

# Safeguarding at Mary's: Policy Statement

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Procedures .....	3
3	Training .....	4
4	Safer recruitment.....	5
5	Responding to allegations made against a member of staff/volunteer .....	5
6	Children harming other children.....	6
7	E-safety and use of digital devices .....	6
8	The Prevent Duty .....	6
9	Mary's Safeguarding Framework.....	8
10	Changes, Reviews and Approvals for this Policy.....	17

## 1 Introduction

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***The most important part of youth work is keeping young people safe. Regardless of why young people engage with our services, there is an expectation from members, parents and guardians, funders, our sector, and local, national and international communities that we keep young people safe.***

Mary's (St Mary Islington Community Partnership) is a registered charity that runs a Youth Club and provides training activities related to youth work and community development.

Working with young people is at the core of our enterprise. This policy outlines how Mary's undertakes its safeguarding responsibilities.

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out the specific duties for local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people in their area. Mary's is a partner organisation to the London Borough of Islington and works with other agencies and authorities on safeguarding matters.

The Care Act 2014 requires each Local Authority to set up a Safeguarding Adults Board. The nature of our work means that occasionally we work with vulnerable adults defined by the NHS as:

*'any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation.'*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Vulnerabilities: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vulnerabilities-applying-all-our-health)

We have used the term ‘Young People’ throughout this policy statement being the collective term for our principal beneficiaries. For the purpose of safeguarding, this term refers to children (aged 0 – 17) and vulnerable adults. Regardless of legal definition and minor differences in procedures, our approach and commitment to keeping young people safe remains the same.

## 1.1 Culture of safety, equality and protection

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Mary’s is committed to providing an environment where young people can play, learn, develop and achieve and where they are safeguarded and are enabled to tell or communicate if they are being harmed in some way.

We work with children, parents and the community to ensure we support children’s rights and create and maintain the safest possible environment for children.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all young people have the right to freedom from abuse and harm
- Promoting joint working with parents and carers in the interest of children’s welfare
- Following safe recruitment procedures which ensure that staff are carefully selected, vetted and have the relevant qualifications and experience.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of young people
- Designating a safeguarding lead who takes specific responsibility for children’s protection, safety and well-being
- Supporting all staff in bringing concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Providing parents, carers, and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have. This includes having knowledge of, and ensuring children have access to their preferred methods of communication and that staff are trained in a variety of communication tools.
- Adopting positive behaviour management strategies which are non-violent and do not impose humiliation
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the organisation’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures, including this procedure.
- Working in partnership with external organisations and professionals to ensure that children are protected

The above commitments are integrated into Mary’s policies, management and supervision practice and into Mary’s internal training and education activities. A detailed reflection with example references about how these are embedded into the organisation please see Mary’s Safeguarding Framework.

## 1.2 Board/Senior organisational lead

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The designated safeguarding lead has overall leadership responsibility for safeguarding in our organisation.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Sally Baxter – Youth Work Development Manager, 020 7183 2642, 07816 073 016, sally.baxter@marys.org.uk

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Aston Wood - CEO, 020 7354 1387, 07498 073452, aston.wood@marys.org.uk

**Lead Trustee for Safeguarding:** Ian Mylam, 020 7359 6112, 07798 676832, ianmylam@blueyonder.co.uk

## 2 Procedures

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All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the leaflet [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#). (HM Government, March 2015) and Mary's whistle-blowing procedures.

### 2.1 Named person's role and responsibilities

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It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to act as a source of support and guidance on all matters of child protection and safeguarding within the setting. In the absence of the DSL, staff should report any concerns to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will report back to the DSL.

Everyone in the organisation should know who the Designated Safeguarding Leads are and how to contact them.

It is not the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the task of Children's Social Services who have the legal responsibility. But it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate action taken.

