



Safeguarding Children Policy

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Safeguarding Children Policy

Please note that this policy is a template and should be amended to fit your requirements.

This policy is a template to help you design a clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy that protects your children and staff members from harm and establishes effective accountability and reporting procedures at Assure Care Homes Ltd.

Your safeguarding policy should be tailored to the area your service operates in and should tackle the key issues from the area. As such, this policy should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals in order to remain effective in response to your location's key issues.

The policy should be written in line with your Location Risk Assessment, which itself should be routinely reviewed for any changes in your home's location.

The 'Key Safeguarding Areas' section of this template will cover a number of safeguarding risks that could apply to an area. Select those that are identified in your Location Risk Assessment as the most severe risks in your area (or add any that are not mentioned) and remove those that are not relevant. This is to ensure your safeguarding policy is bespoke to your service and the environment of your home.

To find further information on your area's key issues, you can use the following links:

When you have finished your safeguarding policy, **delete this box**. Your policy should begin with 'Policy Statement'. Likewise, customise any highlighted sections and remove the coloured highlight once you are finished.

QUALITY STANDARDS

Legislation	Details
Regulation 11: The Positive Relationship	Staff should understand what they must do to prevent bullying of children by other children or adults. Staff should be able to recognise and address different types of abuse such as peer abuse, cyber-bullying and bullying in a day-to-day relationship in the home.

Regulation 12: The Protection of Children	Staff safeguarding skills should include identifying signs that children may be at risk and supporting children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the home. Staff should support children in asking for help to stay safe and ensure that the home is an environment that supports this.
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This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- Abuse & Violence by Child Policy
- Allegation Against a Staff Member Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Child Criminal Exploitation Policy
- Child Sexual Exploitation Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Forced Marriage Policy
- FGM Policy
- Gangs and Youth Violence Policy
- Handling Challenging Behaviour Policy
- Illicit Substances Policy
- Matching and Referrals Process
- Missing from Home Policy
- Monitoring and Surveillance Policy
- Notification of Serious Events Policy
- Prevent (Counterterrorism) Policy
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Related Legislation

- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Care Standards Act 2000
- The Children Act (1989)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- Child Sexual Exploitation: Guide for Practitioners (DfE 2017)
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)
- Modern Slavery Act (2015)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR)

Policy Statement`

Policy Aims

This policy defines the procedures to be followed upon where it is alleged or suspected or has been discovered that a child has been abused by a third party. There are additional specific procedures that address allegations being made against a staff member, use of the internet, and whistle-blowing.

This policy aims to protect and support children from harm and maltreatment by giving the staff team a clear and concise understanding of the safeguarding picture that covers our children's lives and well-being, and ensuring they can reach the right people in the right timeframes with the right information.

This policy and the supporting policies are available on request from Assure Care Homes Ltd. We believe safeguarding is a universal duty as a service and parents, key stakeholders and children all have a part to play in safeguarding. All staff, including volunteers, are expected to understand the safeguarding and whistle-blowing policies and so they will form part of their induction and training package.

PRINCIPLES OF CHILDREN PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING:

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to protect children and young people from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of harm. It encompasses promoting their welfare, ensuring

their safety, and creating an environment that nurtures their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

The fundamental responsibility of Assure Care Homes Ltd is to safeguard and protect the children in our care from harm and abuse to ensure they can thrive and grow.

The following principles guide our safeguarding and child protection practices:

- The child's welfare is paramount, and every child, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation, has the right to protection from harm and exploitation.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, listened to, and taken seriously. Their opinions should be valued and considered in matters that affect them.
- All staff members and individuals associated with our organisation are responsible for reporting concerns about a child's welfare and taking appropriate action to ensure their safety.
- Our organisation partners with families, local authorities, and relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under our care.

