

The **Benjamin** Foundation

# Safeguarding Handbook

Protecting the children, young people and families who use our services.

A guidebook for staff and volunteers.

V3: August 2023

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The Benjamin Foundation



The Benjamin Foundation  
Registered Charity: 1124936  
Company Number: 3825425  
[benjaminfoundation.co.uk](http://benjaminfoundation.co.uk)

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## **Key:**



Link to The Benjamin Foundation document/policy.



Third party website for further guidance.



Further consideration



End of section

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## Introduction

The Benjamin Foundation believes that all children, young people and vulnerable adults deserve to live their lives free of abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all the children, young people and adults that access our services. We are committed to working in a way that keeps them safe.

This handbook is designed to help you work to safeguard the people who use our services and should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy:



### [Safeguarding - The Benjamin Foundation](#)

Please note that this handbook will be updated regularly so we recommend you read it as an online PDF rather than a printout so you can be sure you are reading the latest version.

All staff must read the handbook during their induction and also to refresh their understanding at regular intervals throughout their employment.

This handbook is also required reading for volunteers, agency staff, consultants and anybody else engaged regularly with our services.

Safeguarding can be upsetting. Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults can challenge us and make us uncomfortable, however we have to be at our strongest to protect others. Working in a safe, professional and supportive environment is something we can all contribute positively to.

The Benjamin Foundation's services are underpinned by safeguarding excellence. It is important that we all make safeguarding a priority. Thank you for taking the time to reflect on your safeguarding good practice.

**Sharon Matthews, Director of Operations - May 2023**

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## Part 1: Dealing with a disclosure

Our work as a charity brings us into contact with a wide range of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Sometimes these people will raise issues with you or disclose abuse to you. This can be done overtly, for instance a child asking you for a chat and telling you something is worrying them, or more covertly, for example something crops up in conversation, which could be taken as a disclosure or allegation of abuse.

If a vulnerable person makes a disclosure to you:

- Listen carefully and considerably.
- Do not judge; take a breath and consider your facial expressions too. You may be horrified by the disclosure but do not show this to the child, young person or adult as it is not them you are horrified by.
- If the child/young person asks that you keep the information they are sharing confidential, remind them that you are unable to do this if you think they are at risk of or being harmed.
- Encourage the child/young person to talk freely without probing or asking leading questions. Good questions include things like: *'Tell me about it.'* *'What happened?'* *'When did this happen?'* *'Who did that?'*

The types of questions to avoid include those like: *'Did he touch you then?'* *'Your Mum beats you?'* as these assume knowledge of events and can be considered 'leading.'

- Reassure them you have taken their disclosure seriously and arrange a time for you to talk again. Reassure the child/young person that you will be there for them to help them seek the appropriate next level of support (if required).
- Tell the child/young person what you are going to do. It is always important to inform the child/young person what will happen, who you will talk to and when. The choice not to inform them of next steps should only happen in exceptional circumstances where this would increase risk of harm.

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- As soon as possible, make a record of the disclosure using a safeguarding log sheet appropriate to your service.
  - As soon as possible, discuss this with the nominated Child Protection Officer/Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer for your service. This is normally the Manager of the setting, but in some cases is delegated to a colleague. Please see the Safeguarding Directory for information.

If your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is not available, please contact either the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Operations or the DSL from another service.

- If you feel the child/young person/vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or has been harmed, it is your duty to inform the relevant authorities. This starts with a call to the local Children's Advice and Duty in Norfolk Services (known as CADS). The phone number can be found in the Safeguarding Directory.

CADS is made up of staff from Children's Services, health professionals and the police. If in doubt about the case you are handling (after consultation with a DSL) call CADS.

In Suffolk, a multi-agency safeguarding hub performs a similar function to CADS. Please see the Safeguarding Directory for details.

In some services, it may be appropriate to call the Children's Services Emergency Duty Teams/Emergency Duty Service. Your manager will give you the details of the relevant team. Please make yourself familiar with your service's requirements to inform the EDT/EDS of events.

- Please record the concern on your service's safeguarding reporting form. An example is provided in Appendix 1, but you may have adapted this to reflect the nature of the specific work you do. Please also keep notes of any follow up conversations you have in relation to this matter in case you need to refer to them later.

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- Complete our standard form to record your concerns. Keep careful notes, including a timeline/chronology of events, any further conversations you have with the vulnerable person, and a record of any calls you make to the CADS team or other professionals involved in the case.
  - It is important to make a note of concerns even if you do not report them to CADS or MASH. Each service should keep a safeguarding log and the concern and reasons for not reporting at that time must be noted in this.
  - Store all notes you make securely and safely as they may be needed if the case goes further. This includes informal notes made on notepads etc.
  - If you receive the disclosure out of hours and/or you feel the vulnerable person is in immediate danger, then you must call 999 and request police support.
  - Seek support to manage your own wellbeing when supporting difficult safeguarding cases or issues.
  - If a person leaves a service while disclosures are being investigated, you must clearly indicate this on any archiving records for ongoing safeguarding investigations. Check with the DSL before these records are destroyed.