The designated member of staff is responsible for:

- Liaising with the Children's Social Care
- Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate child protection training so that they are up to-date with current legislation, policy and practice and are able to respond sensitively and appropriately to any child protection concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff new to the setting receive induction training to enable them to understand and adhere to the setting's policies, including reporting and whistle-blowing procedures.
- Ensuring that child protection referrals are made using the format agreed by Islington Children's Social Care or the format required by other boroughs if the child is not an Islington resident
- Ensuring the setting's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are maintained, up-to-date and are disseminated and adhered to by all staff.
- Agree a mechanism with the leadership team to ensure the procedures are adhered to (e.g. file audits, training audits, annual safeguarding reports, central safeguarding cases tracker, etc.)

### 2.2 Managing a disclosure of abuse

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Staff must report all safeguarding concerns as a matter of urgency. If there is an immediate risk of significant harm, call 999 and request the police.

#### 2.2.1 If a young person tells you they are being abused, you must:

- Allow them to speak without interruption, and accept what they say

- Be understanding and reassuring – do not give your opinion
- Tell them you will try to help but must pass the information on
- Tell duty worker or line manager immediately
- Write careful notes of what was said using the actual words
- Include the time and date and full names of those involved
- Sign and pass your notes to the DSL

Children can only be interviewed once and this interview must be conducted by a trained police officer and social worker under Home Office 'Achieving Best Evidence' guidance. If a child has already been interviewed, it means that the police may not be able to pursue the matter.

A child may recall former abuse once in a safe situation. Although they may be under no current threat to their safety, any disclosure must be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and followed through appropriately.

You may also have concerns about a child's welfare where there has not been any disclosure or allegation. In the best interests of the child / young person, these concerns should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and followed through appropriately.

**2.2.2 If you are concerned about the welfare of a young person or there is a concern, complaint or allegation about an adult or yourself, inside or outside Mary's, you must:**

- Tell duty worker or line manager immediately
- Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told
- Include the time and date and full names of those involved
- Sign and pass your notes to your DSL

**2.2.3 Recording and reporting**

Recording is a tool of professional accountability and is central to safeguarding and protecting children. It is not always possible to know whether a small or vague concern held today may increase as the days or weeks pass and later form the substance of a child protection referral. For this reason, it is vital that concerns are recorded accurately so that they can be monitored and emerging patterns noticed.

**2.2.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead Response**

Making a Child Protection Referral to Targeted and Specialist Children and Families Service [Find Your Islington | Children's Services Contact Team \(CSCT\), Children's Social Care](#)

See the flowchart in 9.1 Making A Child Protection Referral

## 3 Training

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All members of staff will regularly access appropriate safeguarding training for their group (depending on their responsibility) as set out by Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership in [Competence Still Matters](#) and ensure their knowledge is up to date on safeguarding issues. Mary's will ensure that the training made available will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.

## 4 Safer recruitment

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Safe recruitment and selection practice is vital to safeguarding and protecting children. Please refer to the safe recruitment policy and procedure for more detailed information.

- All staff and volunteers are carefully selected. Mary's recruitment procedures are in line with the LSCB safer recruitment guidelines.
- DBS checks are carried out in accordance with legislation for all staff, students on placements, volunteers and agency supply workers before they are allowed to work with us. Any disclosure revealed through the DBS check is risk assessed in accordance with best practice guidance.
- DBS disclosures are recorded in staff files.
- All new members of staff, volunteers, students on placement and agency staff complete the induction process and sign to agree they have understood our policies, procedures and basic safeguarding practices.

## 5 Responding to allegations made against a member of staff/volunteer

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Despite all efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations are made of abuse by staff or volunteers against children. All staff must be vigilant in relation to inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with the children. Examples include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual roles and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. Staff should behave in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

All concerns about staff should be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead and the whistle-blowing policy should be followed. It is the responsibility of this designated safeguarding lead to report allegations to, and otherwise liaise with, the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations against people who work with children

The DSL will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will manage any allegation in line with *Islington's Allegations Made Against Staff Process*. See 9.2 Flowchart: Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff

All staff have a duty to protect children from abuse and keep children safe. Wanting to support a colleague or finding it difficult to believe what you have seen or heard must come second to that.