Forms of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse involves deliberately causing harm or injury to a child. It may include hitting, shaking, punching, burning, or using excessive force to discipline or control the child.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse refers to the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, causing severe and adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve constant criticism, belittling, or humiliating the child and denying them love, affection, and attention.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves engaging a child in any sexual activity, whether or not the child understands what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as exposing a child to pornography or encouraging them to engage in sexual acts.
- **Bullying:** Bullying includes repeated, intentional, and hurtful actions aimed at causing harm, distress, or intimidation to a child. It can occur in person or online (cyberbullying).
- **Online Safety:** We recognise the risks of online activities and social media. Assure Care Homes Ltd appropriately educates children, parents, and staff members about online safety, including protecting personal information and reporting harmful content or behaviour.

- **Radicalisation:** refers to adopting extreme beliefs or ideologies that may lead to harmful or violent actions. We are vigilant in identifying signs of radicalisation and providing appropriate support and intervention when necessary.
- **Neglect:** Neglect occurs when a child's survival and development needs are unmet. This includes physical neglect (e.g., inadequate nutrition, clothing, or shelter), medical neglect (failure to provide essential medical care), educational neglect (failure to ensure appropriate education), and emotional neglect (failure to provide affection, emotional support, and attention).
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** Child Sexual Exploitation involves manipulating or coercing a child into engaging in sexual activities. Perpetrators may use grooming, bribery, threats, or emotional manipulation to control and exploit the child sexually.
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** Child Criminal Exploitation involves manipulating or coercing a child to engage in criminal activities, often involving gangs or organised crime groups.
- **Domestic Abuse:** Domestic abuse involves controlling, coercive, threatening, or violent behaviour between adults in intimate or family relationships. Children may be directly or indirectly affected by witnessing domestic abuse.
- **Discriminatory Abuse:** Discriminatory abuse involves maltreatment based on a child's race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.
- **Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking:** Modern slavery and human trafficking involve exploiting individuals, including children, for forced labour, domestic servitude, or sexual exploitation.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Female Genital Mutilation involves procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- **Hate Crime:** Hate crime refers to criminal acts committed against individuals or groups based on their perceived or actual race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics.
- **Mate Crime:** Mate crime involves the exploitation, manipulation, or abuse of individuals with disabilities by people they consider friends or acquaintances.
- **Restraint:** Restraint should only be used as a last resort and when necessary to prevent a child from causing harm to themselves or others. Restraint should be used under appropriate guidance and regulations and aim to minimise child harm.

Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for our organisation's child protection. Their duties include providing training on safeguarding and child protection to staff with direct contact with children, liaising with relevant authorities and agencies, maintaining child protection records, and arranging necessary staff training. The designated safeguarding lead takes immediate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk upon receiving a report of abuse by a staff member or any other individual. They must:

- Carry out all necessary child protection/safeguarding-related inquiries, procedures and investigations;
- Ensure secure and confidential record-keeping on safeguarding matters, that a "need to know" confidentiality policy is preserved on such matters and that all staff, volunteers, trainees and management committee members apply themselves fully to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR);
- Develop the systems and structures within which it is possible to deliver the best possible support for our children;
- Encourage a culture and ethos for the home that eliminates any sort of abuse;
- Liaise with social services and the Police in the relevant boroughs on child protection/safeguarding matters, both formally and informally;
- Report allegations and suspicions of abuse to the appropriate authorities;
- Ensure there are adequate and appropriate induction and training for all staff, volunteers, trainees and management committee members on safeguarding matters;
- Ensure that all activities carried out by Assure Care Homes Ltd satisfy safeguarding requirements with regard to personnel, practices and premises;
- Check and countersigns all incident reports made by staff making such reference to outside agencies as is appropriate.
- Report on the implementation of safeguarding policies at all Assure Care Homes Ltd management committee meetings.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Management Responsibilities

In order to safeguard the children in our care, the management of Assure Care Homes Ltd will ensure:

- That there is effective joint working between all staff along with all the relevant agencies and professionals. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is a shared responsibility and depends on everyone working together and sharing information.
- That each child is supported to understand what abuse is, that there is a culture of listening to the child and they have clear ways to report any known or suspected abuse or neglect on their behalf or that of their peers.
- That each child has an individual risk assessment conducted so staff are aware of any known or suspected safeguarding risks, and that this is updated and followed if anything changes;
- There is a structured procedure which is followed by all staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- The Home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.
- That the premises used for the purposes of the Home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded.
- That the premises used for the purposes of the Home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.
- The effectiveness of the Home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.
- Only properly trained and screened staff with a valid DBS are ever allowed to work alone with a child.
- The staff are supported to:
 - receive appropriate training at the induction stage in recognising and responding to safeguarding issues;
 - Assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;
 - Help each child to understand how to keep themselves safe;
 - Have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;

- Manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;
- understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;
- Take effective action whenever there is a concern about a child's welfare and
- Are familiar with and act in accordance with our child protection policies.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a duty of care to children and must always act in the best interests of a child. Staff are expected to remain vigilant to possible signs of abuse and promptly record and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. Keeping such concerns to oneself is unacceptable, including concerns about the conduct of other staff members. Raising genuine concerns or preventing them from being reported is fully supported, and any victimisation of staff for doing so is treated as a disciplinary matter. All staff must ensure that they:

- Can identify signs of abuse;
- Support Children to understand what abuse is and how to report it;
- Familiarise themselves with the risk assessment and care plan of any child in their care;
- Always listen to children and report any safeguarding suspicions, allegations, disclosures or discoveries;
- Are aware of and follow the correct protocols and procedures when safeguarding issues are suspected, disclosed, or discovered;
- Reinforce positive messages about those who seek help; it is a sign of strength;
- Build positive, trusting and open relationships with the children.

Identifying the signs of abuse or neglect

Abuse or neglect is not always easy to identify, staff are likely to have some information but not the whole picture. All staff needs to be aware of the potential signs of child abuse.

The first indications that a child is being abused may be:

- Remarks made by the child, their family or friends;
- Changes in a child's appearance, behaviour or demeanour;
- Changes in a child's mental health or general well-being, (for example, they may display aggressive behaviour or deliberate self-harm);
- Series of events or indicators which, whilst not necessarily of concern in themselves, are of concern when considered together.

Intervening when there are low-level suspicions can help prevent issues from escalating and causing more harm. If a staff member suspects a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse, they must follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. This may involve informing the senior staff member on duty, who then communicates the concern to the designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead initiates the appropriate steps to investigate the concern, ensure the child's safety, and liaise with the appropriate authorities as required.

Assure Care Homes Ltd operates a whistleblowing policy to enable staff members to report any concerns related to safeguarding anonymously if necessary. Staff members who report in good faith are protected from retaliation or victimisation.

Allegations against staff

Any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse or harm must be reported to the most senior staff member on duty or, in their absence, the designated safeguarding lead. As required, the designated safeguarding lead promptly informs the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) of any incident received, ideally within an hour of the allegation being made.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

The LADO for Assure Care Homes Ltd is:[Insert name], they can be contacted via:

[Insert the contact details of your LADO or the relevant LADO reporting procedures for your local area]

[Your local LADO details can be found here:<https://national-lado-network.co.uk/lado-contact-details/>]

If the Manager or the DSL has an allegation made against them, staff should contact the LADO directly.

Where the LADO feels the matter does not need further action, however, the manager feels the matter relates to poor practice, procedures relating to misconduct should be followed.

Assure Care Homes Ltd acknowledges that this is an extremely sensitive issue for staff and assures all staff and persons working on its behalf that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is, or might be, abusing a vulnerable child.

Allegations of Peer-to-peer Abuse

Peer-to-peer abuse can involve multiple victims and suspects. All children must be treated as being at risk. Separation and extra supervision may be required and in situations where significant harm may be a concern, steps to prevent this must be taken by the designated safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with Assure Care Homes Ltd procedures.

For further guidance on procedures for peer-to-peer abuse, see the *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

Response when a safeguarding issue is witnessed

Unknown Body Marks

Small marks, grazes, and bruises are a part of normal life, and these will occur in the child's time with us. When a mark, bruise, or physical change occurs without an apparent reason, a clear, concise recording in the daily log for the child must take place without delay and a body map and the incident report must be handed to the designated safeguarding lead.

The safeguarding lead will then assess the situation and take suitable action.

Receiving suspicion or allegations

Immediate actions should be taken by staff when a child discloses abuse or neglect to themselves or others.

