



CHILD / YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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CONTENTS

Section	<u>Page no</u>
1	Introduction..... Page 3
	1.1. Background and Aims..... Page 3
	1.2. Key Definitions..... Page 3
	1.3. Legislation..... Page 5
2	Recruitment and Training..... Page 5
3	Responsibility, monitoring and review..... Page 6
4	Child/ Young Person protection procedures for staff members..... Page 6
	4.1. Guidance..... Page 6
	4.2. Listening to the Child/Young Person..... Page 7
	4.3. Staff Procedure..... Page 7
5	Child/Young Person protection procedures for Safeguarding Co-ordinators..... Page 8
6	Recording information and Data Protection Page 9
7	Linked Policies and Procedures Page 9
8	Appendices..... Page 10
	Appendix 1 – Child/Young Person Protection - Staff Code Of Contact..... Page 10
	Appendix 2 – Child/Young Person Safeguarding Log..... Page 11
	Appendix 3 – Referral and Assessment Form..... Page 12
	Appendix 4 – Contacts for Referral/Useful contact numbers and websites..... Page 15

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Aims

Chevin Housing Group takes the prevention and detection of abuse and neglect of children and young people very seriously. This Policy and Procedure demonstrates our commitment to protecting children and young people in all aspects of our activities and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of staff who suspect abuse, neglect or the inadequate care of a child/young person.

Chevin Housing Group will appoint two Safeguarding Co-ordinators who will take the lead on all child and young person protection issues and support staff in adhering to our child/young person protection procedures. In addition, we have established a Code of Conduct for staff who come into contact with children and young people (see Appendix 1).

1.2 Key Definitions of Child Abuse, Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children, Child Protection

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance: ¹

- 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

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need to protect children from harm is reduced.

There are four main categories of abuse; these categories are defined by the government, all of which can cause long term damage to a child:

- Physical;
- Emotional;
- Neglect; and
- Sexual.

Physical - could be hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or causing other physical harm to a child. This could include deliberately making a child unwell.

¹ 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) – Dept. of Health, Home Office, Dept. for Education and Skills.

Emotional - is when people regularly mistreat a child and it has a serious affect on the child's emotional development. It could be making a child feel they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate for example. It can also be when children are expected to do things which are in appropriate and this makes them frightened.

Sexual Abuse - is forcing or encouraging a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It does not just include when physical contact takes place. It could also be encouraging children to look at pornographic material. Or, it could mean encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect - is when people regularly fail to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, which may seriously affect the child's health or development. For example, not providing suitable food, shelter or clothing, or not giving the child the basic emotional support they need.

In addition, children are too often directly or indirectly affected by domestic violence and that this can have a very negative impact on their lives. Half of all reported incidents of domestic violence involve families with children.² Children in households where a family member is experiencing domestic violence are at risk of abuse themselves. Evidence shows that half of male perpetrators of domestic violence had also been physically abusive to children in the family.³

Children with a disability may be at an increased risk of abuse due to various factors such as powerlessness to protect themselves and adequately communicate to outside parties that abuse has occurred.⁴

Children and young people may be at risk of sexual abuse from usually older men who want to exploit them for sexual purposes, including prostitution. Girls and young women are the most common victims of such crimes. However, boys and young men may also be vulnerable. This may involve some level of grooming, (see Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation DCSF 2009). The issue of trafficking of young women and girls for sexual exploitation has been highlighted, and Europe's first dedicated centre for victims of people trafficking opened in Sheffield in 2006.⁵

Chevin Housing Group will have due regard to issues around race, religion, culture, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation when operating our child and young person protection procedures.

² Mirrlees-Black, 1999

³ Metropolitan Police Service, 2001

⁴ Safeguarding disabled children DCSF, 2009

⁵ Links to Chevin's Domestic Violence Policy and Procedure

1.3 Legislation

The Children Act 1989 and 2004, provide the current legal basis for child protection, and builds on and strengthens the framework set out in the Children Act 1989. The Children Act 1989 and the 2004 defines a child as 'anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age for example and is living independently does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children act 1989'.

