



Child Protection Policy Statement Procedures and Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Child Protection Policy Statement and Guidelines for the Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated member organisations (tenants & residents groups). The aim of this document is to provide an understanding of policies and procedures in place which demonstrate the Federations values and commitment in this particular area and provide guidance for staff/volunteers/children/parents/carers about what to do in specific circumstances.

Within the area of child protection it is vital that all staff, including volunteers know what to do if they are concerned about a child. It is equally important that parents/carers and young people themselves are aware that the Federation and its affiliated member organisations takes the safety and welfare of children/young people into consideration in every activity that is undertaken.

This document can be read alongside a copy of "What to Do if You are Worried a Child is being Abused (2006)" This booklet contains specific information that can be used and it is strongly recommended that all staff have access to and have read this document. A copy is available in the Federation office or form download at www.dfes.co.uk.

The first part of this document provides the Federations Child Protection Policy Statement followed by Guidelines and Procedures.

The most important thing to remember is that the key to robust child protection policy and procedures is that they are used/shared/works for staff and children/young people involved in our organisation and it is reviewed annually. Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated member organisations accept that Child Protection Policy and Procedures are not enough in themselves to cover the wider remit of Safeguarding which is primarily about prevention and will develop suitable training and provide advice to staff and members where necessary.



Child Protection Policy Statement.

Leeds Tenants Federation including its affiliated member organisations (tenants and residents groups) are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people, recognising the responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated organisations acknowledge its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Directors, staff and members will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

In implementing this child protection policy Leeds Tenants Federation (including its affiliated member organisations) will:

- Ensure that all staff and members understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- Ensure that all staff and members understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's *Child Protection Procedures* and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all staff and members understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a staff or members conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection;
- Ensure that the named person understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Social Work);
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff or members are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all staff and members to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people;
- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's *Complaints Procedure*;
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures

Section 1 - Introduction:

These procedures have been designed to ensure the welfare and protection of any child and young person who access the services provided by Leeds Tenants Federation or involved with activities of its affiliated member organisations (tenants and residents associations or groups). The procedures recognise that child protection can be a very difficult subject for directors, staff and members to deal with to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else's problem to deal with. Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated members organisations are committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all staff and members to act appropriately to any concerns that arise in respect of a child or young person.

Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated member organisations are committed to equal opportunities. It is recognised that the movement wouldn't exist without the many hundreds of volunteers involved today ensuring that encouragement is provided to those individuals considered suitable for the many roles within the Federation is essential. However we must not lose sight of the fact that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people. Therefore all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people. A sound recruitment and selection procedure will help screen out those who are not suitable to work with children and young people on behalf of Leeds Tenants Federation and its affiliated member organisations. This will take into account the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

Section 2 - Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved but not to allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to be taken. It is also important that child abuse and child protection are openly discussed as this helps create an environment where people are more aware of the issues and sensitive to the needs of children. Open discussions also create environments that deter abusers.

Child abuse both within and outside of the family can occur anywhere. This includes sport, leisure, cultural, religious and care environments and on the transport to and from these places. It is crucial that all allegations and suspicions are treated seriously and appropriate action taken. An environment that explicitly attempts to identify and report abuse helps create a safer culture for children and young people.

Allegations may also relate to poor practice where an adult's or peer's behaviour is inappropriate and may cause concern to a young person. Poor

practice is unacceptable in a voluntary movement where good faith and companionship is strived for and will be treated seriously with appropriate action taken. Sometimes a child or young person may not be aware that practice is poor or abusive and they may tolerate behaviour without complaint. An example of this is a child with a disability who is used to being excluded from activities or a bullied young person who is used to being mocked. Children may also be used to their cultural needs being ignored or their race abused. This does not make it acceptable.

Many children and young people will lack the skills or confidence to complain and it is therefore extremely important that adults throughout the Federation are able to advocate for the children and young people. Advocating for children and young people who find it hard to speak out is part of creating a safer culture for them.

For information about the categories of abuse and signs and indicators see Appendix 1.

This child protection policy is inclusive and the same action should be taken regardless of the needs and background of the child or young person. The Federation recognises however that some children and young people are disadvantaged by their experiences. Those considered additionally vulnerable are children and young people with disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups.

Bearing in mind that children and young people can be and are disadvantaged by these and other experiences, it is important that members and staff be extra vigilant in creating a safe culture.

Concerns can be brought to attention from a variety of sources for example:

- a child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- a third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;
- a report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Section 3 - Responsibility for Safeguarding.

We all have a moral and legal responsibility for the safety and protection of children and young people. However there are people designated at every level of the Federation including affiliated member organisations (tenants and residents groups) who take additional responsibility for child protection with the aim of making the work of the Federation as safe as possible for all concerned, especially that work conducted within the community.

The title 'designated person' is an umbrella term that applies to all individuals that are nominated or appointed by affiliated organisations which engage with children and young people, or Management Committee of Leeds Tenants Federation. The designated person for child protection should be clearly identified in every setting.