Staff members should:

- Stay calm;
- Listen patiently and non-judgementally;
- Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Let them talk and ask open questions such as, "Is there anything else you want to tell me about this?";
- Reassure the child that you believe them, and they are doing the right thing by telling you;
- Explain what you are going to do next. Concerns must be reported, so don't make promises to keep it a secret;
- Do not make them repeat what they have told you to another staff member;

- Write a factual account of what you have seen or happened immediately following the conversation with the child. Record what was said and how the child appeared when they said it. Use the actual words used, if a child used swear words or slang, write these, don't translate or censor. Keep it factual, not what you think or what you understood them to mean between the lines.

Staff members should not:

- Appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry.
- Make comments or judgments about what is disclosed other than to show general care and concern.
- Press the child for details (unless requested to do so).
- Promise to keep secrets.
- Confront the abuser.
- Risk contaminating evidence.

Staff should follow the safeguarding procedures as outlined below.

Reporting Procedures

[This section must be tailored to your company's organisational routines. You must provide information on who should be contacted, how they should be contacted, any relevant documentation that needs to be completed and the timeframes in which this must be done. These details will be specific to your service and the Local Authority under which it operates. You should also link this to your Notification of Serious Events Policy.]

Reporting a Suspicion or Incident:

- Note down your concerns and any information given to you or witnessed by you.
- It is not necessary or advisable to seek evidence to prove your concerns. By reporting the incident involving the vulnerable child and carefully logging any information given to you at this stage, you will lay the foundations for an effective formal investigation.
- Understand the need not to contaminate or preserve evidence if a crime may have been committed.
- Any member of staff who suspects abuse or notices any of the signs must immediately make their concerns known to the Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, a manager. This should be done within an hour.

- The safeguarding lead or manager should ensure the immediate safety of the child and any other person(s) who may be at risk and then proceed with investigating the allegation.
- They must take action and, where necessary, report the issue to the appropriate authorities.
- Action should also be taken by the Safeguarding lead and/or Manager if it is felt that colleagues are not following the Assure Care Homes Ltd's Safeguarding policy and guidelines.

Urgent Medical Attention

If urgent medical attention is required and there is a suspicion of abuse, the DSL or staff should take the child directly to A&E without delay at the closest hospital. The Safeguarding Children Partnership and the placing authority should also be informed as soon as possible ideally within an hour time frame after the child has finished their disclosure. In cases of suspected sexual abuse, the hospital examination should be delayed if possible until the Police have been informed and medical services have liaised with the Police. At all times there must be a responsible adult with the child.

When in hospital, Assure Care Homes Ltd will support the child to understand the situation and if required can source an advocate to support and guide the child if required.

Notifying Ofsted

Ofsted (CIECSS) should be notified of serious events:

- Death of a child
- Referral of a person working for the home pursuant to section 35 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Staff allegations
- Child involved in child sexual exploitation (CSE) or child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- An incident requiring police involvement that the registered person deems serious
- Protection Enquiry involving a child is instigated or concluded
- An incident involving the use of a measure of restraint on a child
- Any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.

Ofsted's online form should be filled out and submitted 'without delay' within 24 hours of a serious event, and notifications of a young person's death should be reported immediately. Ofsted's online form can be found on gov.uk or by following this link:

- Tell Ofsted about a serious incident in a children's home or secure children's home

Please see our *Notification of Serious Events Policy* for more information.

Reporting Procedures

In all situations, including those in which the cause for concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, it is vitally important to record the details of an allegation or reported incident, regardless of whether or not the concerns are shared with a statutory agency.

As far as possible an accurate note should be made of:

- The full name of the person(s) reporting and to whom reported.
- Observations and discussions as they happen.
- Any judgements, actions and decisions.
- Details of health care/support contacts and any outcomes.
- Results of using a body map to identify specific anatomical areas, marks or injuries.
- The date and time of the incident and disclosure, chronologically recorded.
- The parties who were/might be involved.

The report should be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know. All referrals made to Social Services or the Police should be confirmed in writing and followed up with a copy of the incident report within 24 hrs. Social Services should acknowledge any written referral within one working day of receipt. If no response has been received within 3 working days, contact Social Services again. Record names, dates and times of subsequent calls, emails and letters made to any Social Services staff to whom concerns have been passed. These procedures not only serve to protect Vulnerable Children but also protect employees.