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## Part 2: Dealing with suspected abuse

In our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, we must be alert for signs of abuse in the people who use our services.

You may suspect a child/young person or vulnerable adult you are working with is being abused for a number of reasons. This may include:

- Regularly experiencing nightmares or sleeping problems.
- Changes in personality.
- Outbursts of anger.
- Changes in eating habits.
- A lack of self-care, for example, not washing, dirty clothes, or defecating/urinating in their room instead of using the facilities.
- Showing an inexplicable fear of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people.
- You may notice that a child, young person or adult is gifted presents, money, drugs or alcohol.
- Self-harming (included head-banging, scratching, cutting).
- Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.
- Showing violence to animals, toys, peers or adults.
- Age inappropriate knowledge of 'adult' issues, such as alcohol, drugs, sexual behavior.
- Lacking in confidence or often wary/anxious.
- Regressing to the behaviour of younger children.

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- Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, eg somebody raising a hand quickly.
  - Signs of injury not easily explained or consistent with activities that the children/young person/vulnerable adult partakes in.

This is not a definitive list. If you feel concerned, please talk to you DSL.

Please also refer to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) website for more detailed information about the signs of abuse.



[NSPCC - Spotting signs of abuse](#)

It is important that you hone, use your intuition and judgement and raise any concerns that you might have about a child or vulnerable person you are working with. Just the smallest piece of information could be significant in helping to support a person in an abusive situation.

You must respond to niggling concerns you have. It is your duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, and using your professional curiosity is a vital way of doing that.

- Do not judge.
- Encourage the child/young person/vulnerable adult to talk freely without probing or asking leading questions (see section 'Part 1: Dealing with a disclosure' for examples of appropriate questions).
- Tell the person what you are going to do. It is always important to inform the person what will happen, who you will talk to and when. The choice not to inform them of next steps should only happen in exceptional circumstances where this would increase the risk of harm.
- If you have concerns, trust your instincts. Log them and reflect with colleagues. For example, if you have noticed a car picking up a young

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person with no contact made with the driver, then note the colour, registration, model etc.

- As soon as possible, make a record of your concerns using your service's safeguarding log sheet. Make sure you are familiar with your service's processes and documentation.
- As soon as possible, discuss this with the nominated Child Protection Officer/Vulnerable Adults Protection Officer (referred to throughout this policy as the Designated Safeguarding Lead/DSL) for your service.

This is normally the Manager of the setting but in some cases is delegated to a colleague. Please see the Safeguarding Directory for information.

If your DSL is not available, please contact the Chief Executive Officer, a Director of Operations or the DSL from another service.

If you feel the child/young person/vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or has been harmed, it is your duty to inform the relevant authorities.

Normally this starts with a call to CADS (Children's Advice and Duty Service) or your local MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) team. The phone numbers can be found in the Safeguarding Directory.



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## Part 3: Dealing with alleged perpetrators of abuse

The work of The Benjamin Foundation can bring us into contact with those we may suspect of abusing another. If you are working with somebody that you suspect of abusing a child, young person or vulnerable adult, then you must apply the same level of professional judgement and take action as you do when you work with victims (or possible victims) of abuse.

It is entirely possible that the person abusing a child or a vulnerable adult is a child or vulnerable adult themselves. We can find ourselves working with the abused and/or the alleged abuser with both parties in need of support.

If you have suspicions abuse is taking place, protect yourself. Do not challenge the alleged perpetrator or attempt to investigate the abuse yourself.

- Withhold judgement. Many perpetrators of abuse can also be victims of abuse and/or be vulnerable themselves and may need ongoing support.
- It is good practice to tell the person what you are going to do. For instance 'I am very concerned that your child might not safe so I am going to have to report my concerns. I will talk to you later today to update you'. However, if you think this would increase the risk of harm you can share your concerns without letting the potential perpetrator know.
- Make a record of your concerns using the safeguarding protection log sheet appropriate to your service.
- As soon as possible, discuss this with the nominated lead person (Designated Safeguarding Lead) for your service. This is normally the Manager of the setting, but in some cases is delegated to a colleague. Please see the Safeguarding Directory for information.
- If your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is not available, please contact either the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Operations or the DSL from another service.

