**Future Skills Training Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

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**1. Introduction**

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. The purpose of this document is to specify FST’s Safeguarding policy and procedures for the protection of children and young people. A child is defined as up to the age of 18. The document applies to all FST staff, including trustees and volunteers and the policy and procedures applies to all of FST’s activities and projects. All adults who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. Child protection refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in organisations are competent, confident and safe to do so (Guidance for Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

**2. Policy**

FST seeks to provide an environment where everyone can work safely, and children and young people can engage with the charities activities and enjoy programmes provided through the work of the Charity or in partnership with other agencies and/or community voluntary sector organisations.

It is the policy of FST to safeguard the welfare of children and young people involved in the work we do by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It is also FST’s policy to provide those working for or with the charity with a framework to operate within to keep everyone who is engaged in the Charity’s activities safe.

It is therefore FST’s policy to:

* Ensure that all staff, trustees, and volunteers working with children and young people are carefully selected, are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service, have two appropriate references and understand and accept their responsibility for the safety of children and young people in their care. *For more detail see Appendix one*
* Raise awareness of child protection issues amongst community voluntary groups, clubs and organisations within our network
* Ensure that children and young people’s welfare is of paramount importance, regardless of age, gender, ability or race, when planning, organising, advising on and delivering programmes
* Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and to ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate external agencies
* Raise the awareness of relevant staff, partner organisations and volunteers of child protection issues through the provision of training and regular updates to risk assessments and changes in client groups
* Monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis
* Ensure that the principles of this policy are adopted by all organisations or individuals with whom FST works

The Child protection policy and procedure also seeks to manage effectively the risks associated with activities and projects involving children and young people by:

* Completing a risk assessment process which involves identifying risks and means of reducing or eliminating these
* Implementing the required actions identified by the risk assessment process and reviewing the effectiveness of these on a regular basis
* Ensuring that the appropriate DBS checks are conducted for any individuals starting or moving into work which involves working with children or young people
* Requiring new employees and individuals involved in working with children and young people to familiarise themselves with the content of this policy and the associated code of behaviour and receive appropriate training.

**3. Responsibilities**

The implementation of this policy is mandatory across all areas of the Charity. Specific responsibilities are outlined below:

**3.1 Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the Charity’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. He will report to the Trustees on any safeguarding and/or child protection issues.

He is responsible for ensuring:

* The resources available to support staff on safeguarding/child protection issues is maintained
* That safeguarding implications are constantly reviewed across the scope of the work the Charity delivers to young people, and are fully considered in the development of all new pieces of work
* The continued development of the Charity’s approach to Safeguarding, considering and authorising any immediate changes in operational policy required due to a safeguarding incident or near miss
* Safeguarding is considered in all appointments of staff, trustees and volunteers
* Training of staff is delivered as regularly as is necessary, and at least annually
* Ensuring that staff, trustees and volunteers are able to discuss safeguarding, child protection and abuse issues confidentially and receive guidance and support on action if situations arise
* Ensuring the Safeguarding policy is fully implemented and that procedures to support the policy are set up as outlined, complied with and communicated
* Ensuring all reporting staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities under this policy. This must form part of their induction
* Ensuring staff and volunteers undertake appropriate and required induction and training in safeguarding/child protection, at the required level relevant to their role, at least annually
* Ensuring all new staff members and volunteers have the required disclosure certificate in place and that they cooperate with the internal DBS procedure to include checking ID and provision of signed copies of documents.

**3.2 All Trustees, staff and volunteers**

All Trustees, staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the requirements of this policy and procedures and operate within codes of conduct outlined within the various policies that support the work of the Charity. Any behaviour by a Trustee, member of staff or volunteer, that contravenes the terms of this policy and procedure may be considered for disciplinary action, which in turn may lead to dismissal for staff, ending of contracts for volunteers and Trustees being removed from the Trustee Board.

**4. Procedures**

**4.1 Recruitment of Employees, Volunteers and Trustees**

The aim of the recruitment and selection processes for employees, volunteers and Trustees, is to ensure that the best person for a particular role is appointed. However, FST needs to balance the need to protect the interests of children and young people with its desire not to discriminate unfairly against ex-offenders. For this reason, the Charity has a detailed policy and procedure on the recruitment of ex-offenders and all staff, trustees and regular volunteers are required to have two appropriate references, attend specific training and hold a valid enhanced DBS certificate.

