admitted if they are not known to staff.
- All visitors must be recorded in the “Visitors” book and not left alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- All volunteers will have DBS checks and will not be left in a supervisory role.
- All volunteers will be expected to abide by the principles and procedures of this policy and refer any concerns they may have to the appropriate member of staff responsible for safeguarding: Julie Plumley

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm

What is significant harm?

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of young people. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the young persons physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and in each case require discussion with the statutory agencies: Children’s Social Care and Police.

Purpose of these procedures

These procedures explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a young person is or might be suffering harm. A “young person” is a person under 18 years but the principles of these procedures apply to all pupils at this organisation, including those over 18.

Responsibilities and Roles



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All adults at Future Roots have an individual responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people by taking appropriate action. This includes taking action where there are child protection concerns.

The Board of Directors are three to give advice and support safeguarding practice.

Future Roots has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is the person who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding. Any concerns about young people should be discussed with referrer, to decide action, including referring to Children’s Social Care or Police as appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at Future Roots is Julie Plumley

Future Roots also has two Deputy Safeguarding Leads and they are Sonya Mogg and Darren Rowe.

In addition, Dorset Children’s Social Care can provide advice and guidance on safeguarding and child protection matters.

All action is taken in line with the following guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) – published by HM Government
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Safeguarding Procedures & Guidance, accessed through the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website www.dorsetlscb.co.uk
- What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused – Government Guidance (2015)

Responding to the signs or suspicions of abuse

Recognising abuse is not easy, and it is not Future Roots staff or volunteers’ job to decide whether or not abuse has taken place or if a person is at significant risk. This is the role of the statutory services. We do, however, have a responsibility to act if there are concerns about a person’s safety or welfare.

It is important that the person responding to this concern recognises that there is a different method of response for children and young people to that of vulnerable adults.

Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse:

DO	DON'T
✓ Stay calm	✗ Make promises you cannot keep
✓ Listen carefully and note accurately what is said	✗ Interrogate the person or ask leading questions
✓ Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others	✗ Cast doubt on what the person has told you



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Allow the person to continue at his/her own pace✓ Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer✓ Reassure the person that they are doing the right thing in telling you✓ Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared✓ Take further action immediately✓ Record in writing what was said using the person's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated✓ Contact the person responsible for safeguarding – Julie Plumley – or in her absence the Site/Duty Manager. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Interrupt or change the subject✗ Make the person feel responsible for the abuse
✗ Fail to act |
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What is child abuse?

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2015).

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 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 young person 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 young people. These may include interactions that are



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beyond the young person'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 cyberbullying), causing young people frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a young person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child person or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the young person 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 young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a young person 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 young people.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance use. 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 young person 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 young person's basic emotional needs.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: (see bullying policy)

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;



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- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

It is especially important that any report is not passed off as “banter”, part of growing up or “having a laugh”.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of Future Roots and/or can occur between young people outside the organisation. All staff should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of young people should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a young person’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any other time. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Recognising Child Abuse – signs and symptoms

Staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of young people who may be in need of help or protection. It is the responsibility of staff members to familiarise themselves with the signs and symptoms.

Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of Future Roots to decide whether or not child abuse has actually taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do, however, have a clear individual responsibility to act if they have a concern about a young person’s welfare or safety or if a young person talks about (discloses) abuse. They should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” and always act in the best interests of the young person.

Allegations made by young people about other young people, including peer on peer abuse

If one young person causes harm to another, it is not always necessary for it to be dealt with through a referral to Children’s Social Care: sexual experimentation within “normal parameters”, bullying and fighting, for example, are not generally seen as child protection issues. All incidents will, however, be taken seriously. The referring agency will be contacted and appropriate action, to make sure all young people feel safe will be taken.

The nature and severity of the allegation or concern will determine whether staff will implement Future Roots anti bullying or other procedures or whether a referral needs to be made to social workers or the Police. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted if there is any doubt about the right course of action and a log filled in.