Every 'designated person' holds a position of significant responsibility. The Leeds Tenants Federation therefore requires that prior to appointment, every designated person is considered to be a 'fit and proper' to hold a position as defined in Appendix 2. The Leeds Tenants Federation also requires that all 'designated persons' are perceived as being approachable, having a child-centered approach and the ability to maintain this perspective when carrying out their role.

All designated persons need to have completed an LTF Safeguarding and Best Practice Workshop and have completed a CRB Enhanced Disclosure via the Leeds Tenants Federation office. Additional, role-specific support will be made available to 'designated persons' who will be expected to participate.

Affiliated member organisations (tenants and residents groups) of Leeds Tenants Federation, will have the responsibility to ensure their members are aware of the designated person within their organisation and ensure the details of that the designated person are registered with Leeds Tenants Federation.

Leeds Tenants Federation has an appointed designated person who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for staff and members to consult with. The named persons for Child Protection within Leeds Tenants Federation are:

Named Person for Child Protection:	Quintin Bradley (Federation Co-ordinator)
Work telephone number:	0113 2145332
Mobile number:	07891271369

Deputy	Name of contact person:	Michael Hall (Federation Co-ordinator)
	Work telephone number:	0113 2145332
	Mobile number:	07737476957

The role and responsibilities of the designated person(s) are:

- To ensure that all members and staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.

- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- The designated person will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures to the appropriate agency and the LTF office. Records will be kept in a secure place and contents will be confidential.

Section 4 - Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child

Leeds Tenants Federation (and its affiliated member organisations) recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse – Appendix 3. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However Leeds Tenants Federation believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance members or staff will:

Stage 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay?" But never use leading questions
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a Child/young person makes a disclosure;
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
- Notify the Organisation's designated person for Child Protection.
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure; The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the Child Protection Information Form (Appendix 4) and ensure it is signed and dated.
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;

Stage 2

- The designated person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the designated person will contact the police and/or Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care Emergency Duty Team on 0113 2409536. If a referral is made direct to the Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care this must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.

NB – Parents/Carers will need to be informed about any referral to Children and Young People's Social Care unless to do so would place the child at increased risk of harm.

- The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on 0800 096 7719.

Section 5 - Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

Leeds Tenants Federation (including affiliated member organisations) will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The person receiving the information must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The designated person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO - who is based within Children and Young People's Social Care, Child Protection Unit 0113 2478653) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, Leeds Tenants Federation will report the incident to Leeds City Council in the case of staff members and ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident of staff or member.

- Consideration will be made by Leeds Tenants Federation that allegations made against Affiliated member organisations or individual members are referred to the Housing provider supporting the Affiliated member organisation.

Section 6 – Management and supervision of staff / volunteers.

Leeds Tenants Federation is committed to the appropriate management and supervision of staff and members working with children and or young people to ensure that appropriate lines of accountability are in place.

- Staff will receive regular supervision meetings in line with the Federation's supervision policy. These will be recorded and the notes agreed by both parties.
- When a member of staff is involved in a child protection incident this will be reviewed within supervision i.e. recording, assessments, monitoring arrangements etc. and decisions relating to the level of involvement will be taken by the appropriate officer.

Section 7 - Recording and managing confidential information.

A pro-forma for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect is attached Child Protection Information Form (Appendix 4). The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma which needs to be forwarded to the Federation office for the attention of the Federation Co-ordinator.

The Leeds Tenants Federation complies with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1988.

Section 8 – Disseminating/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

The Leeds Tenants Federation will review its Child Protection policy and procedures annually and have them endorsed by the Chair of the Management Committee who accepts overall responsibility for the service being provided. Any changes/amendments will to be clarified and shared with staff and where significant changes appear these must be relayed to Member Organisations.

Appendix 1

Definitions of Abuse as cited in: Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2006, Chapter 1, P: 37-38)

PHYSICAL ABUSE: May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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. 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: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities 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: 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 caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2 – Fit and Proper Person Checklist

When appointing a designated person, ensure that you have considered their appropriateness for this role by checking them against the following.