**4.2** **Work with Children and Young People**

FST requires all those working directly with children and young people to follow the procedures below, in order to create a safe environment in which to work with them.

**4.2.1 Guidance for safer working practice**

The word “session” is used below to cover all delivery of our work and “staff” includes Trustees, staff and volunteers:

* Staff must give due regard to issues of safety at all times. This includes carrying out appropriate risk assessments as and when necessary. Due regard should be given to the potential influences and associated risks that different groups will have on each other
* Staff must have read part one of the KCSIE document and signed the sheet on the notice board to evidence this. To ensure they are kept up to date with any changes, they must read it annually
* Staff working with children and young people should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services and use of equipment and they should carefully plan sessions with the care and safety as their primary concern including the use of appropriate activities that are testing and stretching yet not unnecessarily rough or overly demanding
* Staffing ratio guidelines must be followed. Learn2Live 1:3, Lean On Me 1:3, Infuse 1:10 *(*however normally the ratio is less due to additional volunteers*),* Residentials 1:4
* When a child or young person fails to arrive for a 1:1 session, the staff member must contact the parent/carer immediately and partner organisation where appropriate, however, with the PRU up, we contact the organisation to let them know about absences or lateness.
* Wherever possible, staff should avoid being alone with children and young people, and staff shouldn’t take them to their own home. Staff shouldn’t offer a lift to a child or young person unless they have written parental consent and they have secured permission of the CEO
* Staff are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fairness, trust and ethical practice – Staff must respect all individuals whatever their age, development stage, ability, sex, sexual orientation or ethnicity throughout the sessions
* Staff should behave and dress in a manner that promotes recognised good practice in relation to safeguarding
* All accidents/incidents involving staff or participants should be recorded using the Charity’s accident/incident forms immediately or as soon as practicably possible
* Staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as: fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment
* Staff are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate people (see 4.2.6 below)
* Staff are required to disclose to FST if an issue affects their suitability to work, such as a new conviction, a physical or mental health diagnosis or anything that may have an impact on them working with children and young people.

**4.2.2 Good Practice to protect against allegations of abuse**

You shouldn’t:

* Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others
* Take children and young people to your own home
* Offer a lift to a child or young person unless they have written parental consent and permission has been granted by the CEO

NEVER

* Engage in rough physical activities including horseplay
* Engage in sexually provocative activities
* Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
* Allow children and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
* Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person even in fun
* Let an allegation a child or young person makes go unchallenged or unrecorded
* Do things of a personal nature for children and young people that they can do themselves
* Place yourself in a situation where you will be left alone with a child or young person, unless it is part of a one-to-one mentoring session.

**4.2.3 Photography and evidence**

Appropriate rules need to be set in line with the service being provided, for example there is no photography allowed at swimming pools. The NSPCC recommends using models or illustrations to promote an organisation’s work and advises that names should never be matched to photographs. The Football Association advises that photographs should focus on the activity and not on a specific young person. Formal permission should be obtained for the use of any images or quotes, whether of a child or young person; apart from child protection issues, photographs, and quotes that identify the person, are classed as personal information and, as such, are governed by Data Protection laws (see FST’s Data Protection policy and procedures).

**4.2.4 Off-site trips and Residentials**

FST is not responsible for a child or young person while they are travelling to and from a session unless we are travelling offsite as a group. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or school/local authority to make appropriate travel arrangements for them. When organising residential events for children and young people FST will ensure to make appropriate sleeping arrangements to ensure the safeguarding of individuals and minimise risk. All offsite trips, residentials and events must be managed in accordance with FST’s operating procedures and relevant FST policies.

**4.2.5 Signs and Types of Abuse**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Some signs that could alert staff and volunteers to the fact that a child or young person might be being abused include:

* Unexplained bruising and injuries
* Sexually explicit language and actions
* Sudden changes in behaviour
* Something a child has said
* A change observed over a long period of time e.g. losing weight or being increasingly dirty or unkempt.