The Children's Act places a duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility. The duty placed partner agencies such as housing associations to cooperate and work in partnership in order to improve children and young people well bring as defined by the five outcomes in 'Every Child Matters', they are as follows:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

The launch of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme in October 2009 is supported by the legal framework of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

2. Recruitment and Training

- 2.1 All new and existing Chevin Housing Group staff that will come into contact with children and vulnerable people are subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. This includes our Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) staff. New staff are not permitted to work outside the office until checks have been completed, unless accompanied. In addition, Chevin will expect Resident Panel members and other volunteers who are regularly involved with 'on-scheme' and community events at our invitation to have been CRB checked.
- 2.2 Chevin will adhere to the regulations set out under the new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) from October 2009, whereby increased safeguards will be introduced further enhancing protection of children and vulnerable adults. Refer to Chevin's Vulnerable Adult Policy. As an employer, Chevin will ensure that from November 2010 onwards all new and existing employees who work regularly with vulnerable groups are ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) registered in accordance with VBS guidelines and regulations established by the Home Office.
- 2.2 All staff including relevant contractors, who may come into contact with children and young people through their day to day duties, will receive advice and training on child protection issues, and what action they should take if

they are concerned about a child / young person via induction in-house and external courses as required.

The designated Safeguarding Co-ordinators for Chevin will receive specialised training from the appropriate authorities to assist in their role and duties as Co-ordinators.

3. Responsibility, monitoring and review

- 3.1 The Board of Chevin Housing Group will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. Responsibility for implementation of the procedures will lie with the designated Safeguarding Co-ordinators. The policy and procedure will be reviewed every two years minimum, or in light of any changes in legislation and good practice, or joint working with our key partners.

4. Child Protection Procedures for staff members

4.1. Guidance

The NSPCC has issued guidance on recognising the signs of child abuse. Children and young people often find it very difficult to talk about the abuse they are experiencing so adults have a vital role to play in looking out for the possible signs. The following are some indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of, or is suffering harm:

- A baby who cries constantly
- A child who is bruised or injured
- A child who is very withdrawn
- A child who is very dirty or smelly
- A child who is hungry, or under or over-dressed for the time of year
- A child who is left at home alone
- A child who is left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention when they need it
- A child who is constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- A child who seems very afraid of particular adults, and reluctant to be alone with them
- A child who has unexplained changeable emotions, such as depression, anxiety or severe aggression
- A child who shows sexual knowledge or behaviour that is inappropriate for their age
- A child who is growing up in a home where there is domestic violence
- A child who is living with parents or carers who are involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse, or has mental health problems.

In some cases these signs may have an acceptable explanation. On the other hand, this list does not cover every possibility. You may see other things in the child/young person's behaviour or circumstances that worry you.

⁶ NSPCC

Although members of Chevin staff may have limited contact with children and young people on a day-to-day basis the most important thing to remember is that the member of staff should trust their gut feeling that something is not right, **trust their judgement and take action.**

Don't think 'What if I'm wrong?' – think 'What if I'm right?'

4.2 Listening to the Child/Young Person

If a child/young person says that he or she is being abused or provides information that may suggest that they are being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- Be calm. Reassure the child/young person
- Do not make promises you cannot keep, for example telling the child/young person that you won't tell anyone else, or saying everything will be alright.
- Discuss with the child/young person who needs to be told about the situation.
- Take what the child/young person says seriously.
- Ask questions only to clarify understanding of what the child/young person has said. Do not interrogate the child/young person. Ask only 'open' questions e.g. child: "I got hit," worker: "How did that happen?" **not** "Who hit you?" Do not introduce any information that the child/young person has not volunteered.
- Let the child/young person understand what they have said and that you will act upon it.

It is not the responsibility of a member of Chevin staff to decide if a child or young person has been, or is being abused. Suspecting abuse does not automatically trigger a formal enquiry but will lead to an assessment of the situation by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator to assess risk. If a member of staff is concerned, they should contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator who is responsible for any necessary follow up.

4.3. Staff Procedure

The following step-by-step procedures set out actions which should be taken by **any member of staff** where any concerns relating to child/young person welfare arise.

