

# Safeguarding Children Policy

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Author	Head of Delivery
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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

Settle is committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people to ensure that they feel safe and are protected by effective interventions if they are thought to be suffering, or at risk of harm.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that informs procedures related to Settle's duty to protect children and young people, as defined by relevant legislation. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

We will always ensure we work in compliance with child protection and data protection legislation. Our safeguarding policies and procedures should be reviewed at least every year.

In the event of a serious safeguarding incident or breach, this policy will be reviewed.

## 1.2 Scope

Settle does not work directly with children and young people under the age of 18. This policy applies to all those working on behalf of Settle, whether paid or unpaid, that through their work with adults involved in Settle's Programmes and activities, may come into contact with children and young people, for example the children or siblings of adult participants.

Abuse may take place both outside and inside of Settle's programmes. Everyone who is part of the Settle community is responsible for safeguarding, promoting and protecting the welfare of children and young people.

In the London Child Protection Guidelines this is outlined as all agencies and professionals should:

- Be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- Be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- Share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- Take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans;
- Work co-operatively with parents, unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

### 1.3 Principles

Our safeguarding policy and procedure is based on the following principles:

- An ethos that promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment where everyone can feel valued and develop and fulfill their potential and where their welfare is paramount
- Liaison and cooperation with statutory services, including Local Authorities and Police, to safeguard children and young people
- All allegations and suspicions of abuse taken seriously, and responded to swiftly and appropriately wherever and whenever it takes place.

### 1.4 Legal Framework

Settle has a duty, under the Children's Act 1989, to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18.

Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area, regardless of where they are found; section 47 of the same Act requires local authorities to undertake enquiries if they believe a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Children Act 2004 requires agencies to work cooperatively to protect the welfare of children.

The Equality Act 2010, puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children.

The Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 set out the Homelessness Duty to those who are or may be homeless.

## 1.5 Definitions

### 1.5.1 Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined within Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018 as:

- protecting children and young people from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children and young people's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children and young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### 1.5.3 Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

The following is not an exhaustive list and children and young people may be subject to more than one form of abuse at the same time.

#### 1.5.3.1 Physical abuse

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

#### 1.5.3.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on their emotional development.

It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.
- interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, e.g. witnessing domestic abuse
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to feel frightened or in danger;
- 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.

### 1.5.3.3 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 (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### 1.5.3.4 Neglect

Neglect may not be persistent and may occur over a short period of time and have adverse effects. It can include the 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

#### 1.5.3.5 Other forms of abuse

There are a number of other emerging areas of concern that need to be considered in safeguarding children and young people.

##### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

It can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.

It involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

##### Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful and abusive (Hackett, 2014). It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour.

It encompasses a range of behaviours which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children and young people that display it as well as the people it's directed towards.

Technology assisted HSB can use the internet or mobile phones for example. It may include sexting or the viewing of pornography (including extreme pornography or indecent images of children).

## Criminal Exploitation and Gangs

This is when children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

Children and young people may be the victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

The word gang can be distinguished between peer group, street gang and organised criminal gangs.

County lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets-suburban areas and market and coastal towns-using dedicated mobile phone lines or 'deal lines'. Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:

- Airbnb and short term private rental properties
- Budget hotels
- The home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang -this may be referred to as cuckooing

## Female Genital Mutilation

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM.

Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.



Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

## Radicalisation and Extremism

a) Recognising Extremism – early indicators may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations such as 'Muslims Against Crusades' or other non-prescribed extremist groups such as the English Defence League.
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can access online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent).

b) Why might a young person be drawn towards extremist ideology?

It appears a decision by a young person to become involved in violent extremism:

May:

- begin with a search for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement
- be driven by a desire to enhance the self-esteem of the individual and promote their 'street cred'
- involve identification with a charismatic individual and attraction to a group which can offer identity, social network and support
- be fuelled by a sense of grievance that can be triggered by personal experiences of racism or discrimination

## Non-Recent Abuse

Sometimes called historic abuse, is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18. Sometimes adults who were abused in childhood blame themselves or are made to feel it's their fault. But this is never the case.

An adult might have known they were abused for a very long time or only recently learnt or understood what happened to them.