- If any worker is concerned that no action is being taken, it is their responsibility to report the matter directly to the LADO
- The flowchart 'Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff' is displayed in the office and attached to this policy
- It is the responsibility of all staff to share concerns about the actions or attitudes of colleagues with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) who will deal with the concerns appropriately

- This often difficult issue should be discussed at staff meetings so that all staff understand what is meant by the term ‘whistle-blowing’ and their responsibilities with regards to it, and are able to raise concerns with the DSL.
- Staff must give management details of any incident, order, determination, conviction or any other possible issue which may impact on their suitability to work with children.
- If any such event should lead to disqualification appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of children in the setting.

## 6 Children harming other children

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It is part of our duty of care that we make sure children are protected from harm from other children. If you think that a child is targeting another child it is important to raise this with the Manager immediately.

In recording and reporting incidents it is important that the identity of the child that did the hurting is not disclosed. This is part of our duty of confidentiality to all children and families. If a parent asks who has hurt their child, show understanding of their upset, anger or pain but explain that we are not able to share this information.

## 7 E-safety and use of digital devices

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Refer to Mary’s E-safety Policy

### 7.1 Cameras and recording equipment

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It is not the intention to prevent our members from taking pictures, videos and audio recordings, but to reduce the risks of inappropriate photography, filming and audio recording.

No one is permitted to photograph or record images or audio in the toilet and changing areas.

## 8 The Prevent duty

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In order for Mary’s to fulfil the prevent duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is seen as part of Mary’s wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences. Mary’s can also build resilience to radicalisation by promoting the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and enabling them to challenge extremist views.

### 8.1 Risk assessment

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Mary’s will assess the risk of young people being drawn into terrorism, including support for ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual young people who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism and what to do to

support them. The local authority and local police will be able to provide contextual information to help Mary's understand the risks in their area. Appendices