If you have a concern relating to the welfare of a child/young person concerning tenants, service users or others, report this immediately **by telephone or face-to-face** to one of the two Safeguarding Co-ordinators, who are:

- Jaz Bangerh, Group Human Resources Manager
Telephone: (01924) 831 004
- George Walker, Performance and Business Improvement Manager

Telephone: (0113) 202 1268 Mobile: 07739919123

In the event that both of the two Safeguarding Co-ordinators cannot be contacted, the member of staff should contact their own line manager by telephone or face-to-face who will have responsibility for advising whether or not the issue should be reported directly to children's social care, or if it is suspected that a crime has been committed, directly to the Police.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will ask the member of staff who has raised concerns to complete a brief **Child/Young Person Protection Log** (see Appendix 2). The member of staff should complete and return the form within one working day. **The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will make a judgement whether or not the issue should be reported immediately to the Children's Social Care or the Police when it is felt that a child/young person may be at significant risk.**

If your suspicion or allegation concerns another member of staff, this should be reported immediately **by telephone or face-to-face** to:

- Jaz Bangerh, Group Human Resources Manager
Telephone: (01924) 831 004

In the event that Jaz is unavailable, contact:

- George Walker, Performance and Business Improvement Manager
Telephone: (0113) 202 1268 Mobile: 07739919123

Chevin recognises that there may be a need to offer support to any staff member who is involved in child/young person protection incidents. Staff should contact the HR team to access support.

Chevin Housing Group is fully supportive of any staff member who 'whistle blows' for the sake of a child/young person and it is important that any such concerns are raised as a matter of urgency with the Safeguarding Co-ordinators. Refer to Chevin's Whistle Blowing policy.

5. Child Protection Procedures for the Child Protection Co-ordinators

5.1 On receipt of the Child/Young Person Protection Log, the response within one working day will be to contact the Police if he or she feels that a criminal offence may have been committed against the child and contact the Children's Social Care Department of the relevant Local Authority to:

- Discuss the reasons for concern with the Police / Social Care
- Discuss the situation with appropriate professionals and agencies
- Consider whether, on the basis of the available evidence, there are concerns about the impairment to the child/young person's health and development
- Consider whether further enquiries, assessment and/or intervention is needed
- If further action is needed, consider when it should start and how best to undertake it.

At the end of the discussion about the child/young person, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Children's Social Care should be clear about who will be taking what action or that no further action is necessary.

Referrals should be made by telephone as soon as possible but should be followed up in writing within 48 hours on the **Referral and Assessment form** (see Appendix 3).

Children's Social Care teams should acknowledge referrals within one working day of receipt. If this does not occur within three working days, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact them again.

This policy contains a detailed contact list for partner agencies and useful websites for signposting staff and residents (see Appendix 4.)

6. Recording information and Data Protection

- 6.1 It is crucial that we maintain a factual and accurate record of any allegation, suspicion or concerns raised relating to child/young person welfare. Any evidence relating to any individual case will be stored in a secure place in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Any reports and associated correspondence will be stored by the Chief Executive's Office in a specifically named secure file. Chevin Housing Group will restrict information on a need to know basis but will share relevant information with local authority partners in order that they can carry out their safeguarding responsibilities, in accordance with our duty to cooperate.⁷

7. Linked Policies and Procedures

Our Child Protection Policy and Procedure is linked to our:

Domestic Violence Policy and Procedure
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy
Vulnerable Adult Policy
Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan

⁷ Children Act (2004)

8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Child/Young Person Protection – Staff Code of Conduct

1. Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
2. Value children and young people as individuals, regardless of their gender, religion, ethnicity, disability, or sexuality.
3. Always report allegations of abuse made directly by a child/young person, or any suspicions directly to Chevin's Safeguarding Co-ordinators, **even where an allegation is against you.**
4. Always show a name badge before entering a property. Do not enter a property unless an adult is present.
5. In line with our Internet and e-mail Acceptable Use Policy, accessing or downloading offensive or obscene material from the internet or via e-mail will be treated as Gross Misconduct and could lead to instant dismissal.
6. Always ask a parent or guardian of a child to complete a Photograph Consent form for both taking photographs or using photographs for publicity material. If you have a mobile phone that includes a camera (whether it is a work or personal phone) do not take pictures of children and young people when you are at work. Such actions may be misinterpreted and leave you open to allegations.
7. Staff organising events or activities involving children or vulnerable adults should carry out a risk assessment prior to the event or activity, highlighting any potential risk in terms of health and safety.
8. Parental consent forms should be completed for any activity or youth project where a parent or carer is not present.
9. Do not give out personal details to children, young people or their parents who are in receipt of services from Chevin Housing. This includes personal mobile phone numbers or personal email addresses. Do not communicate with them on social networking sites. Such actions may be misconstrued and you could put yourself at risk of allegations of mistrust / abuse.

Appendix 2

Child/Young Person Protection Log

Complete this form and pass this form to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator within one working day.

Where the issue relates to a member of staff, pass the form to Jaz Bangerh, Group HR Manager or George Walker, Performance and Business Improvement Manager.