Accurate and comprehensive safeguarding and child protection records are maintained securely. The designated safeguarding lead assesses information sharing on a case-by-case basis, keeping confidentiality in mind. Safeguarding records are reviewed regularly to ensure appropriate actions are taken and advice is updated accordingly.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Support for Those Who Report or Disclose Abuse

Complaints

Recruitment

Location Risk Assessment

Who to Refer to, or Report Concerns to

Report concerns to Assure Care Homes Ltd the first instance. Also **contact the emergency services and the Police**, if there is an emergency where delay may result in serious harm to the Vulnerable child or if the abuse may constitute a crime. Other agencies are:

- **Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.**
- **Children Social Care.**
- **Registration bodies.**
- **OFSTED**
- **NSPCC**
- **Childline**
- **Emergency Social Services where there are issues relating to standards and regulations.**
- **In situations of immediate danger, take urgent action by calling the relevant emergency services (e.g. Police, Ambulance and GP)**

Key Contacts

The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership can be contacted using the following details:

[INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP CAN BE FOUND ON YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY WEBSITE]

<https://www.safecic.co.uk/your-scb-acpc/55-free-downloads-and-safeguarding-links/61-safeguarding-children-board-links>

- Name:
- Address:

- Main Telephone:
- Out of hours:
- Email:
- Website:

Children Social Care

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

Main Telephone:[]

Out of Hours:[]

NSPCC

Telephone: 0808 800 5000 (10 am to 4pm weekdays)

Email:

OFSTED

Telephone:

Emergency Duty Services:

[INSERT PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY SERVICES]

Nationwide emergency services telephone: 999

Key Safeguarding areas

[Use your Location Risk Assessment to adapt this section to your area's key issues, and include evidence/statistics to support what you feel are the primary safeguarding concerns for your home - see document introduction for resources]

E-SAFETY

Assure Care Homes Ltdwill:

- Ensure Social Networks and inappropriate websites are blocked on our own computers and on any handheld devices used by members of staff.
- Ensure that all staff have an up-to-date understanding of digital and emerging technologies used by the child with work.
- Block any approaches through social media channels from all children we work with.
- Provide awareness-raising and education for all staff on the appropriate and safe use of social media and on their digital distribution of personal information

Key Question: What should I do if I have an E-Safety concern?

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If you think a child is speaking to a stranger online, has been contacted by someone while gaming or is at risk of meeting someone online or being trafficked outside of the UK, you should report this immediately to your registered manager. They will take advice from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre and, if appropriate, contact the police and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. If a child has viewed sexual abuse or violent images of themselves or someone they know, contact your registered manager who will notify the police and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

If a child discloses concern over their online use, they should be referred to the think know the website or the beat bullying website, unless illegal activities are occurring including sexting, racial harassment, grooming or threats of harm. In these instances, report this immediately to your registered manager.

Bullying / Abuse Between Peers

Every child at Assure Care Homes Ltd has the right to feel confident that the home will provide a safe and supportive environment. Assure Care Homes Ltd and our staff will take every step to make sure that individual children are not subject to discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by virtue of their gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, disability or for any other reason.

Although it would be near-impossible to fully eradicate bullying from communities, Assure Care Homes Ltd believes that by taking a comprehensive and rounded approach, it is possible to drastically reduce the number of bullying incidents and improve the well-being of children at the home and in the wider community.

Specifically, the aims of Assure Care Homes Ltd's anti-bullying strategies, policies and intervention systems are:

- To prevent, de-escalate, and/or stop any continuation of bullying;
- To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent manner;
- To safeguard the child who has experienced bullying, and to trigger sources of support for them;
- To apply disciplinary sanctions to the young person causing the bullying and ensure they learn from the experience, possibly through multi-agency support.