## 9 Mary's Safeguarding Framework

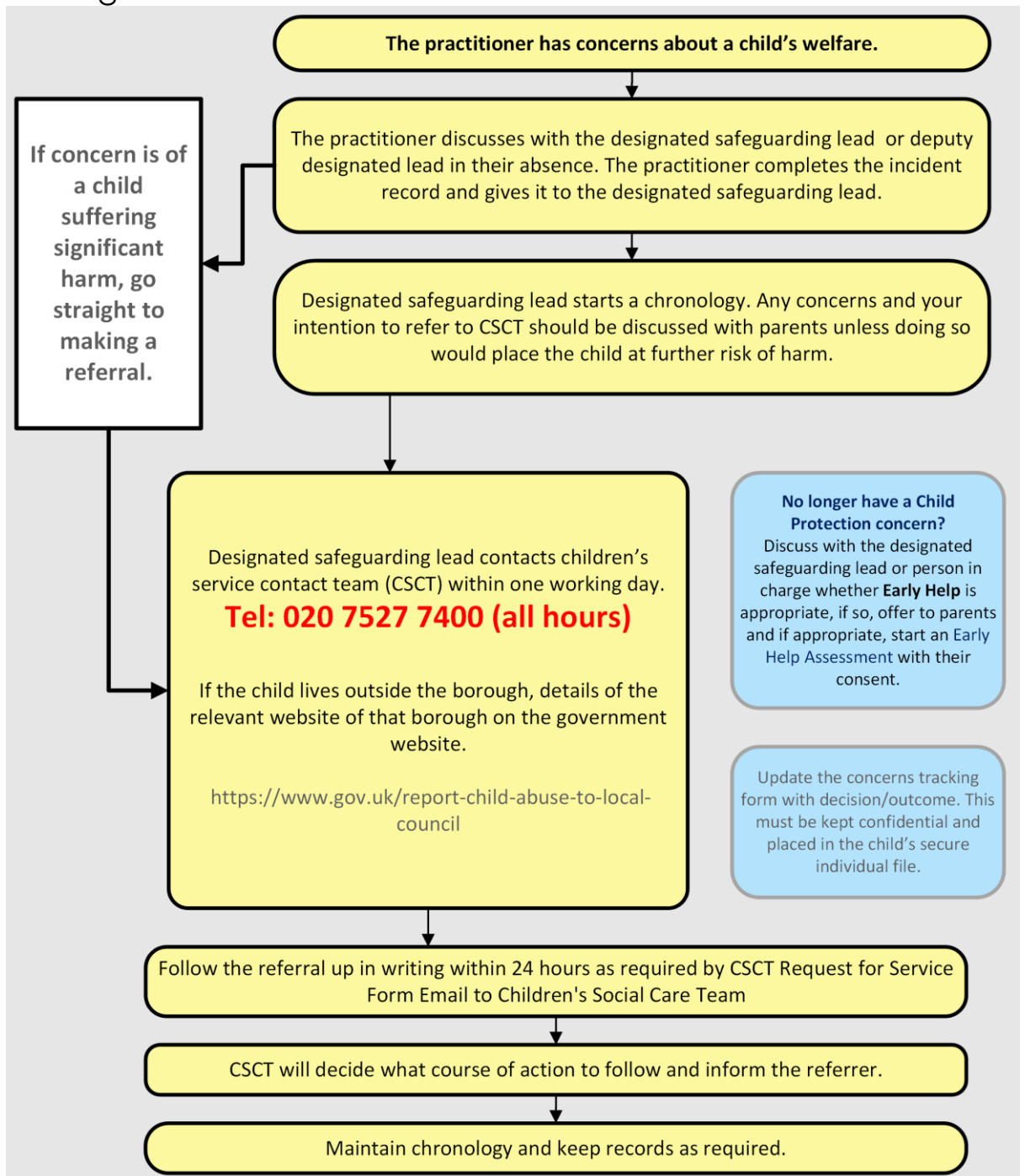
Mary's Safeguarding Commitments	Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Procedural	Management, supervision, practice	Education, training, raising awareness
Recognising that all young people have the right to freedom from abuse and harm			All staff go through induction and regular training are made aware/ reminded of this fundamental right
Promoting joint working with parents and carers in the interest of young people's welfare		Youth Club Keeping parents up to date with what's going on in the local area that might affect young people.	Posters and campaign materials reflecting our commitment to promoting young people's welfare. <a href="#">Information for parents sheet.</a>
Following safe recruitment procedures which ensure that staff are carefully selected, vetted and have the relevant qualifications and experience.	Following set procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers as set out in the staff handbook	Application Process (e.g.DBS, References, interviews.)	Training for hiring managers.
Ensuring that all staff are aware of and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of young people.		Referencing specific cases at staff meeting (e.g. children YP that are being tracked due to concerns).	All Staff through induction, training according to levels of responsibility and ongoing refreshers. Regular debrief with staff after activities and sessions