Date:	
Report from: Staff name and title	
Name of child/young person involved:	
Name of Parent / Carer:	
Details known of child/young person: age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, first language, whether interpreter required, address, telephone	
Issue Details: what, where and when you noticed; was the child accompanied if so who by? Nature of the injury or behaviour; what the child said (verbatim), what you said (verbatim); witnesses; other adults involved and what they said (verbatim)	
Signature:	
Safeguarding Co-ordinator received information	
Date:	
Time:	
Signed:	

Appendix 3

Referral and Assessment form

For completion by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator – to be passed on to Children’s Social Care / Police.

All urgent referrals should be initiated by telephone and followed up in writing within one working day.

Telephone referrals should be made to the relevant local authority contact – see Appendix 4.

Details of Referrer	
Date this form sent or faxed:	
Report from: name of Safeguarding Co-ordinator	
Contact Telephone No: (Including mobile)	
Has a telephone referral been made to the Children’s Social Care’s contact centre Yes / No	
Date and Time of referral:	
Name of person who took referral:	
Reference number:	
Details of child / young person	
Family Name:	Forename (s):
Date of Birth:	Gender – Male / Female
Ethnicity:	Religion:
Child/ Young person’s first language:	Is an interpreter / Signer required? Yes / No Please give details:
Does the child/young person have a disability / long-term health problem?	Any special needs?
Address:	Telephone number:

Details of child / young person's principal carers Please include ALL parents / carers	
Family Name:	Forename (s):
Date of Birth:	Gender – Male / Female
Ethnicity:	Religion:
First language:	Is an interpreter / Signer required? Yes / No Please give details:
Does the child/young person have a disability / long-term health problem?	Any special needs?
Address:	Telephone number:
Details of other household members (where known):	
Full name:	Relationship to child / young person:
Date of Birth:	
Referrals will be shared with the family and should not be made without their knowledge / agreement unless this would jeopardise the child / young person's safety.	
Does the child / young person know about the referral? Yes / No	

If No, please state the reason:

Does the parent / carer know about the referral?

Yes / No

If No, please state the reason:

Reason for Referral

Issue Details: what, where and when you noticed; was the child/young person accompanied if so who by? Nature of the injury or behaviour; what the child/young person said (verbatim), what you said (verbatim); witnesses; other adults involved and what they said (verbatim)

Please include any attachments where necessary.

Signature of Safeguarding Co-ordinator:

Appendix 4

Contacts for Referral

For Barnsley

<p><i>Directorate for Children, Young People and Families</i></p> <p>Area Assessment Teams:</p> <p>Assessment East Brierley Hall (covering East of the borough)</p> <p>Assessment West Wellington House (covering West of the borough)</p>	<p>01226 438831</p> <p>01226 772423</p>	<p>Contact the Assessment Team covering the area the child lives in.</p> <p>Staffed 8.45am-5pm (Mon-Thurs), 8.45am-4.30pm (Fri).</p>
<p>Out of Hours Emergency Duty Social Work Team</p>	<p>0844 9841800</p>	<p>Between hours of 5pm-8.45am (Mon-Thurs), 4.30pm- 8.45am (Fri), 24 hours (Sat and Sun).</p>

For Bassetlaw

<p><i>Children and Young People's Services</i> (Children's Social Care Team)</p>	<p>01623 520520</p>	<p>For all enquiries covering the North Nottinghamshire area.</p>
<p>Out of Hours Emergency Team</p>	<p>0115 8447333</p>	
<p>Social Services Duty Worker</p>	<p>01777 716161</p>	

For Chesterfield

<p><i>Child Protection Services</i> Derbyshire County Council West street Chesterfield S40 4TZ</p>	<p>08456 058058 (24 hours)</p> <p>Email: child.protection@derbyshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>All cases relating to children or social services will be investigated by Derbyshire County Council.</p>
<p>Out of Hours</p>	<p>01629 532600</p>	<p>This number is for professional use only and NOT for the public. Staffed from 8pm-8am, this number bypasses the 24 hour Call Centre number.</p>

For Doncaster

<i>Children and Young People's Services</i> Children at Risk – Duty and Assessment Service The Council House College Road Doncaster DN1 3AJ	01302 762245	The Duty and Assessment Team are the first point of contact for initial enquiries and referrals.
Emergency Out of Hours	01302 796000	