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- If you feel abuse has taken place or is very likely to take place then it is your duty to inform the relevant authorities. Normally this starts with a call to the local Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS). The phone number can be found in the Safeguarding Directory.
  - Please record the concern on your service's safeguarding reporting form. An example is provided in Appendix 1, but you may have adapted this to reflect the nature of the specific work you do. Please also keep notes of any follow-up conversations you have in relation to this matter in case you need to refer to them later.
  - Store any notes you make securely and safely as they may be needed if the case goes further. This includes informal notes made on notepads etc.
  - If the person you suspect of being an abuser works in a paid or voluntary capacity with children/vulnerable people (or is seeking to work in this capacity) then you must contact the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO). Contact details can be found in the Safeguarding Directory.
  - If your concerns become apparent out of hours or you feel a vulnerable person is in immediate danger, then you must call 999 and request immediate police support.



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## Part 4: Keeping yourself safe

In order to best safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults we are working with, we also have to keep ourselves safe. This section suggests ways you can keep yourself safe and also what to do if you feel a co-worker (paid or unpaid) is not keeping themselves or their service users safe.

Sometimes our service users are very vulnerable and have experienced abuse and/or unhealthy relationships. This may make them much more sensitive to potential abuse and they may not be comfortable with the levels of touch, teasing, questioning and use of humour that you find normal in your life.

It is important that all staff behave in a way that cannot be misconstrued despite the varying frames of reference we may be working within. This avoids unnecessary allegations and the stress these cause to all concerned.

It is also important that all staff, volunteers and anybody else with access to our service users (for example, contractors and partner agencies) demonstrate a good understanding of their professional boundaries and are able to demonstrate this understanding in their working practices.

It is the duty of the Service Manager and/or DSL to identify where training is required to observe good professional boundaries and arrange necessary formal or informal training opportunities.

In the following guidance, the term 'staff' refers to paid and unpaid staff.

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behavior and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their Line Manager, DSL or Director over any incident where professional boundary concerns have been raised.

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- Staff should apply the same professional standards to all service users.
  - Staff need to be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

We know that dealing with safeguarding issues can be tough and can impact staff. However, there are steps you can take to help you manage your own wellbeing while supporting sensitive safeguarding issues:

- Make sure you seek support from your manager or from a colleague within your team (somebody who knows the person who are concerned about is ideal).
- Encourage your team to take part in reflective practice sessions or group supervisions so that you can get different viewpoints on matters.
- Where possible take part in multi-agency meetings discussing the case as this will give you reassurance that you are not alone in having concerns and will help you understand what other professionals are doing to safeguard the child/young person/vulnerable adult.
- Talk about the casework that is causing you stress during your personal review/supervision meetings with your line manager.
- If you need more support, please call our employee assistance programme on 0800 030 5182 – but remember they are there to support you and you cannot share confidential information about a service user with them.
- Make sure you have followed the handbook and other policy guidelines in handling a safeguarding concern so you can be assured you have done everything possible to help a child, young person or vulnerable adult.



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## Part 5: How to ensure good professional boundaries

Appropriate relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults should be based on mutual trust and respect. As a member of staff, you may be working closely with children, young people and vulnerable adults – sometimes on a one-to-one basis. This needs to be carried out within our Lone Working Policy and service guidelines.

- Many of our service users can be spontaneously affectionate and tactile. It is important not to alienate them through lack of response or by appearing to reject this. However, it is essential that you are mindful of your response.
- Discourage and make note of any over-affectionate children, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Never share your personal contact details or personal social media details with a service user. Do not accept a social media follow/friend request from a service user.



The ICT Usage Code of Practice and The Benjamin Foundation Social Media Policy gives clear guidelines on the use of social media.

- Do not use your personal mobile phone around service users. Do not use the camera function on your personal mobile to take photos of activities and/or service users.
- Do not accompany service users to the toilet or bathroom unless there is a noted medical or care-related reason for doing this. Where this is required, please follow the guidance and procedure issued by your manager.

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- If you have been asked to provide transport, you must ensure that your car is free of your personal information, such as letters to your home address or other young people's records.
  - Always follow risk assessments, specific guidance of other professionals and professional judgement to safeguard yourself and individuals with appropriate boundaries.
  - Do not photograph service users unless agreed in advance and using a camera or mobile device that belongs to The Benjamin Foundation.



Consider our Photo/Film policy and procedures and add images/film and usage to our Photo/Film Database. Speak to The Benjamin Foundation Communication Manager for guidance.

- It is not usual to disclose personal information about your friends/family to a service user. Of course, on some occasions, this may be entirely appropriate to demonstrate empathy and experience but do so in a way that protects your family/friends, as well as the service user, by giving an overview rather than sharing exact details.
- Never invite a service user to your home (even if you are just popping in while transporting them to an activity).