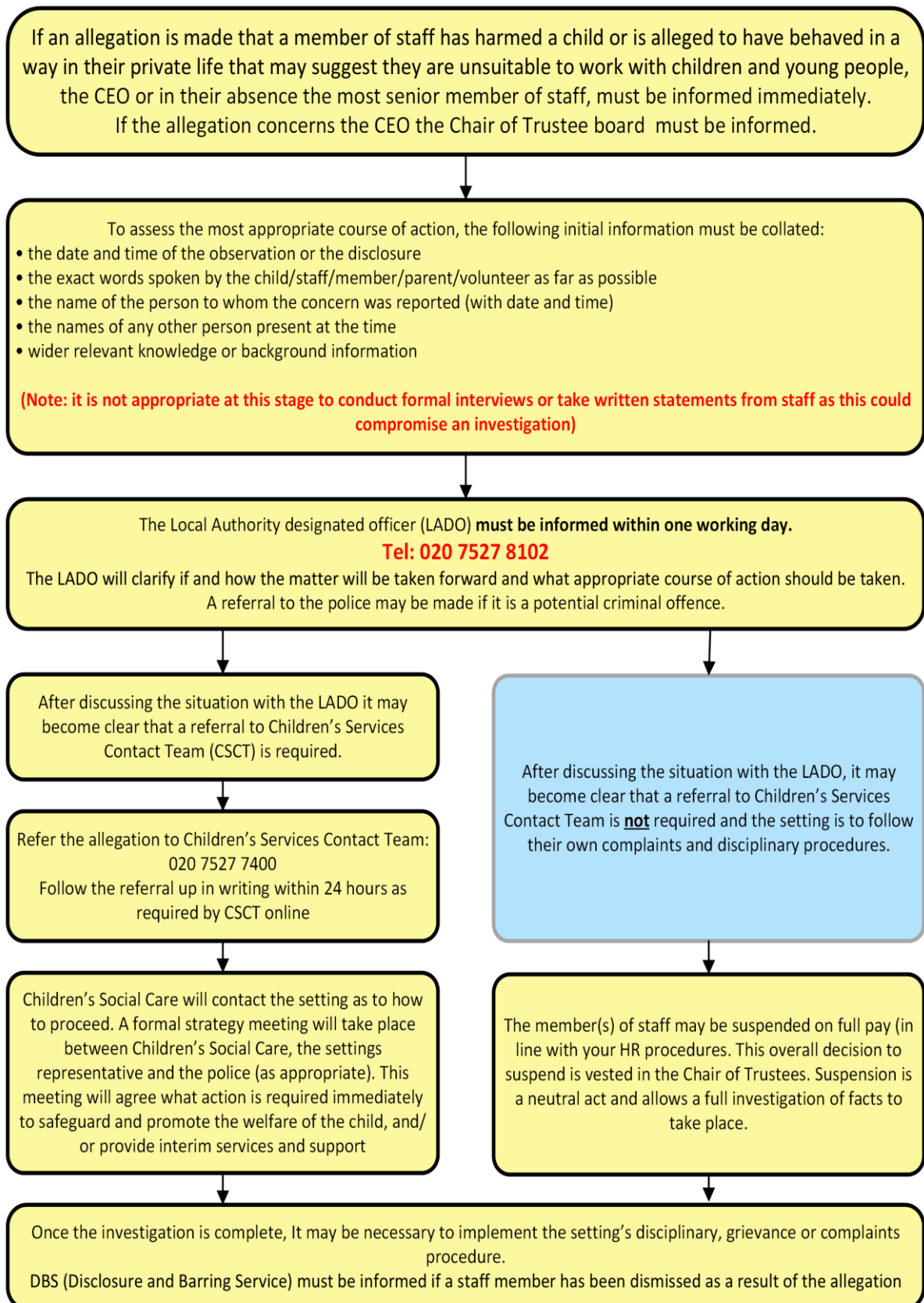
Mary's Safeguarding Commitments	Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Procedural	Management, supervision, practice	Education, training, raising awareness
Designating a Safeguarding Lead who takes specific responsibility for children's protection, safety and well-being	Mary's has DSLs, deputies and governance representation for safeguarding.		Designated Lead Training
Supporting all staff in bringing concerns to the DSLs		Supervision and staff meetings include refreshers about <a href="#">indicators of abuse</a> .	Notices for who the safeguarding leads are displayed, and regular training is enforced.
Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse	Procedure and timelines set out in the <a href="#">flowcharts</a> .	Regular debriefs with delivery staff	DSLs receive regular training and supervising to support compliance with this commitment
Providing parents, carers, and young people with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have. This includes having knowledge of, and ensuring young people have access to their preferred methods of communication and that staff are trained in a variety of communication tools.		YC team reflecting on practice and improving continuously facilitated by Designated leads and best practice management support Comments, complaints and suggestions can be made in the centre and online.	YC teams reflecting on practice and introducing new guidance, case studies, training and testing staff awareness.
Adopting positive behaviour management strategies which are non-violent and do not impose humiliation	Mary's maintains youth club rules, with specific instructions to guide practice for Childcare and YC teams	Good behaviour is recognised and valued.	Behavioural expectations are clear to all youth club and play scheme members and regularly reinforced. Good behaviour is recognised and valued.

Mary's Safeguarding Commitments	Safeguarding Policy, Safeguarding Procedural	Management, supervision, practice	Education, training, raising awareness
Reviewing the effectiveness of the organisation's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies and Procedures	DSL Tracking cases in the Central Safeguarding Tracker	Evaluating current policy/ procedures including recording practices in light of current cases at staff/ management meetings.	Training update for Safeguarding leads learning about new statutory guidance
Working in partnership with external organisations and professionals to ensure that children are protected		Honorary Staff Contract (YC)	Staff are trained and inducted into GDPR compliant information sharing protocols.

