



SURFING
ENGLAND

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Surfing England is committed to Every Child Matters as such has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care.

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

This guidance relates to all staff, and volunteers, and Directors acting for and on behalf the Surfing England.

Surfing England is not an investigative or intervention agency for child protection. However, because some staff are in regular contact with children and young people they are in a position to observe outward signs of abuse and can and should alert others when such signs are observed.

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. All children have the right to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards designed to ensure that children are protected from harm (These include 'The Children Act 1989', 'The Children Act 2004' 'Every Child Matters' and the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006' document by H M Gov).

Surfing England is committed to working with other agencies to ensure the safety and well being of its young people. We are committed to dealing with young people and their details within the relevant legislation pertaining to data. We will however share information when appropriate to ensure the safety of our young people. In most cases, but not all, this will be with the knowledge and consent of our young people

Child Protection Policy

The **Child Protection Policy** is designed to help safeguard children and young people from potential abuse as well as protect Surfing England, its staff, Directors and volunteers from potential false allegations of abuse.

We recognise that:

- The term children or young people is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.
- The term staff, Directors and volunteers is used to refer to employees, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing Surfing England.

All children and young people, irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection from abuse and/or neglect.

What is Abuse and Neglect?

Abuse and neglect, as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 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, 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, another child or children. Please note that no specific reference is made to the term "bullying" due to the belief that bullying is in fact covered by one or more of the four Forms of Abuse referred to below.

The Main Forms of Abuse It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children

Physical Abuse:

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

Emotional Abuse:

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

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child or young person is aware of, or *consents to*, what is happening. They may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect:

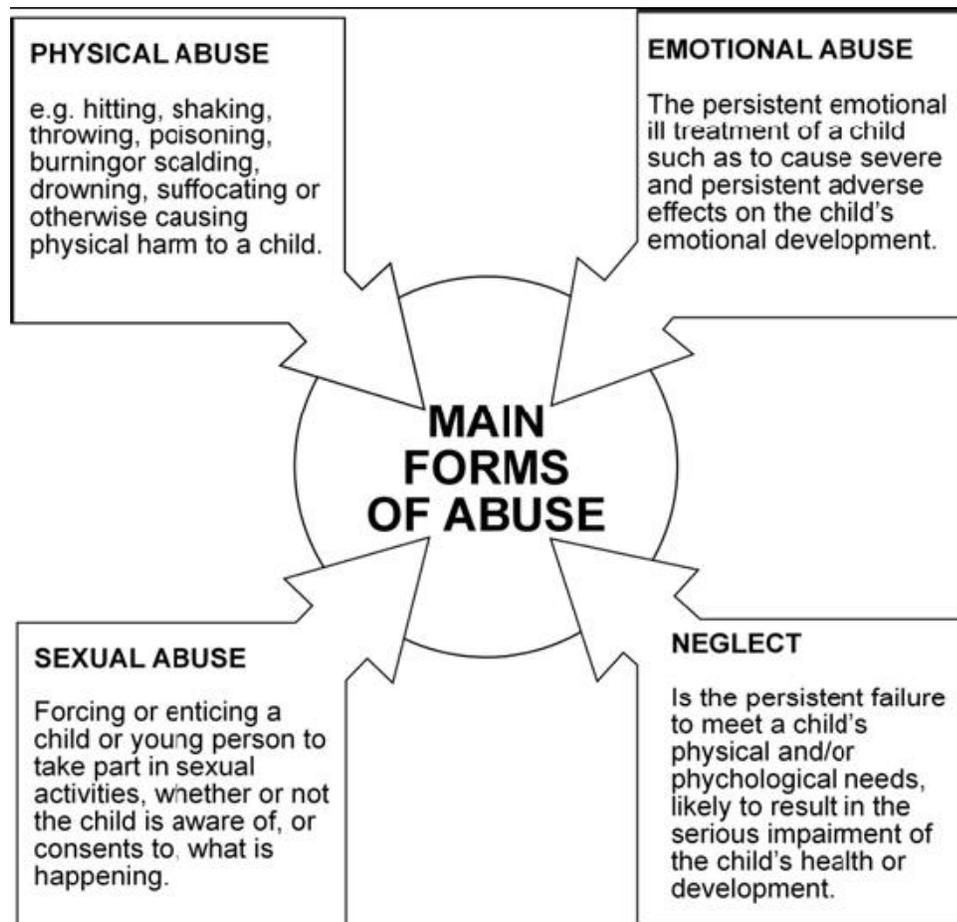
Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result 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 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's basic emotional needs.