The impact of child abuse can last a lifetime. It is never too late to report abuse but there is also no obligation to report it.

### The Impact of Domestic Abuse

Included in the four categories of child abuse and neglect above, are a number of factors relating to the behaviour of the parents and carers which have significant impact on children such as domestic abuse. Research analysing Serious Case Reviews (now known as Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews) has demonstrated a significant prevalence of domestic abuse in the history of families with children who are subject of Child Protection Plans. Children can be affected by seeing, hearing and living with domestic abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target. It should also be noted that 16 and 17 year olds have been found in recent studies to be increasingly affected by domestic abuse in their peer relationships.

The Home Office definition of Domestic violence and abuse was updated in May 2018 as: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

Psychological;  
Physical;  
Sexual;  
Financial;  
Emotional."

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

## 2.0 Safeguarding at Settle

This policy should be read alongside our other organisational policies and procedures including our Safeguarding Adults Policy which sets out the following in relation to how Settle fulfills its Safeguarding responsibilities, including:

### 2.1 Responsibilities

### 2.2 Procedure

### 2.3 Safe recruitment of Staff

### 2.4 Staff training and development

### 2.5 Support for Staff

### 2.6 Allegations against Staff

Refer to the adult safeguarding policy for the organisation's general approach to allegations against staff. In relation to safeguarding children if Settle becomes aware of any allegations against a professional (for example foster carers) regarding children (under the age of 18) the organisation must inform the LADO within the relevant local authority.

### 2.7 Reporting cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service

### 2.8 Whistleblowing

In the event that a safeguarding concern for a child or young person under 18 should arise from our work with adults, it is the responsibility of all those involved in delivering Settle's activities, to follow the reporting procedures set out in the Safeguarding Adults Policy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person.

### **3.0 Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding**

All children and young people have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation.

Settle has an Equality and Diversity Policy and this Safeguarding Children's Policy should be read in conjunction with this.

### **4.0 Information Sharing and Data Protection**

All staff will understand that safeguarding children warrants a high level of confidentiality.

Settle has a Data Protection Policy and this Safeguarding Children's Policy should be read in conjunction with this.

## 5.0 Appendices

### 5.1 Settle Safeguarding Procedure

[Safeguarding Procedure Document](#) (Programme Officer)

[Safeguarding Procedure Document](#) (Programme Manager)

### 5.2 Settle Alternative Safeguarding Procedure

[Alternative Safeguarding Procedure-DSL unavailable](#) (Programme Officer)

[Alternative Safeguarding Procedure-DSL unavailable](#) (Programme Manager)

### 5.3 InForm Safeguarding Alert Form

#### New Safeguarding Alert

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#### Information

* Programme	<input type="text" value="Search Programmes..."/>	* Date of alert	<input type="text"/>
* Type	<input type="text" value="--None--"/>	Status	<input type="text" value="In development"/>

#### Details

Safeguarding concern

#### More information

MARAC case

## 5.4 Key Contacts and References

Settle Designated Safeguarding Lead

Aimee Hardaker, Head of Delivery

[aimee.hardaker@wearesettle.org](mailto:aimee.hardaker@wearesettle.org)

07491914445

Police

In emergency call 999

Local Authorities

Each Local Authority has their own Local Safeguarding Children Board or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub with information on the local procedures for reporting concerns

Community and voluntary sector contacts

Childline

Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR

Tel: 0800 1111

Ann Craft Trust

Tel: 0115 951 5400

A national association working with staff in the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors in the interests of people with learning disabilities who may be at risk from abuse.

MIND infoline

Tel: 0845 766 0163

Information regarding mental health related issues. Help in finding out options and local services. Mon–Fri 9.15–5.15.

NSPCC

Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Parentline

A national Helpline for parents under pressure: 0808 800 2222

RESPOND

Tel: 020 7383 0700

Provides therapeutic intervention for people with learning disabilities who have been abused.

SANELINE

Tel: 0845 767 8000

National helpline for anyone coping with mental illness

Solace

Tel: 0808 802 5565

Solace Women's Aid offers free advice and support to women and children in London to build safe and strong lives.

Refuge

Tel: 0808 2000 247

National helpline for women and children experiencing domestic abuse.