See specific guidance for Heart and Home Hosts.

- If you suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult is getting over- attached to you, then you must discuss this with your manager or other appropriate colleague. It may be appropriate to change their key-worker or your work patterns to stop this going any further.



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## Part 6: Suspicions about the conduct of a colleague or other adult

As well as demonstrating good professional boundaries yourself, it is also your responsibility to report concerns that you may have about any inappropriate conduct demonstrated by colleagues or those seeking to work in your service (on a paid or unpaid basis).

It is important that you do this if you feel safeguarding is compromised or risks are taken, however slight the risk. Although it is disconcerting to think a co-worker or potential co-worker is behaving inappropriately, it is important that you follow up your suspicions and instincts as this could avoid abuse occurring.

Please allow your professional judgement and professional curiosity to guide your responses in these situations and not your personal feelings towards a colleague or applicant for a job. It is your duty to report any safeguarding concerns you have about others in the workplace (or those applying to be in the workplace).

If you suspect a colleague (or a job applicant for paid or unpaid work) from your service or another service of behavior that could put children, young people and/or vulnerable adults at risk, you must follow these steps:

- Make a note of your concerns while they are fresh in your mind.
- Raise these concerns with your Manager/Duty Manager/DSL as soon as possible. Do not wait for your next scheduled meeting.
- Following this discussion, if you think there are issues to be addressed, you must contact the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO – see the Safeguarding Directory for contact details). Your Manager may do this for you, or you may be asked to make the call yourself. All allegations or suspicions about those working, or seeking to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults must be referred to the LADO. They will give advice and take further action if required.

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- If you are not comfortable talking through concerns with your Manager or DSL, or if your concerns are about them, then approach a member of the Executive team, a DSL from another service or somebody from the HR team as soon as possible.
  - If your concerns are about the CEO or Directors, then you may wish to raise these issues with a Trustee of The Benjamin Foundation. You do not have to disclose to colleagues why you wish to contact a Trustee.



Link to The Benjamin Foundation Whistle-blowing Policy: [S:\Staff Handbook & Policies\2. Policies\3B Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.pdf](#)

- If you feel that your colleague is likely to cause immediate harm to children or other vulnerable people, call the police as you would for any safeguarding emergency.
- We would never cover up any wrong-doing or malpractice, but behavior can be misinterpreted. Therefore, it is important that you maintain confidentiality on such issues or reputations could be unnecessarily damaged where no wrong-doing took place.

Please note that this guidance also applies if you have suspicions about somebody working/volunteering or attempting to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups at another agency (i.e. not The Benjamin Foundation).

Please follow up your suspicions by talking to your Manager/DSL and making a LADO referral or seeking advice where required.




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## Part 7: Types of Abuse

We are working to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from all types of abuse or situations in which they feel at risk. A broad definition of abuse is to use power for the wrong purpose in a way that is harmful or morally wrong. In practice we need to be mindful of a number of different types of abuse.



Click the links below to find out more:

- [Bullying and Cyberbullying](#)
- [Child Sexual Exploitation](#) (Please also see Section 10a/page 27)
- [Child Trafficking](#) (Please also see Section 10c/page 31)
- [Criminal Exploitation and Gangs](#)
- [Domestic Abuse](#)  (Please also refer to The Benjamin Foundation [Domestic Abuse Policy](#))
- [Emotional Abuse](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation](#) (Please also refer to Section 10b/page 30)
- [Grooming](#)
- [Neglect](#)
- [Non-recent abuse](#)
- [Online abuse](#)
- [Physical abuse](#)
- [Sexual abuse](#)

Take your time to read about the different types of abuse and how to spot the signs.



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## Part 8: Safeguarding – Additional Guidance

### 8a: Safeguarding the Looked After Child

While our overarching procedures on safeguarding have relevance in guiding our work with Looked After Children, additional guidance is required. The term ‘Looked After Children’ or LAC is generally used to mean those who are looked after by the state, according to the relevant legislation. This includes those who are subject to a care order and can also include those with a temporary care order – for example, those who are receiving planned respite care. In Suffolk, these children are referred to as ‘Children in Care’ (CIC).

This addendum to the main safeguarding guidance is relevant to those children and young people who are subject to a care order, and their accommodation and care is the responsibility of the local authority.

These children and young people may be in our care or may simply be service users at services alongside children not ‘in care’. It is wrong to assume that because a child or young person is in care that they are safe.

Looked After Children may be at continued risk of abuse or neglect from their carers, their families, other young people or the wider community around them. This abuse could be any of the abuse detailed in this handbook (Part 7) and all staff members and volunteers working with this client group should be vigilant in looking for signs of new, renewed or on-going abuse of the LAC using the services of The Benjamin Foundation.