For East Riding of Yorkshire

Child Enquiries District Teams: -Pocklington -Bridlington and Driffield -Goole and Howden -Hessle -Skirlaugh	01759 305704 01482 396761 01482 396842 01482 640131 01482 396532	The Teams provide a range of services to protect and support children, young people and their families following an assessment of need. Staffed 8.30am-5.30pm (Mon-Fri)
Call Centre	01482 393939	24 hour helpline for all enquiries, which will then be referred to the appropriate area of issue.
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	01482 880826	

For Hull

Hull City Council City Treasury Guildhall Road Hull HU1 2AB	01482 300300	All enquiries to go through this number in the first instance and will be referred to appropriate area office.
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	01482 788080	

Kirklees

<i>Kirklees Children and Young People's Service</i> Duty and Assessment Team	01924 326093/ 01924 483792	
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service	01924 326489	

For Leeds

<i>Children and Young People's Social Care</i> Head Office Merrion House Leeds LS2 8QB	0113 222 4403	Staffed till 6pm. The helpline staff will pass your referral to the duty officer who then must respond within 24 hours.
Contact Centre	0845 125 4113	
	Minicom 0845 127 1113	
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	0113 240 9536	

For North Yorkshire (covering Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough, Selby)

<i>The Children and Young People's Service</i> North Yorkshire County Council Customer Services Team County Hall East Block Northallerton DL7 8AH	0845 8727374 Email: cru.customer.services@northyorks.gov.uk	Initial enquiries are referred to the Customer Services Team. Staffed 8am-8pm (Mon-Fri), 9am-5pm (Saturday).
Out of Hours	0845 8727374	
Professional Service Enquiries	01609 536999	This number is NOT for general public use.

For Rotherham

<i>Children's Social Care Access Team</i> 5 th Floor Crinoline House Effingham Square Rotherham S65 1AW	01709 823987 Email: childrensocialcareaccess team@rotherham.gov.uk	
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Teams	01709 364689	

For Sheffield

<i>Children and Families Social Services</i> Duty Social Worker	0114 273 4934	The service can be accessed 24 hours a day/7 days a week and enquiries will be directed to the appropriate area office.
Area Offices: The Old School House Darnall Station Road Sheffield S9 4JT Meade House 96-100 Middlewood Road Hillsborough Sheffield S6 4HA	0114 203 7463 0114 203 9591	

For York

<i>Children and Family Services</i> Customer Advice Centre PO Box 402 10-12 George Hudson Street York YO1 6ZE	01904 554141 (please note: due to a restructure, this number may change from September) Email: housing.socialcare@york.gov.uk	The Customer Advice Centre will direct telephone calls to the appropriate department
Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team	0845 0349417	

For Wakefield

Ring Social Care Direct	0845 850 3503 Fax:01924 303455 Minicom: 01924 303450 Email: social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk	24 hours a day/7 days a week.
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Useful Contact numbers/websites

NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 800 500

Kidscape – www.kidscape.org

Helpline: 08451 205 204

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre – www.ceop.gov.uk

Helpline: 0870 000 3344

Department for Children, Schools and Families www.dcsf.gov.uk

Every Child Matters www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) – www.isa.gov.org

Contact Centre: 0300 123 1111

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) – www.crb.gov.uk

General Enquiries: 0870 909 0811

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence – www.nice.org.uk

Telephone: 0845 003 7780

Contact details and web addresses for the Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Barnsley

Safeguarding Children Board 01226 772400

www.safeguardingchildrenbarnsley.com

Bassetlaw

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board 0115 9934332

www.bassetlaw.gov.uk

Chesterfield

Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board 01629 537964

www.derbyshirescb.org.uk

Doncaster

Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board 01302 737621

www.doncaster.gov.uk

East Riding of Yorkshire

East Riding Safeguarding Children Board 01482 396999

www.ersb.org.uk

Hull

Hull Safeguarding Children Board 01482 300300

www.hullcc.gov.uk

Kirklees
Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board 01484 225161
www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk

Leeds
Leeds Safeguarding Children Board 0113 2868654
www.leedslscb.org.uk

North Yorkshire
North Yorkshire County Council Safeguarding Children Board 01609 536909
www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

Rotherham
Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board 01709 823 906
www.rscb.org.uk

Sheffield
Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board 0114 273 4450
www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org.uk
Sheffield Safeguarding Children Advisory Service 0114 205 3535

York
York Safeguarding Children Board 01904 555695
www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk

Wakefield
Wakefield Safeguarding Children Board 01977 722047
www.wakefield.gov.uk