If a child or young person displays these signs it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting it appropriately. *See Appendix 2 for Types of Abuse*

**4.2.6 Incidents that must be recorded and reported**

If any of the following occurs, members of staff should report this immediately to the DSL and record the incident immediately on lamplight’s child protection work area:

* If a child is hurt, accidentally or otherwise
* If a child seems extremely distressed
* If a child appears to be sexually aroused by another’s actions
* If the conduct of a member of staff is inappropriate (e.g. a member of staff seen to touch a child inappropriately, be verbally abusive, offer inducements etc)
* The reaction or behaviour of a child suggests that a member of staff has behaved in an inappropriate manner.
* If a child gives information about engaging in sexual activity, including sexting*,* or about suffering any form of abuse
* If a child is seen breaking rules stated in the Acceptable Use Policy.

It is not the staff's responsibility to investigate an incident, only to record the information and then inform the DSL.

**How to respond to a child’s disclosure of abuse or harm**

* React calmly and in a controlled manner
* Reassure, remember that the child is likely to be frightened or anxious
* Keep questions to a minimum, ensure you ask open questions such as “tell me, explain to me, describe, and show me”. Don’t ask direct questions to the child - avoid 'Who?', 'What?', 'When?', 'Where?'. Don’t ask leading questions such as “did he touch” etc'
* Listen to the child actively showing that you are taking them seriously
* Do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you will have to speak to someone else who can help.
* Do not in any way pressurise him or her in any way
* Do not prevent a child from recalling events – let them talk. Recognise the difficulties the child may be having in talking, be patient, be silent, be calm. Recognise that there are sometimes difficulties in interpreting what is said by children. Some may not be able to express themselves well verbally and it may have been historically very difficult for them to complain or be understood. Be careful to recognise behavioural clues in disabled children. Sometimes abuse of disabled children has gone unrecognised because they were interpreted as part of their disability
* Inform the child - tell the child that he or she was right to tell and is not to blame and again explain that you will have to speak to someone else who can help
* The safety of the child is paramount. If in doubt contact the Authorities
* Record all the information provided a soon as possible so that information is not forgotten
* Report the incident to the CEO, or if the CEO is involved, the Chair of the Board.

**The member of staff should not:**

* Speculate or make assumptions about what has happened
* Agree to keep secrets
* Panic
* Allow shock or distaste to show
* Probe for more information than is being offered

### Make negative comments about the alleged abuser

* Approach the alleged abuser
* Reinforce the issue with exaggerated statements such as ‘oh my gosh they didn’t!’

**Follow-up**

* When the conversation has finished, make an *immediate* detailed note of what he or she has said. Immediate recording must take place to ensure information details are not forgotten
* Use all this detail to record in lamplight on the child protection work area.
* As soon as is practically possible, pass the information to the organisation’s DSL. If the DSL cannot be easily reached, staff must contact the Chair of the Board or a board member of FST
* If you have serious concerns about the immediate safety of the child contact Wandsworth Social Services (tel. 020 8871 6622 or 020 8871 6000 at weekends and public holidays), or the Police (999), or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (0808 800 5000), or Childline on 0800 1111. Record the name of the person you spoke to and tell your organisation’s DSL what you have done.

**IMPORTANT - Do not delay. Do not contact or confront the alleged abuser.**

**Procedure - How FST responds to allegations of abuse**

Where an incident has been reported to the DSL, there may be three types of investigation:

* A child protection investigation, led by social services
* A criminal investigation, led by the police
* A disciplinary or misconduct investigation, led by FST

Where an allegation has been made, the DSL shall refer the allegation to Wandsworth social services department who may involve the police. If out of hours, the DSL will go directly to the police.

Where appropriate, the parents of the child must be contacted as soon as possible, but only following advice from the social services department.

The DSL shall notify the Chair of the FST board (unless the Chair is the subject of the allegation). If the Chair is not available, at least one other board member must be made aware of the situation. If the DSL is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chair who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Board meetings must have a regular agenda item that will assess child protection procedures in Future Skills.

**Allegations of poor practice:**

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice rather than abuse; the DSL will deal with it as a coaching or a misconduct issue and internal disciplinary procedures with the relevant staff must be undertaken.

If an allegation is made about poor performance on the part of the DSL in implementing this policy, or if any matter is considered to be handled inadequately, it should be reported directly to the Chair of the Trustee Board who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings, training or both.

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information must be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Need-to-know includes the following people:

* FST DSL
* Where appropriate, the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
* The person making the allegation
* Social services/police
* Chair of FST/other delegated board members.
* The alleged abuser (and their parents, if the alleged abuser is a child). Please note the DSL should seek police advice or social services advice before approaching the alleged abuser.