In addition to the main safeguarding guidance, the following needs to be taken into account when dealing with the LAC:

- Children who are Looked After need not be subject to a separate Child Protection Plan. The LAC process should be sufficiently robust to address the Child Protection needs of the child or young person.
- Child Protection and other safeguarding issues will be routinely addressed at regular review meetings and concerns noted and details in the Care Plan for the individual LAC. The plan may have a different frame of reference for what constitutes abuse because of past experiences and relationships. This needs to be considered when dealing with disclosures and when reviewing safeguarding as part of the Care Plan.
- The behavior patterns and risk-taking decisions of LAC need to be considered and addressed in Care Plan Review meetings. However, it is

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also important that we look beyond the behavior, deduce what is behind it and support accordingly. We must take responsibility for managing risk in these situations. Abuse of any kind cannot be explained away by referring to the behavior of the victim.

- Staff involved in Care Plan reviews who note or raise safeguarding concerns need to make a record of these concerns and the plan to address them. In the case of the LAC, this does not necessarily mean the placing of the child/young person on the Child Protection Register or the need for a Child Protection Conference.
- While the Child Protection Conference or placing the child's name on the Child Protection Register may not necessarily be required, it is of utmost importance that staff adhere to procedural requirements in line with legislation and policy guidance. This will particularly be the case when there is the potential for, or suspicions of:
  - Organised abuse.
  - Risk of sexual exploitation.
  - Children who pose a sexual risk, or who are violent towards others.
  - It is often appropriate to hold a Child Protection Conference prior to a child being discharged from care to the care of their parents or other family members. This action is to be discussed and agreed at the LAC review.

What to do if there are suspicions that a LAC is being abused:

- Follow the internal procedures outlined in the service specific safeguarding procedure, including those on record keeping.
- Suspicions or disclosures should be raised with the care Provider ie the Registered manager of a residential facility, a Foster Carer, or your DSL.
- The LAC will have a nominated Social Worker and they can be another appropriate line of referral.
- If it is the carer/care setting that is suspected of abuse then it is obviously not appropriate to report suspicions to them, therefore reporting lines outlined in the main Safeguarding Policy should be followed. The Police need to be informed if it is 'out of hours' for a CADS/MASH report to be made.

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## 8b: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

The key principles of safeguarding are the same for children and vulnerable adults.

The Benjamin Foundation works with many adults, and some of these are vulnerable to abuse or are being supported by us because of abuse that has occurred to them. It is our job to support vulnerable adults by sticking to these principles:

1. **Empowerment** – working with adults to empower them to keep themselves safe
2. **Prevention** – offering support in a way that stops things becoming safeguarding issues. Having strong risk management practices in place.
3. **Proportionality** – making sure we don't over or under react to things. Have a range of responses or actions available that are in proportion to the issue raised.
4. **Protection** – it is often our role to protect vulnerable adults from harm, particularly those who struggle to protect themselves.
5. **Partnership** – we work in partnership with vulnerable adults themselves and we work in partnership with other professionals and agencies to support safety plans for the vulnerable adults we support
6. **Accountability** – the actions we take to safeguard adults must stand up to scrutiny by others

### Mental Health Capacity Act (MCA) 2005:

When working with adults, we have to consider the protections and freedoms governed by the MCA. This act applies to those age 16 and above. This means that we have to:

- Assume an adult has capacity to make decisions for themselves unless proved otherwise.
- Take every step to enable people to make their own decisions.
- Assume capacity, unless proven otherwise, even if the decisions they take make it more difficult to safeguard them.

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- Assume capacity even if, in your view, the decisions a person is taking are unwise.



**Example:**

*A vulnerable 19-year-old has capacity to make their own decisions. They decide to be in a relationship with another adult that you think is unsuitable for them. Unless there is a clear case for Deprivation of Liberty (see separate section), you cannot prevent them from being in this relationship. You can however give them advice and guidance about how to keep themselves safe whilst pursuing this.*

- Act in the best interest of somebody who does not have capacity to make their own decisions.
- Take the least restrictive option in every case.
- Report any instances where we think the above has not been followed.

### **Liberty Protection Standards**

Liberty Protection Standards (LPS) are in place for the rare occasions we need to act on behalf of an adult or take away part of their freedoms to act as they wish. This is rare, and can only regularly take place if they are under continuous supervision, not free to leave a setting or legally detained.

Liberty Protection Standards used to be called Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards so you may see them referred to by this name or the abbreviation DOLS

A 16-18-year-old 'in care' (LAC/CIC – see section on Safeguarding the Looked After Child), unless in a secure setting or where there is a court endorsed arrangement similar to a secure setting, is not considered to be under continuous supervision or detained.

