

# Children & Young People Policy & Procedures

## **Introduction**

Refugees Welcome believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice that protects them. This policy applies to all refugee and evacuee groups whom Refugees Welcome support.

## **Recruitment of Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers**

There is a robust application and interview process for all volunteers working with families in the programme as per the Recruitment Policy including DBS checks and taking references. Appropriate recruitment systems are in place for Trustees, Contractors and Advisors.

## **Training for Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers**

Volunteers working with families on the programme will receive safeguarding training to cover: how to identify a concern, how to raise concerns, how to respond to safeguarding concerns. This ensures that volunteers can: Recognise, Respond and Record any cause for concern and Risk Assess the situation for appropriate escalation of concerns as outlined in this policy. Trustees, Contractors, Advisors who do not have day to day contact with the families will be suitably briefed on Safeguarding matters.

Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers are expected to act in an appropriate and professional manner and to avoid any kind of conduct which could undermine the wellbeing of the families or the service.

*Examples of improper conduct in relation to safeguarding - see Appendix 1.*

The Designated Person has access to specialist safeguarding advice and support through Cheshire East Council (CEC).

## **Concerns relating to RW Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers**

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This document outlines the policy and procedures for protecting children and young people in cases where there is a safeguarding cause for concern. These procedures cover incidents where a concern is raised regarding a volunteer or member of Trustees, Contractor, or Advisor. In such cases, this procedure will be followed in relation to escalating concerns and reporting incidents for protection of a child/children/ young person.

A volunteer or Trustee, Contractor or Advisor who is the subject of a safeguarding allegation will be suspended from providing services and the Commissioner informed. Until the matter is resolved with the Commissioner and any appropriate reports made to the relevant statutory authorities and professional bodies the suspension will continue.

This policy will apply to Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and volunteers under Refugees Welcome projects. The Community Sponsorship Scheme also has a responsibility to report to the Home Office in the first two years.

## **What is meant by children and young people?**

A child for safeguarding purposes is any person between birth and under the age of 18. This includes young people. There are some exceptions to this: Children who are placed in local authority care are usually classed as children until aged 21, and those with some special needs are regarded as children while aged under 25.

## **Refugees Welcome recognises that:**

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children and young people's welfare.

## **The purpose of the policy is:**

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive Refugees Welcome services through their families.
- To provide Volunteers Trustees, Contractors, and Advisors with guidance on procedures that they should adopt if they suspect a child or young person may be or has been experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- This policy applies to all Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Refugees Welcome at any time.

## **We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and guidelines for good practice.

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- Recruiting Volunteers, Trustees, Contractors and Advisors safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made, including requiring references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, Trustees, Contractors, Advisors and Volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing effective management for Volunteers through supervision, support and training, ensuring it remains up to date.
- Ensuring that Volunteers, Trustees, Contractors, and Advisors, do not agree to friend requests on social media platform, (e.g.Facebook) 'Follow' children or send private messages to children on social media or via 'What's App' encrypted services. Nor request to 'follow' children on personal websites. All communications should be transparent and open to scrutiny.

## Identifying Concerns

How to identify concerns will be covered in mandatory safeguarding training for all volunteers. A list of signs to look out for is included in Appendix II.

## Safeguarding Procedure

In the event of any concerns regarding a child or young person then:

- Any Volunteer who has a concern about a child or young person should discuss it by phone with the CVSCE Supervisor, Supervising Trustee, Project Manager or the Safeguarding Lead (CSS), whichever is your main point of contact, at the earliest opportunity. Record the discussion using a First Account form which should then be sent to the CVSCE Supervisor for recording.
- Trustees, Contractors and Advisors should share concerns through their own management structures, and with the relevant designated person for RW without delay.

**If the child or young person is in immediate danger or you suspect that a crime has been committed the police MUST be contacted. Seek urgent medical care if any injury.**

Where it is agreed that there is a potential safeguarding issue:

- The Designated Person in RW will then also be informed.
- If your main contact person is not available, any of the following alternatives may be informed:

Volunteer Supervisor CVSCE  
RW Project Manager  
RW Trustee  
RW Designated Person (Safeguarding Lead)  
The Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

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- If your main contact person was not immediately available, they must also be informed at the earliest opportunity.