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A referral to Children's Social Care will be made in all cases of domestic abuse relating to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, or coercive control, in their intimate relationships.

A referral to Children's Social Care will be made if a young person displays sexually harmful behaviour. This involves one or more young people engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. It is also considered harmful if it involves coercion or threats of violence or if one of the young person is much older than the other.

The process for managing sexually harmful behaviour can be found in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the DSCB website. In brief, a multi-agency meeting should be convened by Children's Social Care following a referral and an action plan agreed.

Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as "normal" between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Sexting involves images or videos which are indecent or of a sexual nature generated by young people under the age of 18 or of young people under the age of 18, shared via a mobile phone, handheld device or website.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to Future Roots attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate Future Roots staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young person involved (if appropriate).
- Referring agency should be informed at an early stage
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately

The incident would then be dealt with using the guidelines of the UKCCIS

Young people engaging in under – age sexual activity

Sexual activity where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of young people who are consenting partners of a similar age is not usual. Designated Safeguarding Leads will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer or take advice from social workers, taking into account such things as any imbalance of power, wide difference in ages or development stages etc.



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Where a young person is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, so must be reported to social workers in every case.

The inter-agency safeguarding procedures, on the DSCB website, have more information about under age sexual activity.

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Child Sexual Exploitation

This form of abuse involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money, mobile phones) as a result of their performing and/or another or others performing on them sexual acts. It can occur through the use of technology without the young person's immediate recognition; e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet / mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

Recognition of child sexual exploitation is part of staff training. We note that any young person may be at risk of this form of abuse, regardless of family background or other circumstances, and can experience significant harm to physical and mental health.

Due to the grooming methods used by abusers, it is common for young people not to recognise they are being abused and may feel they are "in a relationship" and acting voluntarily.

Any concerns about child sexual exploitation will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding who will take appropriate action which might include completing a risk assessment form. The form and more detailed local procedures are in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the DSCB website.

Criminal exploitation follows the same procedure and is equally important.

Forms of abuse linked to culture, faith or belief

All staff at Future Roots will promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Some forms of abuse are linked to these and staff should strive to suspend professional disbelief (i.e. that they "could not happen here") and to report promptly any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will seek further advice from statutory agencies, prior to contacting parents/ carers.

Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriages is also illegal.

So, called "honour-based" violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It can exist in all communities and cultures and occurs when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. Females are predominantly, but not exclusively, the



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victims and the violence is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family or community members. All forms of so-called honour-based violence are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and should be referred accordingly.

Radicalisation and extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Extremism is defined by HM Government as “Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”

Future Roots recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different from safeguarding against any other vulnerability.

We promote acceptance of difference, tolerance and diversity. Young people are encouraged to share their views and to understand that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

We recognise that young people with low aspirations are more vulnerable to radicalisation and therefore we strive to equip our young people with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Any concerns about young people becoming radicalised or being drawn into extremism will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will speak to referring safeguarding lead and will prompt advice from the Police by e-mailing the Safeguarding Referral Unit:

sru@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Staff at Future Roots are encouraged to complete on-line Prevent training.

Children missing education

We recognise that a young person going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including the specific types of abuse detailed above and/or travelling to conflict zones.

Referring agency will always be informed of the absence.

Private Fostering

Any child residing with a family that is not a close blood relative for more than 28 days is considered to be in a Private Fostering arrangement that should be monitored by Social Care. There is a mandatory duty to inform the local authority of such situations and the DSL should be informed immediately if it is suspected that such an arrangement is in place and the referrer will be informed immediately.



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Taking action

Where physical injuries have been observed, these will be carefully noted but not photographed. The staff member will not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the young person's body.

Any disclosures or indicators of abuse will be reported verbally to the DSL or Deputy straightaway or, where they are not available and concerns are immediate, ensure a referral is made without delay to Children's Social Care. In Dorset, from September 2016, these teams are known as "help and protection" teams.