There may be rare instances where a LPS may have to be used as a very short- term answer to a heightened situation. This must be a last resort.



### Example:

*A 24-year-old young person with a mild/moderate learning difficulty has lost their temper and is throwing heavy objects at other people present. De-escalation techniques are employed but are ineffective. A member of staff who is suitably trained executes a physical intervention to prevent the young person or others present being harmed.*

Any LPS must be:

- The least restrictive option
- No longer than is absolutely necessary
- Recorded and reviewed

If LPS are required on a longer-term basis, the Local Authority must be consulted and a plan of action agreed. In many cases this will mean an adult is cared for by a different service, for example a secure service, detained under the mental health act, or held in a custodial setting.

If you think the liberty of a vulnerable adult is being deprived by others (who may be colleagues), you are obliged to take action and follow the advice given earlier in this handbook (Dealing with alleged perpetrators of abuse, in section 7, and ‘Suspensions about the conduct of a colleague or other adult’ in section 16)



### Further Reading:

[NHS England has produced a useful guide](#) in relation to Adult Safeguarding.



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## Part 9: Multi-Agency Working, Resources and Training

The Benjamin Foundation works in accordance with the aims of:



[Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Norfolk Safeguarding Adults' Board](#)

[Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership](#) (works across adult and child safeguarding)

These boards are made up of statutory and voluntary sector partners who work with children, young people, families and vulnerable adults. They ensure that people working with children and vulnerable adults carry out their safeguarding responsibilities as required.

We also work in Norfolk with the SAFER programme, which provides advice, guidance and training in relation to safeguarding children.

All Norfolk-based staff working in The Benjamin Foundation services carry out the SAFER 'Core Programme Training' (or equivalent).



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## 10: Safeguarding Key Topics

### 10a: Child Sexual Exploitation

*“The sexual exploitation of children and young people (CSE) under the age of 18 is defined as: 'situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or people) receive 'something' (eg food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.’”*

(Norfolk County Council)

Child sexual exploitation can occur remotely, such as young people being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet or via an app, which can then be shared without their knowledge and for no payment or gain for the child.

Sexual exploitation covers both penetrative and non-penetrative sex. Both of these types of exploitation are strongly linked to:

- **Trafficking**, so being moved around the country/away from county of origin to different areas of the county and away from support systems for the purpose of sexual activity, drug production and selling.
- **Modern Slavery**, where children and young people are made to work in, for example, the production and distribution of drugs and sexual activity. This often means tiredness, sleep deprivation and being in unsanitary, dangerous conditions.
- **Gang-related and/or organized crime.**

Any child can be exploited in these ways and it affects both genders – but there are particular factors which make some children and young people statistically more likely to be a victim of both criminal and sexual exploitation. These include:

- A lack of a safe or stable home (a chaotic home environment due to criminality, violence in the home, substance abuse etc).
- A history of abuse.
- Social isolation, social difficulties or bullying.
- Economic vulnerability (makes the offer of money more tempting, or a necessity).
- Disabilities, substance abuse or health issues.
- Being Looked After.
- Connections with peers who are being exploited.

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- Homelessness/insecure accommodation.
  - School exclusions, at risk of school exclusions, or attending specialist provision.

There may be some indications that criminal and/or sexual exploitation is occurring. These include:

- Episodes of going missing from home/care/school for periods of time, which could be hours, days or weeks.
- Unexplained gifts, money, clothing, jewellery, make-up, hair cuts, sex toys etc.
- Changes in behaviour; secrecy, being withdrawn, change of friends, controlling relationships with older peers.
- Talking about going to 'parties' out of area, people's houses, unknown areas, in possession of unknown keys, hotel key cards.
- Use of or increase in use of substances.
- Increased use of phones/messaging – more texts or pings.
- Entering/exiting vehicles/taxis with unknown adults.
- Repeated STI/pregnancy.
- Self-harm and/or emotional wellbeing changes.
- Abductions/forced imprisonment.
- Vaseline/lubrication.
- Weapons (often with handles covered with cling-film)

If you think that a child, young person or family is being exploited, you need to raise your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and with professionals working with the young people.

For those being exploited there can be barriers to seeking, accepting or getting help to free them from exploitation:

- The person may not recognize the exploitation.
- The person feels they have no power and are frightened by violence, threat of violence or blackmail.
- Feels of shame, guilt of things they have experienced.
- Fear of repercussion can extend to friends and family if seen to be engaging with professionals.
- Some professionals can minimise the harm by describing young people as 'making a lifestyle choice' or 'putting themselves at risk'.