**In an emergency and out of hours Cheshire East Emergency Duty Team should be informed,** and the information shared with the Designated Person at the earliest opportunity.

## **Designated Person**

The Designated Person will be informed at the earliest available opportunity of any concerns about a child or young person that has been passed to the CVSCE Supervisor or any other person as per this policy. The Designated Person will ensure that progress is monitored and feedback received for review regarding any action taken by the Safeguarding Monitor

If the Designated Person does not receive satisfactory feedback and/or considers the matter should be referred to Children's Social Services directly then action will be taken by RW itself to address this and the concerns about the child will be referred to Children's Social Services. Trustees will be kept informed of any action regarding safeguarding concerns.

The Designated Person will also ensure that the safeguarding policy and procedures are kept up to date and reviewed.

## **What should you do if a child reports abuse to you?**

If someone discloses to you they are being abused, whether in the home or the support setting, then upon receiving the information, you should:

- React calmly.
- Reassure the child or young person that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what they say seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details.
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Inform the child or young person what you will do next i.e. write down what they have told you in their own words and tell another person who will be able to help them.
- Complete a First Account Form of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information as per the RW Safeguarding Procedure.

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## **What happens when there is Cause for Concern report?**

- It is not the responsibility of RW to decide whether abuse has taken place or not and any Cause for Concern could form part of a wider picture of concerns for a child or young person and needs to be passed on to the Designated Person (or the out of hours Cheshire East Emergency Duty Team).
- Keep a record of any referral made to the Designated Person or the Cheshire East Emergency Duty Team and any actions taken so that a written report can be provided, at a later date, if required.
- A decision will be made by the Designated Person (or the Emergency Duty Team out of hours) about referral to Children's Social Services or other course of action.
- Children's Social Services has a statutory duty under The Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child or young person. If a child or young person protection referral is made, they have a legal responsibility to investigate and all agencies have a duty to co-operate with those investigations. This may involve talking to the child or young person and their family and gathering information from other people who know the child or young person. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.
- Urgent cases, where a child or young person is at risk of immediate harm, will be reported immediately. The police should be called for cases of emergency where there is immediate risk of harm to a child or young person and urgent medical care sought where appropriate.

## **Policy review**

RW is committed to reviewing this policy and good practice at least annually.

**REVIEWED: Sept 24**

**Key Jobs contacts updated**

**SIGNED BY: N A Campbell**

**CHAIR of TRUSTEES**

**DATE: 19.9.24**

**NEXT REVIEW DATE: Sept 2025**

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## **Key to job roles referred to in this policy & procedures as at Sept 24:**

RW Chair of Trustees – Nicky Campbell

RW Volunteer Supervisor (CVSCE) / Safeguarding First Contact all RW projects: Estelle Worthington  
01270 763100 [Estelle.Worthington@cvsce.org.uk](mailto:Estelle.Worthington@cvsce.org.uk) **Work mobile 07565 338 486** during normal work  
hours/days (9 - 4.30pm Wed - Thur, and 9 - 12.30pm on Fri)

RW Volunteer Project Lead Macclesfield and Congleton: Anne Towers

RW Volunteer Project Lead Nantwich: Alan Brown

RW Volunteer Project Lead Alsager: Tony Smith

RW Volunteer Project Lead Crewe Afghan: Gill Appleton

RW Volunteer Project Lead Alsager Afghan/ Ukraine (Congleton): Judith Mayer

RW Volunteer Project Lead Ukraine (Bollington): David Raines

RW Volunteer Project Lead CAUSN: Paul Nixon

**RW Designated Safeguarding Trustee – Gill Appleton**

**To contact any Trustee please email:**

**[refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com](mailto:refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com)**