Assure Care Homes Ltd strives to create an environment in which bullying is not acceptable, not ignored, and dealt with swiftly and constructively.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's anti-bullying measures and response procedures, see the *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a particularly heinous form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an unequal power dynamic to manipulate or deceive a young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity. It might be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for financial or influential gains for the offender. Children that are the victims of sexual exploitation often do not recognise that they are being exploited.

Assure Care Homes Ltd staff are well positioned to look out for physical or behavioural changes that might indicate involvement in sexual exploitation. Staff must also be vigilant when monitoring online spaces for indications of online grooming.

All practitioners have a responsibility to refer children to Children's social care if they suspect a child has suffered or is likely to suffer, serious harm. Referrals must be made in one of the following ways:

- By contacting the Local Children's Social Care office.
- In an emergency outside office hours, by contacting the Children's Social Care Out-of-Hours Service/Emergency Duty Team or the Police.
- All practitioners must confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours of being made.
- If the child is known to have an allocated social worker, referrals will be made directly to the allocated worker if they are immediately available.

The DSL has the responsibility of making referrals. However, if they are not available, the referral must still be made without delay by the next most senior staff member.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's CSE prevention measures and response procedures, see the *Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy*.

Child Criminal Exploitation

The Home Office defines Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) as "*where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.*"

'County lines' is a form of Child Criminal Exploitation. It is a term used to describe the activities of gangs and organised criminal networks who are involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of "deal line". These gangs are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move (and store) drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

If a staff member identifies that a young person is involved in, or at risk of involvement in CCE, they should report this to the DSL immediately.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's CCE prevention measures and response procedures, see the *Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Policy*.

Gangs and Youth Violence

The criminal activities carried out by gangs may include the movement of drugs and money across county lines, violent actions, robberies, and general public disturbance. If a Assure Care Homes Ltd staff member has concerns about immediate danger to a child or young person as a result of gang activity, they should call the Police on 999. Where there are concerns about a young person being criminally exploited the Police and the Youth Offending Team, from the first point of contact with the child, should consider whether they are victims of criminal exploitation or trafficking and pursue safeguarding, rather than criminal justice, response.

Any decision not to refer a child or young person should be actively reviewed to allow a referral to the Youth Offending Team to be made at an appropriate stage in order to protect their safety.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's procedures regarding Gangs and Organised Crime, see the *Gangs & Youth Violence Policy*.

Prevent Duty

Assure Care Homes Ltd is committed to the UK Government's policy to reduce the risk of terrorist attacks (known as CONTEST) through its Prevent strategy, particularly in the light of attacks that have cost many lives. It understands that Government policy is based on four main assumptions.

- 1 Prevent — by stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 2 Protect — by strengthening borders, infrastructure and public spaces from any attacks.
- 3 Prepare — by responding effectively to reduce the impact of any attack.
- 4 Pursue — to disrupt or stop terrorist attacks.

In respect of anti-radicalisation, Assure Care Homes Ltd will follow local authority policies and guidance for assessing and managing risks, staff training, information sharing and local intervention programmes such as Channel. Assure Care Homes Ltd will also work closely with other community organisations, including the police, that share a common anti-radicalisation agenda.

Assure Care Homes Ltd has a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding individuals from extremism and radicalisation.

The SPOC at Assure Care Homes Ltd is[]

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's counterterrorism safeguarding measures and the specific duties of our SPOC, see the *Prevent (Counterterrorism) Policy*.

Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

“Trafficking of persons” means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Children are usually recruited by coercive or subversive means, taken on dangerous journeys with false papers and ID and, at their destination, they are kept in a controlled environment by means of threats or violence. Some children may be escorted by a person stating that they are a relative. Most children are trafficked for financial gains such as domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, sweat-shop work in catering or agriculture, illegal adoption and many more.

If a staff member has concerns that a child has been, is, or is at risk of being the victim of human trafficking, they should report this immediately to the designated safeguarding Lead.

Concerns can also be reported via <https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start>

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's identification and prevention of human trafficking measures, see the *Human Trafficking Policy* and the *Modern Slavery Policy*.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The World Health Organisation (WHO) establishes that FGM “*Comprises of all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons*”. FGM can also be referred to as Female Circumcision (FC) and Female Genital Cutting (FGC).