Where the young person already has an allocated social worker, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly.

A written record will then be made on a concern log form of what was said, including the young person's own words, as soon as possible and given to DSL.

If the young person can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their views will be taken into account, Future Roots has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure the young person's safety and that of other young people.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

Where there is no disclosure by a young person, but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together and that s/he makes a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

The Dorset Safeguarding Children Board's Threshold Document should be used to help clarify the pathway required for a young person.

A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL should expect some feedback, although confidentially might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome s/he can ask to reconsider, and if following this, s/he still believes the correct action has not been taken, will refer the concerns directly to social workers.

Remember

Any suspicion or concern that a young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, **MUST** be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concerns will be reported without delay to the DSL or a Deputy. During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or a Deputy should always be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. However, if for whatever reason they are not available, the staff member will discuss their concerns as soon as possible with either



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- Another senior member of staff or
- The duty worker in the Help and Protection Team – single point of contact (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub from Spring 2017)

Anyone can make a referral, not just the DSL's.

It is important that everyone at Future Roots aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for making a judgment about whether or not abuse has occurred and should not conduct an "investigation" to establish whether a young person is telling the truth. That is a task for social workers and the Police following a referral to them of concern about a young person.

This applies regardless of the alleged "perpetrator"; whether the young person raises concerns about a family member of someone outside the farm, a member of staff or another young person.

A careful record will be made of what has been seen/heard that has led to the concerns and the date, time location and people who were present. As far as possible, staff should record verbatim what was said and by whom. The record will be passed to the DSL.

The DSL will keep a record of the conversation with the duty worker and other social workers, noting what actions will be taken and by whom, giving the date and time of the referral. The referral will be confirmed in writing on the inter-agency referral form (available on the DSCB website) as soon as possible and at least within 48 hours. Any pre-existing assessments such as through the Common Assessment Framework should be attached.

A child protection file will be started in the young person's name, where the young person is not already known to social workers. If a file already exists, the new information will be added to the chronology.

Response from Children's Social Care to a Future Roots referral

Referral

Once a referral is received by the team, a manager will decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a young person is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided more quickly, and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals and other agencies as appropriate (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The DSL should be told within three working days of the outcome of the referral. If this does not happen s/he will contact the duty worker again.

Assessment



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All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the young people themselves as far as practicable. Assessments should show analysis, be focussed on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days from the point of referral. Staff have a responsibility to contribute fully to the assessment if required.

S47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)

The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the young person will always be seen as part of that process and sometimes without parents' knowledge or permission. On occasions, this will mean the young person is jointly interviewed by the Police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a video-recording of the interview is made.

The Child Protection Conference

If, following the S47 enquiries, the concerns are sustained and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and the DSL will attend if possible. This person will produce a written report in the correct format (a pro forma is available on the DSCB website). This will be shared with the young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

More information is in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures ("Child Protection Conferences") on the DSCB website.

If the DSL disagrees with the decisions made by the social workers regarding the outcome of the referral, the conclusions of the assessment or any actions taken, the matter should be discussed and if necessary escalated to more senior managers (under the escalation policy available on the DSCB website), particularly if the young person's situation does not seem to be improving. Escalation procedure in file.

Responding to allegations or concerns about staff or volunteers

Rigorous recruitment and selection procedures and adhering to Future Roots code of conduct and safer practice guidance will hopefully mean that there are relatively few allegations against or concerns about staff or volunteers. However, if a member of staff, or any other person, has any reason to believe that another adult has acted inappropriately or abused a young person, they will take action by reporting to the DSL. Even though it may seem difficult to believe that a colleague may be unsuitable to work with children, the risk is far too serious for any member of staff to dismiss such a suspicion without taking action.

If the allegation/ concern is about the Director, the person with concerns will contact the Board of Directors or the Designated Officer (also known as the LADO) in the Local Authority Safeguarding and Standards Team.