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- Mistrust of adults and professionals due to previous involvement with police or social services.
  - For some young people, they get kudos, finances, substances or gifts they would not otherwise be able to access.
  - Debt-bondage: young people are often given free drugs or loose drugs to police arrests, thefts from rival gangs so they have to pay back large sums of money in debt bondage.
  - Due to grooming processes, young people can lose contact and connections with friends and family so feel they can't go back.

### How you can help:

- Be interested, professionally curious, listen carefully to what young people are saying and hear it from a safeguarding perspective.
- Don't make judgements, even if a young person is involved in criminal activities. Remember, they may appear willing participants but the choices and actions may be being controlled by perpetrators with more power than them.
- Where sexual exploitation exists, ensure no blame is apportioned to the young person. Some victims will maintain links with abusers and even protect them.
- Challenge professional views which are oppressive, judgmental or rejecting need for a child protection response.
- Be creative in our approach, talk about young people's resilience, strengths and create a safe space for discussion about their life, interests to discover their own understanding about County Lines, status, power and control.
- Remember that we can never judge a young person to have 'put themselves at risk'. They are simply 'at risk' and we must act to support them.



**To develop your knowledge and practice, we recommend you read the following documents:**

[Department for Education – Child Sexual Exploitation](#)

[The Children's Society – County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation](#)

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## 10b: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

**Note: This section contains graphic descriptions of FGM**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, civil and criminal legislation on FGM is contained in the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 ('the act'). In Scotland, FGM legislation is contained in the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 was amended by Sections 70-75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

Under Section 1 of the act, a person is guilty of an FGM offence if they excise, infibulate or otherwise mutilate the whole or any part of a girl's or woman's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris. The excise is to remove part or all of the clitoris and the inner labia, with or without removal of the labia majora. To infibulate is to narrow the vaginal opening by creating a seal, formed by cutting and re-positioning the labia.

**It is an offence** for any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status) to:

- Perform FGM in England and Wales (Section 1 of the act).
- Assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England and Wales (Section 2 of the act).
- Assist (from England or Wales) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or UK resident (Section 3 of the act).

If the mutilation takes place in England or Wales, the nationality or residence status of the victim is irrelevant.

FGM is a complex issue. Despite the harm it causes, many women and men from practicing communities consider it to be normal to protect their cultural identity.

FGM is believed to be a way of ensuring virginity and chastity. It is used with the intention to protect girls from sex outside marriage and from having sexual feelings.

Although FGM is practiced by secular communities, it is most often claimed to be carried out in accordance with religious beliefs. FGM is not supported by any religious doctrine.

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If you know of, or suspect a case of FGM or a child or young person vulnerable to FGM, follow the guidelines in this handbook.



For further information, [visit gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

## 10c: Child Trafficking/Modern Slavery

Child Trafficking is child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation. Trafficking can involve children or young people being moved long distances, eg from another country, or moved shorted distances, eg across a city.

Children are trafficked for:

- Child sexual exploitation.
- Benefit fraud.
- Forced marriage.
- Domestic servitude, such as cleaning, childcare and cooking.
- Forced labour in factories or agriculture.
- Criminal activity, such as pick-pocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVD's. Please also see section on Child Criminal Exploitation.

Child Trafficking is an offence. In March 2015, the Modern Slavery Bill received Royal Assent. The Act consolidates current offences relating to trafficking and slavery.



[Click here for further information on the Modern Slavery Act 2015.](#) Or: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

**As Child Trafficking is child abuse, it requires a child protection response.** If you know, receive information relating to, or suspect a child/young person has been trafficked or is vulnerable to trafficking, you must deal with it in line with the Safeguarding Policy of The Benjamin Foundation.

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## 10d: Adult Trafficking

Vulnerable adults may also be the victim of modern slavery and trafficking.

Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. It encompasses:

- human trafficking
- slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour

An individual could have been a victim of human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

Victims may not be aware that they are being trafficked or exploited, and may have consented to elements of their exploitation, or accepted their situation. If you think that modern slavery has taken place, the case should be referred to the NRM so that the relevant competent authority can fully consider the case. You do not need to be certain that someone is a victim.

According to Hope for Justice, people are tricked or forced into exploitation and kept there through violence, fraud or coercion, and often end up living and working in abominable conditions.

Some are beaten and abused; others have threats made against their families in their home countries. Many are forced into fraudulent 'debt bondage', with their wages kept by a trafficker to pay non-existent bills for their travel, accommodation or food. They are told they will be deported if they go to the authorities.

Often, the trafficker takes control of a victim's identity documents (e.g. passport). They accompany them to open a bank account, then take control of its associated bank card and correspondence (this functions both as a simple way for the trafficker to control the victim's earnings, and a way for them to exert dominance and control by offering occasional small sums of money from what should be the victim's own wages).