**and put FAO: (the name) in the subject bar**

**The Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) on 0300 123 5012**

**(Monday -Thursday 8.30 am - 5pm or Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm)**

**Out of Hours Service (Emergency Duty Team) on 0300 123 5022**

## **RESOURCES:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/individuals-at-risk-of-being-drawn-into-serious-and-organised-crime-a-prevent-guide> <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

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## **APPENDIX 1 : Examples of improper conduct of Trustees, Contractors, Advisors or volunteers include:**

- *Neglect / acts of omission / self-neglect - Causing harm by failing to meet needs e.g. ignoring physical or medical care needs, withholding food, medicines, failure to provide adequate supervision.*
- *Physical - Hitting, pushing, slapping, and using inappropriate physical restraint, burning, drowning, and suffocating, withholding medical care, feigning the symptoms of ill health or deliberately causing ill health.*
- *Sexual - Sexual activity of any kind where the vulnerable person does not or is not able to give consent.*
- *Psychological - Including verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying and harassment. Persistent emotional ill treatment, cyber-bullying, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of others, domestic abuse (see section below)*
- *Discriminatory abuse - Treating a person in a way which does not respect the nine protected characteristics known as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sex and sexual orientation.*
- *Organisational abuse - Where routines and rules make a person alter his/her lifestyle and culture to fit in with the institution.*
- *Financial - Taking money and/or property without permission. Using pressure to control a person's money/property/ benefits. Taking or offering any financial inducements.*
- *Modern Slavery / Smuggling /Trafficking – Smuggling is defined as the facilitation of entry to the UK either secretly or by deception (whether for profit or otherwise). Trafficking involves the transportation of persons in the UK in order to exploit them by the use of force, violence, deception, intimidation, coercion or abuse of their vulnerability.*
- *Radicalisation - is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that (1) reject or undermine the status quo or (2) reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.*

## **APPENDIX II: Concerning Signs to Look Out For**

### 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 or failure to participate in ante-natal care.

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Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical harm or danger.
- respond to a child's basic emotional needs.
- ensure adequate supervision; (including inadequate substitute care-givers) • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Signs which may suggest neglect:

- squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions.
- parents fail to attend to their children's health or development needs.
- children appear persistently undersized or underweight.
- children continually appear tired or lacking in energy.
- children suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.
- the child is not attached or is anxiously attached to the parent.
- the child is not regularly sent to school including preschool.
- developmental delay due to lack of stimulation.
- the child has cold skin mottled with pink or purple.
- the child has swollen limbs with pitted sores which are slow to heal.
- the child's skin condition is poor, especially in the nappy area.
- the child has dry sparse hair.
- the child stays frozen in one position for an unnaturally long time.

## Physical abuse

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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that may suggest physical abuse:

- any bruising to an immobile child.
- multiple bruising to different parts of the body.
- bruising of different colours indicating repeated injuries.
- fingertip bruising to the face, chest, back, arms or legs.
- burns or scalds with clear outlines e.g. a gloves and socks effect or burns of uniform depth over a large area. Also, splash marks above the main scald area – associated with throwing.
- retinal or pinpoint haemorrhaging – associated with shaking;
- rib fractures in very young children.
- adult bite marks.
- an injury for which there is no adequate explanation.

## Emotional abuse

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.
- 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.



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- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.
- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another person.
- the exploitation or corruption of children; • serious bullying, including cyber-bullying.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs that may suggest emotional abuse:

- excessive bedwetting/soiling, eating, rocking, head banging, aggression; • self-harm.
- attempted suicide.
- high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal.
- seek out or avoid affection.
- sleeplessness/night terrors.
- food refusal.
- attention seeking.

## Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration e.g. rape or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual images or in watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet. Sexual abuse may be committed by men, women and children.

Signs that may suggest sexual abuse:

- injuries, infections, or abnormal discharge, in the genital/anal/oral area.
- pregnancy, and identity of father is a secret or vague.
- shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children or adults; • seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age.
- confusing of ordinary affectionate contact with abuse.

**More detailed information on the signs of abuse can be found on the [Cheshire East Council online procedures system](#)**