Essential

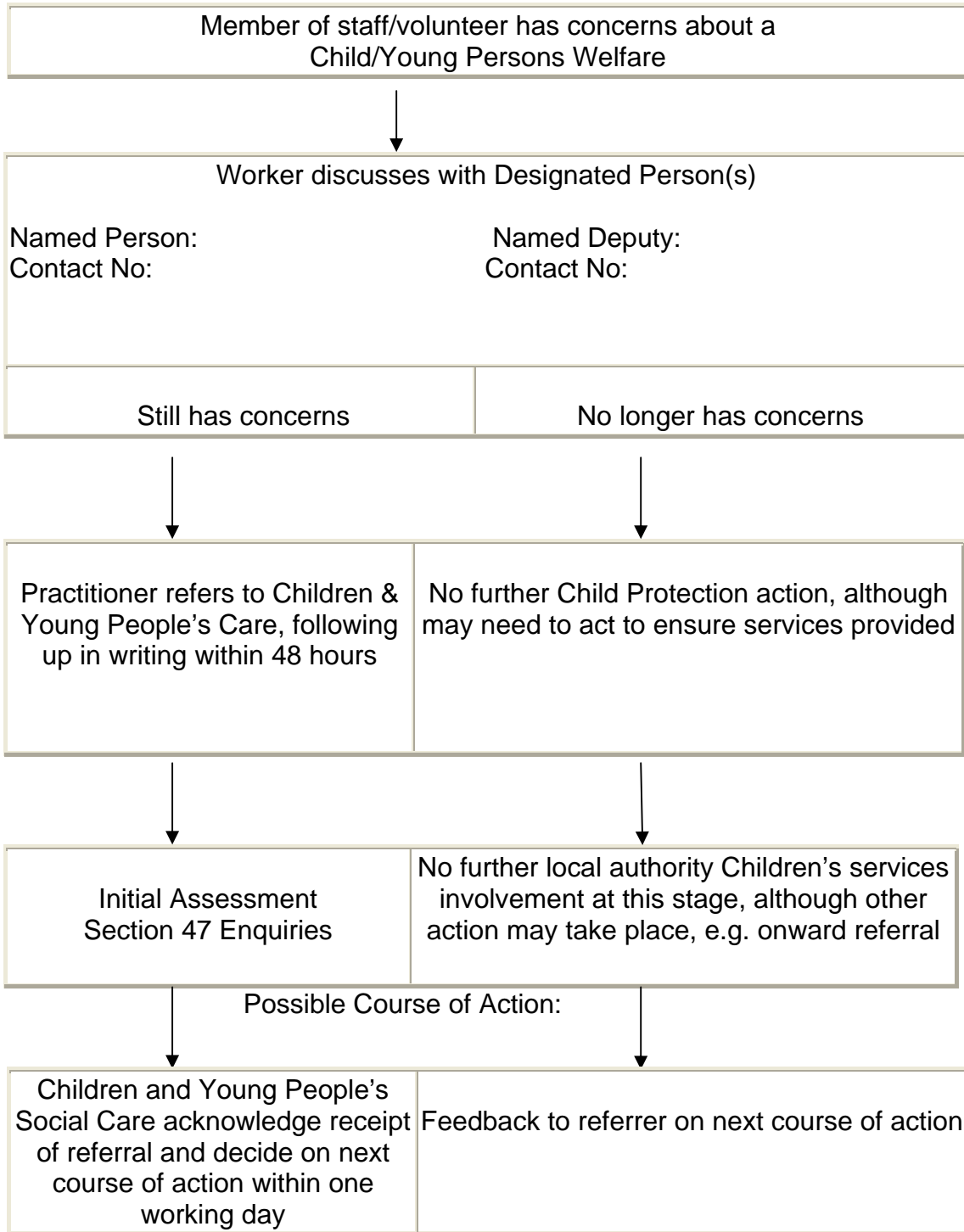
- Willing and able to provide at least two references
- Completion of an Enhanced CRB check via the Leeds Tenants Federation office and acceptance by the LTF of the outcome.
A history of offending will not prevent someone working with children. Each case is considered on its merit. The LTF office can advise on the current methods for checking this process and whether it has been satisfactorily completed
- Attendance at a LTF Safeguarding and Best Practice Workshop
- Willingness to update skills and knowledge
- Previous experience of working with children
- Knowledge of and positive attitudes to equal opportunities
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks
- Mental stability, integrity and flexibility

Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection issues
- Knowledge of child protection legislation

NB. If any person is considered not to be a 'fit' person to work with children, his/her application should be refused.

Appendix 2 – Flow Chart



Appendix 3

Useful Contacts/Support Organisations

If you have concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

You need to ensure that you speak to the appropriate organisations who can listen to and record your concern, and then take appropriate action.

In Leeds, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

- Children and Young People's Social Care (Social Services)

Call Centre (normal working hours)	0113 3984702
Out of Hours (emergency duty team)	0113 2409536
- West Yorkshire Police 0845 6060606
- NSPCC Leeds Office 0113 2172200

If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 - Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

The NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helpline is a free, multilingual service for the UK's Asian communities providing counselling, information and advice to ANYONE who is concerned about the welfare of a child, including:

- Parents, carers or relatives who need advice
- Children or young people in need of help and advice
- Education, health and social welfare professionals seeking culturally sensitive advice and information.

Child Protection Information Form



Completed by: Position.....

Name of Member Organisation

<p>Case Name: (Accused Person/Organisation)</p> <p>Position held:</p> <p>Relationship: Gender: Male / Female (To alleged victim)</p> <p>Contact details:</p> <p>Phone No Date of birth:.....</p> <p>Age: Ethnic background:</p>
<p>Name of Alleged Victim/young person concerned: (if more than one)</p> <p>Age: Date of birth:.....</p> <p>Role/Position: Any disabilities</p> <p>Gender: Male / Female Ethnic background:</p> <p>Contact: Tel. No: (Name & address of parent/carer)</p>

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External Agencies Contacted:
(Please provide name, contact number, advice received and contact date)

Police:
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Social Services:
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Other:
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(e.g. NSPCC)
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Signed: **Date:**
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