## **Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

The FST DSL and Chair together will make a prompt decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Unless the findings of the social services or police inquiries preclude FST from acting, the DSL and Chair will investigate and assess in detail all individual cases and refer to the Board as to what action, if any, should be taken. However, in the event of allegations of sexual abuse, a sole external investigation will take place, with the DSL and board pending the outcome.

The Board shall decide what action should be taken in relation to the member of staff that forms the subject of the allegation.

Where the allegation relates to a member of the Board, that member may not sit as a member of the Board during any discussions relating to the allegation or its handling. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where it seems that insufficient evidence is available and the incident is unlikely to have taken place. Nevertheless, the welfare of the child (and FST children in general) is of paramount importance throughout.

## **Allegations of previous abuse**

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

Where such an allegation is made, the organisation should follow the procedures as detailed above, as other children may be at risk from this person.

## **Staff support to deal with the aftermath**

Consideration is given to the kind of support that staff may need following an unsubstantiated allegation of abuse. Staff will be encouraged and supported to contact support organisations that can help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling (BAC) has a wide range of accredited counselling practices that staff can avail of. They can be contacted at 01455 883300, by e-mail at [bacp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bacp@bacp.co.uk) or check out their internet site on <http://www.bacp.co.uk>.

FST commits to supporting all its staff in the event of false allegations. They are sometimes part and parcel of the work we do with children and we commit to a culture of openness and honesty, empathy and understanding where such incidents occur.

**Making a Referral**

If you are concerned that a child or young person may be at risk or has disclosed that they are being harmed, you should contact the DSL or Deputy DSL. He/she will assess the concerns to determine whether to refer to an external agency needs to happen or can be addressed via the Charity’s internal procedures. Where a referral is to be made externally, the DSL will report the matter to the authorities. The external agency will conduct their own investigation. Anonymity may not be maintained on reporting.

**5. FST Supporting Policies and Procedures**

FST has a duty, both in law and as a responsible organisation, to take reasonable care of children and young people coming into contact with the Charity’s activities. The Charity aims to adopt the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps in relation to the safety and welfare of children and young people. FST is fully committed to meeting the requirements of safeguarding, in relation to children and young people, in order to ensure that they are safeguarded whilst enjoying opportunities to develop their full potential. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following FST policies and procedures which can be found on GDrive:

* Health and Safety Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Equal Opportunities Policy
* Employment Policy
* Recruitment of ex-offenders Policy
* Data Protection Policy

The following legislation is relevant to this policy, either because it has influenced its introduction and/or its content:

* Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
* Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975
* The Police Act 1997
* Protection of Children Act 1999
* Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
* The Human Rights Act 1998
* Sexual Offences Act 2003
* The Children Act 2004
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* Equality Act 2010
* Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 -The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 is of particular importance as all decisions made to bar individuals from working with children or adults are now made by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) under this legislation.
* GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

**6. Review**

This will be reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation that would require FST to amend its policy and procedures. As a minimum, it will be reviewed annually.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 Recruitment of staff

Appendix 2 Types of Abuse

Appendix 3 Radicalisation and Extremism

Appendix 4 Bullying

Appendix 5 Code of good practice

Appendix 6 Disclosure/Incident Form

Appendix 7 FST Safeguarding Contacts list and LADO procedure

**Appendix 1: Recruitment of staff**

FST recognises that anyone may have the opportunity to abuse children in some way and that all reasonably practicable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working for the Organisation.

All staff applicants will complete an application procedure, which will ask for self-disclosure about any criminal record. Consent will be obtained from applicants to complete a DBS check appropriate to their role. This check will be updated every 3 years. The DBS check will be initiated as soon as the candidate accepts the offer of employment (paid or unpaid). When we have received confirmation of the completed disclosure, the number will be added to our Single Central Register.

Two confidential references (one to cover previous work with children if applicable) will be requested and checked. The two references must be taken up and confirmed through email upon completion of reference form.

Applicants will be requested to produce verifiable evidence of identity (i.e. passport or driving licence with photo).

It is the duty of the DSL to confirm to the board of FST that the checks set out above, and any other checks deemed appropriate, have been completed in relation to each member of staff.