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In all cases of allegations against staff and volunteer, the Director and The Chair of the Board will contact the Designated Officer (LADO) without delay.

Children with special education needs who are disabled

Research shows that children with special educational needs and who are disabled are especially vulnerable to abuse and adults who work with them need to be vigilant and take extra care when interpreting apparent signs of abuse or neglect.

Additional barriers can exist for adults who work with such children, in respect of recognising abuse and neglect. These can include

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the young person's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEN and who are disabled can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying – without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

These child protection procedures will be followed if a young person with special educational needs or who is disabled discloses abuse or there are indicators of abuse or neglect. There are no different or separate procedures for such young people.

Safer Working Practice

All adults who come into contact with young people at the farm will behave at all times in a professional manner which secures the best outcomes for young people and also prevents allegations being made. Detailed advice on safer working practice can be found in the Future Roots Code of Conduct.

We promote a culture whereby members of Future Roots should feel able to raise with the Director or any member of the leadership team, any concerns about staff conduct. If the reporter feels that the issue has not been addressed, they should contact a Board Member.

Training

Child protection will be part of induction for all staff and regular volunteers new to the farm. They will be given a copy of this policy within the staff handbook.

This will be followed up by basic child protection training that equips individuals to recognise and respond appropriately to concerns about young people every 3 years.

Staff will have training in preventing radicalisation and extremism (Prevent) – either by attending a Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) or completing an on-line course.



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The team will have learning from local and national serious cases when the learning becomes available.

When DSLs and Deputies take up the role, they will attend enhanced (Level 3) training – provided through the DSCB multi-agency course. They must be updated at 3 yearly intervals after that.

Possible Indicators of Abuse

The following information is not designed to turn Future Roots staff in experts, but it will help them to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse. The examples below are not meant to form an exhaustive list; Designated Safeguarding Leads and other staff will find it helpful to refer to Government Advice “What to do if you are worried about a child being abused” (2015) and the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board website.

Physical Abuse

Most young people will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some young people, however, will have bruising which is less likely to have been caused accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained, or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical information for a young person when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on young people with different skin tones or from different ethnic groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse can include:

- Bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- Bruising that are seen away from bony prominences
- Bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- Multiple bruises in clusters
- Multiple bruises of uniform shape
- Bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks, fingertips or a belt buckle

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness must be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse can include:

- Cigarette burns



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- Adult bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Missing school
- Running away from home

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear otherwise well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. *Young people who live in households where there is domestic violence often sufferer emotional abuse.* Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse can include:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, eg in hospital or away from the parent's care.
- Sudden speech disorders
- Developmental delay, ether in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour, eg sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self harm
- Fear of parents being approached

Sexual Abuse



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Adults who use young people to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. It is important to remember that children can also be sexually abused by other children (i.e. those under 18).

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the young person's behaviour which may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore that they are listened to, taken seriously and appropriate action taken promptly.

The physical signs of sexual abuse can include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse can include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Missing school
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Alcohol / substance/ drug use



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- Suddenly having explained sources of money
- Not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or other children

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect can include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Being constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect can include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

It is important that adults at Future Roots recognise that providing compensatory care might address the immediate and presenting issue but could cover up or inhibit the recognition of neglect in all aspects of a young person's life. Compensatory care is defined as "providing a child or young person, on a regular basis, help or assistance with basic needs with the aim of redressing deficits in parental care". This might involve, for example, providing each day a substitute set of clothing because those from home are dirty, or showering a young person whose personal hygiene or presentation is such that it is affecting his/her interaction with peers. It does not include isolated or irregular support such as giving lunch money or washing a young person who has had an "accident". If any adult at Future Roots finds he/she is regularly attending to one or more aspects of a young person's basic needs, then this will prompt a discussion with the DSL.