If staff at Assure Care Homes Ltd receive any indication that a young person is at immediate risk of FGM, they must urgently notify their manager. The designated safeguarding Lead (DSL) will make an immediate referral to the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's identification and prevention of FGM, see the *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Policy*.

Forced Marriage

In a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the arrangement of the marriage and some elements of duress are involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights and, where a child is involved, an abuse of the rights of the child.

Any reports or concerns to Assure Care Homes Ltd about forced marriage, including concerns from the victim that they might be subject to such an arrangement, will be treated as a child protection issue. If staff have or receive concerns that a child is or may be the victim of forced marriage, they must report this to the DSL immediately, who will then make a referral to social care services.

For further guidance on Assure Care Homes Ltd's identification and prevention of forced marriage, see the *Forced Marriages Policy*.

Good Safeguarding Practice

Our recruitment procedures and policies of staff include:

- Enhanced Disclosure & Barring System checks with lists during the selection process.
- Occupational Health checks.
- Ensuring that the applicant's mandatory training is up-to-date.
- Ensuring that references are obtained and identities confirmed.
- Risk assessment of role.
- Completion of Assure Care Homes Ltd application forms, which state the prospective or current staff member's duty to declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

Assure Care Homes Ltd takes great care in the recruitment of staff, carries out all possible checks on recruits to ensure that they are of a high standard, and co-operates in all initiatives regarding the sharing of information on care workers who are found to be unsuitable to work with vulnerable people. The organisation ensures that new employees are checked through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS).

SAFE SPACES

All Children should have a safe space within the home, for example, their bedroom and bathrooms.

- Children's bedrooms should be personalised – children can choose their wall colours/curtains/furniture etc where possible and have personal belongings.
- Children have their own bedrooms and where children share the process of this is recorded (for example, children choice around this and who they share with) and that their dignity whilst sharing is observed.**[delete if not applicable]**
- Children are able to lock their doors and have their own keys to their rooms. Where this is not applicable there should be clear documentation as to the reasons why.
- Staff should knock to request entry and wait for the children to respond before entering or ask the child if they can go into their room.
- Where individual preferences do not match health and safety, such as where an individual hoards items/poses fire risks, this has been risk assessed.

- Bedrooms should offer children privacy, for example, if they wish to make a phone call or speak to family/friends.
- Bathrooms should have secure locks for privacy. Where this is not applicable there should be clear documentation as to the reasons why.

SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

- To ensure the safety of the children at Assure Care Homes Ltd, staff and the local community it may be appropriate to use monitoring systems to support safety and care. The use of any monitoring or surveillance systems will only be used for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or other children living in the home.
- Monitoring systems which may be used include; CCTV, door alarms, and visual and listening devices.
- Details of any monitoring and surveillance systems will be outlined in the Home's Statement of Purpose and Children's guide.
- Surveillance cameras may be fitted that monitor the entrances/exits of the building. Images are monitored for the purpose of security ensuring the safety of children, staff and the general public.
- CCTV will not be in operation in safe spaces e.g. bedrooms/bathrooms. This is to give children their privacy and to ensure they feel entirely comfortable and secure in their own home.
- Details of any monitoring and surveillance systems will be outlined in Assure Care Homes Ltd's Statement of Purpose and Children's guide.
- *For further information on Assure Care Homes Ltd's monitoring procedures, see the Surveillance and Monitoring Policy.*

Monitoring and Review

The Registered manager will check this policy is working properly and they will review it at least once a year. We will make improvements to the policy as and when it is required.

Employees are invited to suggest any ways the policy can be improved.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

After reading this Policy, you should be able to:

- Understand what Safeguarding Children Policy is and how the Safeguarding Children Policy operates;

- Understand how Safeguarding Children Policy operates at Assure Care Homes Ltd and have an awareness of the actions we take in preventing, identifying and reporting concerns;
- Understand the role you play in Safeguarding Children Policy.

If you have not understood any of these points, please ask your Line Manager or trainer for further help

Policy Review

A Director will review this policy at least once a year to make any updates needed.

Authorisation and Signature

This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Assure Care Homes Ltd.

All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Director's Signature

Matthew Dent

Director