It is the duty of the DSL that new recruits are fully informed of Future Skills’ child protection policy and that training needs are identified.

All new staff must read part one of the KSCIE document and sign the sheet on the notice board to evidence they have done this. The document must be read by all annually to ensure they are kept up to date of any changes.

**Training Needs**

FST commits to safeguarding this child protection policy by providing training to help staff to:

* Recognise the signs of abuse
* Respond effectively to concerns expressed by a child
* Analyse their own practice against established good practice to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
* Recognise their responsibilities to report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.

Every member of staff will attend at least 1 child protection or safeguarding training workshop annually.

**Appendix 2: Types of Abuse**

**Abuse:**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may cause abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Physical abuse:**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, young person or adult at risk. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child, young person or adult at risk.

**Emotional abuse:**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, young person or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to them that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, young people or adult at risk. These may include interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children, young people or adult at risk frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of them. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, young person or adult at risk, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse & Sexual Exploitation:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, including sexual exploitation, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, and whether it is for money or reward or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative contact (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young people or adults at risk in seeing or receiving or sending sexually suggestive emails or text-messages, or inappropriate behaviour on the Internet, involving them looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material of watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect:**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child, young person or adult at risks’ basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
* Protect a child or young person from physical and emotional harm or danger
* Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
* Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child, young person or adult at risk’s basic emotional needs.

**Discriminatory Abuse:**

Including racial or sexual harassment and abusive treatment based on a child, young person or adult at risk’s disability.

**Abuse of Disabled Children:**

Disabled children are at increased risk of abuse and those with multiple disabilities are at even more significant risk both of abuse and neglect. Parents of disabled children may experience multiple stresses. This group of children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons including:

▪ Having fewer social contacts than other children or young people

▪ Receiving intimate personal care from a larger number of carers

▪ Having an impaired capacity to understand what they are experiencing is abuse or to challenge the abuser

▪ Having communication difficulties resulting in difficulties in telling people what is happening

▪ Being reluctant to complain for fear of losing services

▪ Being particularly vulnerable to bullying or intimidation

▪ Being more vulnerable to abuse by peers than other children, young people or adults at risk.

Disability is defined as: A major physical impairment, severe illness and/or a moderate to severe learning difficulty; an ongoing high level of dependency on others for personal care and the meeting of other basic needs.

**Bullying:**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). There is increasing use of new technologies as a tool for bullying and such incidents should be taken seriously.

**Self-Harming Behaviour:**

Children, young people and adults at risk who harm or attempt to harm themselves should be taken seriously. The self-harming behaviour in itself may cause impairment of their health or development and in some circumstances present significant harm or the risk of significant harm. Self-harming behaviour may also arise alongside eating disorders and/or drug misuse.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):**

Female genital mutilation is a collective term for procedures that include the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other nontherapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious physical and mental health consequences both at the time and in later life. The procedure is typically performed on girls of 4 -13 years, but may be performed on new born babies or on young women. FGM can result in death. FGM is a criminal offence (Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 2003 and subsequent amendments by the Serious Crime Act 2015). Under the Act it is an offence to arrange, procure, aid or abet female genital mutilation. Parents/carers may be liable under this act. It is also an offence to allow the procedure to be undertaken in another country. Where agencies become aware that a girl is at risk of FGM a referral should be made to Children’s Social Care.

**Forced Marriage:**

A forced marriage is one that is conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage can amount to sexual and emotional abuse and put children or young people or adults at risk, susceptible to physical abuse. In circumstances where there are concerns that someone is at imminent risk of a forced marriage urgent referrals should be made to Children’s Adults’ Social Care. In the case of a child or young person in danger of forced marriage it is likely that an initial discussion with the parent, carer or other community member may significantly increase the level of risk to the person.

**Online abuse:**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. It can take place anywhere and anytime.

Online child sexual abuse:

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded, or forced, to:

* Send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
* Take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
* Have sexual conversations by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send images, video or copies of conversations to the young person’s friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped.

Online bullying or cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying is an increasingly common form of bullying behaviour which happens on social networks, games, and mobile phones. Cyberbullying can include spreading rumours about someone, or posting nasty or embarrassing messages, images, or videos. Cyberbullying includes:

* Sending threatening or abusive text messages
* Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
* ‘Trolling’ – sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
* Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
* Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
* Encouraging young people to self-harm
* Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
* Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
* Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
* Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Online grooming:

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking. Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child. They can spend time learning about a young person’s interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. It’s easy for groomers to hide their identity online – they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become ‘friends’ with children they are targeting. Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.