The general rule is: the younger the young person, the higher the risk in terms of their immediate health. However, serious neglect of older young people is often overlooked, on the assumption that they have the ability to care for themselves and have made a "choice" to neglect themselves. Lack of engagement with services should be seen as a potential indicator of neglect.



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Future Roots staff should be mindful of the above and discuss any concerns with the DSL who will take the appropriate action in accordance with the inter-agency neglect guidance on the DSCB website.

Record keeping: Best Practice – To be read and followed by all DSLs and Deputies

Introduction

The importance of good, clear child welfare and child protection record keeping has been highlighted repeatedly in national and local Serious Case Reviews.

It is the DSL's responsibility to ensure that young people protection files, access, storage and transfer meet the required professional standards as detailed in this document.

The common law of confidentiality, Data Protection and Human Rights principles must be adhered to when obtaining, processing or sharing personal or sensitive information or records. In summary, the Data Protection Act 2018 requires that records should be securely kept, accurate, relevant up to date and kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which they were made.

Record to be made by an adult receiving a disclosure of abuse (when a child talk about abuse)

This record should be made as soon as possible after the individual hearing the disclosure has reported it verbally to the DSL. The facts, not opinions (unless of relevance), should be accurately recorded in a non-judgemental way. It is important to remember that expressing an opinion as to whether the young person is telling the truth is not helpful and can prejudice how a case proceeds.

The record should include the following:

- The young person's name, gender and date of birth
- Date and time of conversation
- What was the context and who was present during the disclosure?
- What did the young person say? – Verbatim if possible
- What questions were asked? – verbatim
- Responses to questions – verbatim
- Any observations concerning a young person's demeanour and any injuries
- The name of the person to whom the disclosure was reported
- Printed name and job title of the author, followed by signature and date

The record about a disclosure of abuse should be passed to the DSL and retained in the young person's protection file in its original and contemporaneous form (as it could be used as evidence in court proceedings), even if later typed or if the information is incorporated into a report.



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Future Roots should never ask young people, regardless of their involvement in a child protection matter (i.e. the subject of an allegation, a witness or the alleged “perpetrator”), to write out their “statements” of what has happened. In some cases, this could have the unintended consequences of jeopardising a child protection investigation. This applies regardless of whether the incident(s) took place within our outside farm.

Records kept by the Designated Safeguarding Lead

As stated at 2.2 above it is useful and recommended practice for Future Roots staff to have one standard pro forma for recording all “welfare “and child protection concerns.

Concerns which initially seem trivial may turn out to be vital pieces of information later, so it is important to give as much detail as possible. A concern raised may not progress further than a conversation by the DSL with the parent, or, at the other end of the scale, could lead to matters being heard in court.

Starting a Future Roots Child Protection File

A Future Roots Child Protection File does not necessarily mean that the young person is or has been the subject of a child protection conference or plan. “Child Protection File” denotes a high level of Future Roots concern which has warranted referral to/involvement of, and in most cases assessment by, young people care social workers.

Future Roots child protection files are never “closed” or de-categorised. Once Future Roots has started a child protection file, the chronology is maintained so that any future concerns can be considered in the context of past events, even if Social Care ceased involvement.

Note – if there is an allocated social worker because a child is disabled or a young carer and there are no child protection concerns then a child protection file should not be started.

The format of Child Protection Files

It is helpful if individual files have a front sheet with key information about the young person and contact details of parents/carers, social worker and any other relevant professionals.

If the young person is “Looked After” the front sheet should include important information about legal status, parental responsibility, arrangements for contact with birth parents and extended family, levels of authority delegated to carers and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the young person.

If a young person is or was subject of a child protection plan or in care/looked after, this should be highlighted in some way to make it immediately obvious to anyone assessing the record.

It is multi-agency standard that children’s child protection files must have at the front an up to date chronology of significant incidents or events and subsequent actions/outcomes. Maintaining the



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chronology is an important part of the DSL role; it aids the DSL, Deputy and others to see the central issues “at a glance” and helps to identify patterns of events and behaviours.