Main Forms of Abuse



It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse and that some children or young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

SECTION TWO GUIDANCE

Recognising Child Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not the responsibility of Surfing England staff, Directors or volunteers to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child or young person is at significant risk. **However they do have a responsibility to act if they have a concern.**

Signs and Indicators

We recognise that every child and young person is unique and it is difficult to predict how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. Listed below are some physical signs and behavioural indicators that may be commonly seen in children and young people who are abused, but remember, that they may only be an indication and not confirmation that abuse is taking place.

Important Rule

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these signs and indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as death, or the birth of a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents/carers etc.

The lists below are not exhaustive or definitive but are a guide.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body • Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching) • Cigarette burns • Bite marks • Broken bones • Scalds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of parents being approached for an explanation • Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts • Flinching when approached or touched • Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather • Depression • Withdrawn behaviour • Running away from home

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Physical signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A failure to thrive or grow • Sudden speech disorders • Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurotic behaviour, eg hair twisting, rocking • Being unable to play • Fear of making mistakes • Self harm • Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

SEXUAL ABUSE

Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas • Bruising or bleeding near the genital/anal areas • Sexually Transmitted Infection • Vaginal discharge or infection • Stomach pains • Discomfort when walking or sitting down • Pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn • Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people • Having nightmares • Running away from home • Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental age • Sexual drawings or language • Bedwetting • Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone • Self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts • Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia

NEGLECT

Physical Signs	Behavioural Indicators
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others • Constantly dirty or 'smelly' • Loss of weight, or being consistently underweight • Inappropriate dress for the conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaining of being tired all the time • Not requesting medical assistance and /or failing to attend appointments • Having few friends • Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised
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Recording a Disclosure

After the disclosure, record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child or young person's own words, as soon as possible. In your record you should include:

- The date and time.
- The child's or young person's name, (and address and date of birth, if known)
- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any visible injuries.
- Your observations – e.g. a description of the child's or young person's behaviour and physical and emotional state.
- Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said. Record the child's or young person's account of what has happened as closely as possible.
- Any action you took as a result of your concerns e.g. who you spoke to and resulting actions.
- Include names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- Sign and date what you have recorded.

The information needs to be stored in accordance with relevant procedures, e.g. Data protection.

Report to and inform the designated Child Protection Officer. In a case where your designated Child Protection Officer may be involved directly contact Social Services and the Police as appropriate.

Good Practice for Staff, Directors and Volunteers

The Care of Children and Young People

It is possible to limit the situations where child and young people abuse may occur, by promoting good practice.

The following basic guidelines will help safeguard children and young people, staff, Directors and volunteers, Surfing England and other concerned organisations. The guidelines aim to promote positive practice and are examples of care while working with children and young people.

Good Practice

- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people. Avoid situations where a member of staff, elected member or volunteer and an individual child or young person are alone unobserved.

- Children or young people should never be left unattended.
- Respect the child or young person and provide a safe and positive environment.
- If any form of physical contact is required it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines, i.e. National Governing Body of Sport Guidelines
- If supervision in changing rooms or similar environment is required, ensure staff work in pairs and never enter opposite sex changing rooms.
- With mixed groups, supervision should be by a male and female member of staff, where possible.
- You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the activity.
- You must place the well-being and safety of the child or young person above the development of performance.
- You must feel confident to report concerns or worries about other staff members, elected members or volunteers to the appropriate person in authority
- If a child or young person arrives at the activity or service showing any signs or symptoms that give you cause for concern you must act appropriately and follow the procedures.
- On a home visit do not enter a room or building if a child invites you in – In this case ask the child to get their parent/adult who looks after them or rearrange the visit.

It is not good practice to:

- Spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others.
- Take children or young people alone on a car journey, however short
- Take children or young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- Arrange to meet children or young people outside an organised activity or service

If these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full prior knowledge and consent of your line manager and the child or young person's parent/carer.

Staff, Directors and volunteers should never:

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use it yourself.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to child or young person, even in fun.
- Let any allegation a child or young person makes be ignored or go unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children and young people that they can do for themselves e.g. assist with changing. (NB. It may be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children or young people, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents. In an emergency situation that requires this type of help, you should endeavour to have someone present and fully inform the parents as soon as it is reasonably possible. In such situations it is important that you ensure all staff etc are sensitive to the child or young person and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion/)
- Share a room with a child or young person.
- Enter areas designated only for the opposite sex.

POLICY HISTORY

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date