Sexting**:**

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually-explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops, etc – any device that allows you to share media and messages. Sexting may also be called ‘trading nudes’, ‘dirties’ or ‘pic for pic’. The creating or sharing of explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child.

Children and young people who are involved in a sexting incident might have: shared an image of themselves; received an image from someone else; shared an image of someone else more widely. Children and young people may consent to sending a nude image of themselves. They can also be forced or coerced into sharing images by their peers or adults online. Even if the image was originally shared consensually, perpetrators of abuse may circulate it more widely and use this to blackmail a child and/or groom them for further sexual abuse.

If a young person tells you they have been involved in sexting it is important to be understanding and non-judgmental. Try to find out a bit more about what has happened, ie: if it is an image, video or message; who sent it; who featured in it; who has seen it; if there were any adults involved; if this was shared on an organisational or personal device. *Never view, copy or save explicit images, videos or messages.* If the image is on a device belonging to your organisation, you need to isolate it so that nobody else can see it. This may involve blocking the network to all users. You should take steps to get an explicit image or video removed if it has been posted online:

∙        Report the image to the site or network hosting it

∙        Contact the [Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)](https://www.iwf.org.uk/)

∙        Children and young people can [use Childline's Report Remove tool](https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/report-nude-image-online/)

It is essential all children and young people involved in sexting receive ongoing support. You should also involve parents and carers, unless doing so might pose a risk to their child. It may also be appropriate to make a referral to a counselling service or therapeutic support.

**Cuckooing:**

Cuckooing is the process whereby criminal gangs target the homes of vulnerable people in order to use their premises for criminal activity. Many of the victims are particularly vulnerable and criminal gangs may use threats and intimidation to gain access to the property to engage in criminal activity such as drug dealing, sexual exploitation, etc.

**Criminal exploitation -**

**county lines:**

Criminal exploitation of children or vulnerable adults is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

**Peer on peer abuse:**

Children can abuse other children. It can take many forms including: bullying; sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur online and offline. Evidence shows that girls, children with special education and needs disabilities (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk. Peer on peer abuse tends to be experienced by children aged 10 and upwards, with those abusing them being slightly older. Signs of possible peer on peer abuse include, but are not limited to: physical injuries, drug and alcohol abuse, going missing, committing criminal offences, disengagement from school, poor mental health, sexual health concerns.

**Trafficking:**

Children, young people and adults at risk can be trafficked into, within and out of the UK for many reasons and all different types of exploitation. Trafficking is a form of child abuse and needs an appropriate safeguarding response. Any child, young person or adult at risk who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for exploitative reasons is considered to be a victim of trafficking, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. This is because it is not considered possible for children, young people or adults at risk in this situation to give informed consent. Even when they understand what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adult. It is important these children, young people and adults at risk are protected too.

Children and young people are trafficked for many reasons, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, labour, benefit fraud, forced marriage, begging and involvement in criminal activity such as pick pocketing, theft and working on cannabis farms. They are likely to be subjected to other forms of abuse, as a means of coercing and controlling them. Trafficking is carried out by individual adults and organised crime groups. Consensual sexual activity involving a young person under 18 years is not abusive, but it may be, and a child or young person’s ability to consent can be impaired due to lack of freedom, capacity or choice; for example because of an age/power imbalance; because it is leading into sexual exploitation; because one person is in a position of trust with the other (e.g. a teacher); where one person is vulnerable because of disability or capacity; where the child/young person is in the care of another away from home. No child under the age of 13 or under is able to consent to any sexual activity according to the Sexual Offences Act (2003).

**Appendix 3: Radicalisation and Extremism**

The threat from terrorism and extremism in the UK is real and severe and can involve the exploitation of vulnerable children and young people. This can include involving them in extremist activity in the UK or abroad putting them in extreme danger. Children and young people are being targeted by adults who hold extreme views that advocate violence. There has also been an increase in far-right extremism, which can also draw them into violence. FST staff, trustees and volunteers, working directly with children and young people must be aware of radicalisation and extremism and report any suspicions of radicalisation and extremism immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Radicalisation and extremism can put a child or young person at risk of being drawn into violence and criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm. Radicalisation is a process by which an individual, or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of a nation.