Traffickers usually focus on those easiest to exploit, which tends to be people with fewer resources or existing vulnerabilities.

### **Risk factors for trafficking and modern slavery**

Adults from any walk of life can be targeted and can end up as a victim of modern slavery. But people experiencing any of the following things can be at particular risk:

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- Homelessness
  - Alcohol or drug addiction
  - Mental health problems
  - Chaotic home environment or recent family breakdown
  - Long-term unemployment
  - Learning difficulties
  - Debts or criminal convictions
  - Fearful of deportation or being discovered by authorities
  - Physical injuries or disabilities

It is important to consider that adults who are victims of modern slavery or human trafficking might not just be our service users. Adults who are colleagues, suppliers, partner agency employees, agency workers, contractors or family members of service users may be victims of trafficking and modern slavery.

As with suspected child trafficking, there is an obligation to report suspicions around Modern Slavery or adult trafficking. Your first port of call for reporting concerns would be through the local authority adult safeguarding referral routes.

In [Suffolk](#) you can do this via the Multi-Agency-Safeguarding-Hub (MASH) on **0345 606 1499**.

In [Norfolk](#) you can call Adult Social Services on **0344 800 8020**.

Useful resources on Modern Slavery and Adult Trafficking:



[www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org)

[www.care.org.uk](http://www.care.org.uk)

## 10e: PREVENT: A strategy to prevent radicalisation of children and young people

The Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 places an obligation on organisations to “*in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.*” This is known as the ‘**Prevent Duty.**’



Please read the [full guidance](#) from the UK Government on the Prevent Duty:

The Benjamin Foundation is committed to maintaining a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment and protecting those who are vulnerable. We need to be mindful of the threat of vulnerable service users being drawn into extremism. This means that we have a shared responsibility to:

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- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote it.
  - Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and extremism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
  - Work with other agencies as required to address the risks of radicalisation.

Extremism is defined as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.”

By ‘vocal threat’ this also includes internet and social media content. Significant threats to safety and security is from groups such as ISIS, Al Qa’ida/Daesh and the far right (EDL, Britain First etc).

### What to do if you have a concern about extremism?

As with any safeguarding issue, it is your duty as a member of staff or volunteer at The Benjamin Foundation to follow up any concerns you have about possible radicalisation or extremism.

Depending on who your concern relates to (service user, staff member, volunteer, somebody from another agency), please refer to the appropriate section of the Safeguarding Handbook to guide your actions.

As ever, using skilled ‘professional curiosity’ is vital in noticing and reporting changes in behavior and attitudes that concern you.

Please do not keep concerns and worries about extremism or potential radicalization to yourself – discuss it with your line manager, the Safeguarding lead for your setting or a senior manager. Make a note of your concerns and take appropriate actions.

If you are concerned about a potential act of extremism or terrorism, make a note of your concerns. **If it is an immediate concern, call the Police on 999.**

If your concerns do not relate to an imminent issue, call the CADS team/LADO (as appropriate). Please tell your manager, a Director or the Chief Executive Officer you have done this.

It is our legal duty to report concerns about acts of terrorism or potential acts of terrorism to the Police.



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## 11. Safeguarding in a Regulated Service


Some of our service delivery is regulated by [Ofsted](#) (Early Years, Children and accommodation for those under 18) and the [Care Quality Commission](#) (CQC). These are bodies that set the standards for how these services are delivered. They inspect services to ensure that minimum standards are adhered to. These standards include safeguarding.

Both the CQC and Ofsted are set up to protect some of the most vulnerable people that we work with. Safeguarding is an important part of the activity that they regulate.

While this does not fundamentally change *how* we safeguard our service users, it might mean that we have to report safeguarding concerns in a different way, or carry out additional reporting, by completing a notification to the regulatory authority. If you work in one of these services, it is your duty to learn about the regulations and how they might impact on your work to safeguard others. It is not optional.

The decision to notify Ofsted or the CQC of a safeguarding concern ultimately sits with the Registered Person (a role held by a member of the Executive Management Team), although the notification itself might be completed by a manager or other team member from the service itself.

Your responsibility is to reduce safeguarding risks in the same way that you would across all our work. In addition to this you must:

- Develop a good understanding of the regulatory framework for your service
- Safeguard vulnerable adults to prevent abuse, as well supporting and empowering adults to minimise the risk of abuse (CQC)
- Follow the guidance in the  [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) document which underpins the Ofsted safeguarding regulations.
- Support your manager or other colleague if they decide to make a notification to Ofsted or the CQC

### CQC

‘Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. It's fundamental to high-quality health and social care’

### Ofsted

‘Safeguarding children is defined in Working together to safeguard children as: 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’