It should make sense as a “stand alone” document; anyone else reading the chronology should be able to follow easily what the concerns are/have been, whether the concerns have escalated and why plus the actions taken by the school to support and protect the young person. This will be particularly useful for professionals involved in collating information for Serious Case Reviews and for parents/young people if they view the record.

Once a chronology is started it should be updated as appropriate even if Social Care later ceases involvement.

The file should be well organised and include, as appropriate, Future Roots Concern logs; copies of correspondence, minutes of child protection conferences, documents relating to young people in care/“looked after” etc. The DSL will decide which relevant information which pre-dates the starting of the child protection file, such as CAF or other pastoral care documentation, will also be included.

Storage

All records relating to child protection concerns are sensitive and confidential so will be kept in a secure (i.e. locked at all times) filing cabinet, separate from other Future Roots files, and accessible through the DSL, the Deputy (ies) and other staff.

The young persons general file should be marked in some way (e.g. a yellow star) to indicate that a child protection file exists. All staff that may need to consult a young person’s file should be made aware of what the symbol means and to speak to the DSL if necessary if they see this symbol and have concerns. For example, a member of the office staff who is looking in the main file for a parent’s contact details because of unexplained absence might decide to report this to the DSL if they see the indicator, in case the absence is significant.

Sharing of and access to child protection records

The young person who is subject of a child protection record has the right to access the file, unless to do so would affect his/her health or well being or that of another person or would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation or a section 47 assessment (which relates to significant harm) under the Children Act 1989.

Parents (i.e. those with parental responsibility in law) are entitled to see their young people’s protection file, with the same exemptions as apply to the young people’s right to access the record. Note that an older young person may be entitled to refuse access to the record by his/her parents. As a guide, this applies to young people who are 12 years of age or above, if they are of normal development maturity.



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References by name to young people other than the young person who is the subject of the file should be removed when disclosing records, unless consent is obtained from the individual/s concerned (or their parents/carer on their behalf). Care must be taken to ensure all identifying information is removed from the copy of the record to be shared.

Always seek advice from the Dorset Data Protection Officer (01305 225175) if there are any concerns or doubt about a young person or parents reading records. However, it is generally good practice to share all information held unless there is a valid reason to withhold it e.g. to do so would place the young person or any other person at risk of harm. Any requests to see the young persons record should be made in writing to give time for confidential information, such as any details of other young people, to be removed.

If the record to be disclosed contains information about an adult professional, that information can be disclosed if it relates to the performance by that person of their job or other official duties. However, if the reference refers to that individual's private life, it should be removed (unless this relates to a child protection matter which is relevant to the record to be disclosed).

Child protection information should not normally be shared with professionals other than those from Social Care, the Police, Health or the Local Authority. Information should not be released to parents' solicitors on request; advice should be sought from Future Roots legal advisor in such cases.

All safeguarding concerns, incidents and referrals shall be recorded in writing by Julie Plumley or, in her absence, the Site/Duty Manager. This record must be completed in all situations and kept secure.

Policies and procedures to be read in conjunction with this policy and procedures:

Whistle-blowing

Complaints Procedures

Employment

Child Protection: A Brief Introduction

Behaviour and Bullying

Dorset Safeguarding Children Board Guidance

Prevent Policy

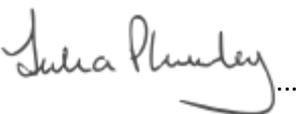
Safer recruitment Policy



Safeguarding Policy

Contact numbers to report a concern:

Children and young people: 01258 472652 / 01305 221450 / 01202 657279 (out of hours)

Signed: ...

Name: Julie Plumley

Date: 01.02.19

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as and when there are any changes in the law, procedures or processes within the organisation.

Revision Dates

Created;	October 2008
Current Update;	01 st February 2019
Next Update;	February 2020