Children and young people may become radicalised if they feel:

▪ Isolated and lonely or wanting to belong

▪ Unhappy about themselves and what others might think of them

▪ Embarrassed or judged about their culture, gender, religion or race

▪ Stressed or depressed

▪ Fed up of being bullied or treated badly by other people or by society

▪ Angry at other people or the government

▪ Confused about what they are doing

▪ Pressured to stand up for other people who are being oppressed

▪ The desire to be valued and respected

▪ There are few other options open to them

▪ No one is listening to them/have no voice

Extremism is when people have very strong opinions, and these could become extreme. People who have certain beliefs about politics or religions which are hateful, dangerous or against the law are often known as extremists. This harmful behaviour is called extremism. Extremists might use violence and damage to express their views. And extremist racial or religious groups might use, religion, hate, fear or violence to control and influence people. There are many groups and individuals who hold extremist views both within the UK and internationally, some are more dangerous than others and FST staff need to be aware of how they can affect young people in a negative way and what you should do to support children and young people who are in danger of being radicalised. FST staff will be expected to have completed PREVENT awareness training at a minimum biannually to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

**Appendix 4: Bullying**

FST is committed to providing a caring, safe and supportive environment for children and young people so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at FST as it is destructive and no one deserves to be a target, instead everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in physical and emotional pain and distress for the person / persons being targeted.

**Bullying can be:**

* Emotional, e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
* Physical, e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
* Racist, e.g. racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
* Sexual, e.g. any unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
* Homophobic, e.g. because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
* Verbal, e.g. name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
* Cyber, e.g. internet, email, chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls and misuse of associated technology, camera & video facilities

If the bullying of a child, young person or adult is apparent, alleged or suspected it must be reported immediately. We are a *TELLING* organisation meaning that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of FST staff. When bullying is reported the following procedures will apply:

* Meet with the target/s, allow them to speak and share their concerns, however do not promise confidentiality
* Record what happened in Lamplight or on an incident record form (see appendix) and reassure the target/s that you will seek to help them
* If the target/s threatens self-harm or suicide contact the DSL immediately to ensure the prompt intervention of professionals
* If the target has been injured, ask parents for consent to take photographs of the injury
* If there is serious injury, contact the police
* Talk to parents/carers of all involved and show them written statements. Continue to hold meetings with families to report on progress
* The DSL will meet with the bully/bullies separately and discuss what is expected and how their behaviour has broken the FST guidelines
* Do not accept false excuses e.g. if the bullying was an accident, did the children act by helping the target or getting help or giving sympathy? If it was just a laugh, was everyone laughing? If it was a game, was everyone enjoying it?
* Encourage the bully/bullies to genuinely apologise
* Teach the bully/bullies non-aggressive ways of behaving
* Discuss the imposition of sanctions with the bully/bullies
* After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying or reprisals do not continue to occur
* The DSL must be kept informed of progress and will report to the board. A written record of action taken must be maintained
* Where the bully/bullies are members of staff, the DSL and Chair will consider the issue and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken.

**Appendix 5: Code of behaviour**

DO put this code into practice at all times

DO treat everyone with dignity and respect

DO always put the welfare of children and young people first

DO set an example you would wish others to follow

DO treat all young people equally – show no favouritism

DO plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others

DO follow the recommended adult/young people ratios for meetings and activities

DO respect a young person’s right to personal privacy

DO avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust, e.g. a sexual relationship with a young person over the age of consent

DO have separate sleeping accommodation for young people when on residentials

DO allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have

DO encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like

DO avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes

DO ensure a no alcohol policy when young people are in your care – adults and young people

DO make everyone aware of FST’s child protection procedures – young people, parents/carers, young leaders and other helpers

DO remember this code even at sensitive moments e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse

DO keep other staff informed of where you are and what you are doing

DO remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned

DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately

DO NOT trivialise abuse

DO NOT form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust

DO NOT permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying

DO NOT engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact – physical, verbal, sexual