## 9.1 Making A Child Protection Referral



## 9.2 Flowchart: Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff



### 9.3 What should I do if I suspect abuse of a vulnerable adult?

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- If there is a risk of immediate harm to the adult and/or others:
  - Take yourself out of danger
  - Call 999
- If there is no immediate risk but you think abuse or neglect may be a problem:
  - Call the Islington Access and Advice Service Tel: 020 7527 2299
  
- If you think another colleague or professional person is abusing an adult at risk:
  - Report this to your line manager.
  - If you are unhappy with their response or do not feel you can approach them then call the Islington Access and Advice Service Tel: 020 7527 2299.

You might feel worried about reporting your colleagues. Remember that it is difficult for adults at risk to report abuse and they rely on you to help them.

## 9.4 Links to forms referred to in this policy

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[Request for Service Form | Children's Services Contact Team \(CSCT\), Children's Social Care](#)

[Referral to Islington's Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#)

## 9.5 RECOGNISING POSSIBLE ABUSE

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The following *may* be indicators of abuse.

### Physical signs

- Any injuries, bruises, bites, bumps, fracture, etc. which are not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Instances where children/young people are kept away from the group inappropriately or without explanation.
- Self-mutilation or self-harming e.g. cutting, slashing, drug abuse.

### Emotional signs

Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a young person withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression.

- Nervousness or inappropriate fear of particular adults.
- Changes in behaviour e.g., under-achievement or lack of concentration, inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g., excessive dependence attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness, wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child.

### Signs of neglect

- Regular poor hygiene
- Persistent tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Excessive appetite
- Failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain, consistently being left alone and unsupervised

### Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Any direct disclosure made by a child/young person concerning sexual abuse.
- Child/Young person with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of.
- Adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Preoccupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child/Young person who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Other emotional signs (see above) may be indicative of sexual or some other form of abuse.

## 9.6 Staff Code of Conduct

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Alongside our policy, the youth club staff and volunteers have a Code of Behaviour designed to protect young people and staff from being in a position of compromise. They should be used in conjunction with youth work values and ethics.

### 9.6.1 Do

- Do keep to this code at all times.
- Do treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Do set an example for others to follow.
- Do treat all young people equally – do not show favouritism.
- Do plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least within sight and hearing of others.
- Do respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Do avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust.
- Do allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have.
- Do encourage others to challenge attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
- Do avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, eg tantrums and crushes
- Do make everyone (young people, parents and carers, volunteers, tutors and visitors) aware of our safeguarding arrangements.
- Do remember this code at sensitive moments, eg when helping someone who has been bullied, bereaved or abused.
- Do tell other delivery staff where you are and what you are doing
- Do remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, even if you mean well.
- Do take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer them to your Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

### 9.6.2 Do not

- Do not trivialise abuse.
- Do not form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust.
- Do not drink alcohol when you are directly responsible for young people and never allow young people on activities to drink alcohol.
- Do not allow abusive activities, eg initiation ceremonies or bullying.
- Do not take part in inappropriate behaviour or contact, whether physical, verbal or sexual.
- Do not take part in physical contact games with young people.
- Do not make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun.
- Do not use inappropriate language when writing, phoning, emailing or using the internet.
- Do not let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.
- Do not rely just on your good name to protect you.



## 10 Changes, Reviews and Approvals for this Policy

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Date	Changes, Reviews and Approvals	Who By
21/07/2023	Significant changes to policy following the demerger of the organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changes to remove references to childcare specific requirements (for example Ofsted and the LA early years contacts).</li><li>• Combined with Safeguarding Adults Policy with appropriate wording suitable for a Youth Work context.</li><li>• Removal of excess policy wording.</li><li>• Flowcharts and links updated.</li><li>• Formatting and readability changes.</li></ul>	Aston Wood
26/07/2023	Approval	Trustees