DO NOT play physical contact games with young people

DO NOT make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun

DO NOT use inappropriate language – writing, phoning, email or internet

DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported

DO NOT just rely on your good name to protect you

DO NOT invite or allow children or young people into your home

DO NOT communicate with a child through any form of personal social media, only use FST social media channels appropriately during work hours

DO NOT offer gifts to a child

**Appendix 6 Disclosure/Incident Form**

DISCLOSURE/INCIDENT RECORD FORM

|  |
| --- |
| Your name: |
| Your position: |
| Child’s name: |
| Child’s address: |
| Parents’/carers’ names and address: |
| Child’s date of birth: |
| Date and time of the disclosure/incident: |
| Other staff present during disclosure/incident (where relevant): |
| Place where disclosure/incident occurred: |
| Record what the child said and what you said:  *(Continue on separate sheet if necessary)* |
| Please record any comments on the physical appearance of the child that may be relevant (*continue on separate sheet if necessary*) |
| **Future Skills DSL/other contacted?**  Name and position of person contacted:  Contact telephone number:  Details of advice received |
| External agencies contacted? |
| **Police** YES/NO. If yes:  Date and time:  Name of officer/telephone operator:  Contact telephone number:  Details of advice received: |
| **Social services** YES/NO  If yes:  Name of worker:  Contact telephone number:  Details of advice received: |
| **Other (e.g. NSPCC)** YES/NO  If yes:  Name of worker:  Contact telephone number:  Details of advice received: |
| Print name:  Signature: |
| Date: |

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

**Appendix 7: Safeguarding contacts, LADO procedure**

**Internal Contacts:**

DSL Phil Thain, CEO: 020 3818 6210/07976 239118 [pth@future-skills.co.uk](mailto:pth@future-skills.co.uk)

Deputy DSL: Shem Frank, Youth Support Worker [shem@future-skills.co.uk](mailto:shem@future-skills.co.uk)

**External contacts:**

Police Central Referral Unit: 0845 605 1166

Police Non-emergency: 101

Police emergency: 999

NSPCC Helpline: 08088 005 000; [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Childline: 0800 1111

Initial Point of Contact (IPOC) previously known as MASH: 020 8871 6622

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 8871 7440; [LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk)

Safeguarding Standards Service: 020 8871 7208

Wandsworth Safeguarding Children’s Board: [www.wscb.org.uk](http://www.wscb.org.uk); 020 8871 7401

Social Care Out of Hours Service: 020 8871 6000

OFSTED: 0300 123 1231

**Contacting the LADO**

The LADO’s key role is to:

* Provide advice/guidance to employers or voluntary organisations
* Liaise with police and other agencies including Ofsted and professional bodies such as the General Medical Council and the General Teaching Council
* Monitor the progress of referrals to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process
* Seek to resolve any inter-agency issues
* Collect strategic data and maintain a confidential database in relation to allegations
* Disseminate learning from LADO enquiries throughout the children’s workforce
* To provide oversight of the investigative process through to its conclusion
* Chair Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meetings (previously known as Strategy Meetings) and establish an agreed outcome of the LADO investigation
* Liaison with other Local Authority LADO’s where there are cross boundary issues.

**LADO Procedure**

1. An allegation is made against staff or volunteer working with children and is reported to the organisation’s designated CP lead
2. Designated CP lead or manager contacts the LADO - (020) 8871 7440 for consultation or makes a formal referral to the Initial Point of Contact (IPOC) on (020) 8871 6622
3. Information is passed on to the LADO who decides whether the person whom allegation is made against:

* **Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child**
* **Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child**
* **Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children**

1. If it’s a **YES** or **MAYBE** then the LADO consults with relevant professionals, they arrange and chair an ASV meeting to exchange information and decide on formal investigation processes, which may include a police investigation. More than one ASV meeting may take place before an outcome is agreed.
2. If it is a **NO** then there is no further action for the LADO Service and the Employer investigates as a disciplinary matter. The employer feeds back to LADO on their disciplinary investigation and decisions made

**Document Control**

**Reviewed by Anna D’Alessandro, Interim Office Manager, 27.10.2023**

**Reviewed by Saida Tasnim, Office Manager and Phil Thain, CEO, 01/11/2022**

**Reviewed and amended 02.02.2021 by Camilla Massara, Office Manager**

**Reviewed and amended guidance re *Sexting* on 15.10.2020 by Camilla Massara, Office Manager**