



Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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Meeting your communication needs

We want to ensure that your needs are met, if you would like this information on audio tape, in Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact The Corporate Equality and Diversity Team, telephone: 01872 322339 or email: equality@cornwall.gov.uk

Purpose of Policy

To set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults in Cornwall and how this will be implemented by Cornwall Council in the discharge of its duties. This is a joint policy as there are similarities in many of the actions needed to safeguard children and young people and to safeguard vulnerable adults. However the Council recognises that there are also some distinct differences between these groups and these are reflected in this document and the relevant supporting policies and guidance.

Policy Statement

To develop procedures and good practice within Cornwall Council to ensure that each person and agency can demonstrate that there is an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. To provide evidence of how this is being implemented within its own organisation and within multi-agency working arrangements and of its plans to address any gaps in these arrangements.

Policy Application

This policy applies to all members of staff of Cornwall Council, all Council Elected Members and all those organisations who have a working relationship with the Council including volunteers.

Authors

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Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who, during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

There is a duty on organisations to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Also government guidance makes it clear that it is a shared responsibility, and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Definition

A child is " anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. (See Children's Act 2004)

What do we want to achieve?

Cornwall Council aims to ensure that children in Cornwall achieve the five outcomes for Children that are identified in the Children Act 2004, which are: -.

- Be Healthy – physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- Stay Safe – prevention and protection from harm and neglect
- Enjoy and Achieve – education, training and recreation
- Make a positive contribution to society
- Achieve Economic and Social Well-being

What does this mean?

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of their health or development
- ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- enabling them to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully

Legislative background

Cornwall Council’s role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is as defined in Chapter 3 of the statutory guidance to the Children Act 2004, ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’, (DCSF 2010)

Cornwall Council recognises that, under the Children Act 2004, it has a statutory duty to make arrangements to ensure all its functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Cornwall – this includes all services directly provided and those commissioned by the local authority.

Cornwall Council subscribes to the ‘Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004’ www.everychildmatters.co.uk in underpinning “work with individual children and their families” and the “monitoring and inspection of arrangements to safeguard and promote welfare”

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Definition

A vulnerable adult is a person *“who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, **and** who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”*. (See “No Secrets” - Section 2.3.)

What do we want to achieve?

Cornwall Council works to the following principles (as outlined in the Department of Health publication “No Secrets”).

- Everyone has the right to live his or her life free from violence, fear and abuse.
- Everyone has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- Everyone has the right to independence, which carries with it a degree of risk.

Cornwall Council will ensure that all members of staff across the whole Council know or can easily find out what they need to do if they have a concern about the abuse of vulnerable adults.

What does this mean?

Staff will be able to recognise abuse. The main forms of abuse are divided into the following categories:

- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts to which a person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **Institutional abuse, neglect and poor professional practice.** This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other.

(No Secrets – DOH 2000)

Staff will respond appropriately when they see or are concerned about abuse.

- This means that staff will report and record their concerns about abuse.
- Staff will have detailed guidance to support them to do this in the 'Alerter's Guide.' Staff will also be able to get advice from colleagues about how to do this.

The Council will work with partners from the Safeguarding Adults Board and the wider community to promote awareness of what abuse looks like and how to respond.

The Council has produced a safeguarding communications strategy to help raise public awareness of safeguarding issues, identify and communicate key messages across the Council with employees, key partners and the public and create greater understanding among the media. This has been approved by both the Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards.

The Council has also set up a multi agency communications group to lead this work. This includes representatives of the Council's Communications team, Adult Care and Support and Children's Services, the police, health organisations and the voluntary and community sector, including carers' organisations. The group is currently planning a multi agency campaign based on the Council's "safeguarding is everyone's responsibility" message which will take place at the end of November.

Legislative background

In 2000 the Department of Health and the Home Office published the document 'No Secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policy and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse'. In 2005, the document 'Safeguarding Adults' was published by the Association of Directors of Social Services to give a national framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work. The publication's aim has been to serve as a toolkit for organisations providing health and care services for adults to develop evidence-based good practice framework to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults.

The No Secrets Review published in 2009 identified four key messages from consultation with stakeholders:

- Safeguarding requires empowerment/the 'victim's' voice needs to be heard
- Empowerment is everybody's business, but safeguarding decisions are not
- Safeguarding Adults is not like Child Protection
- The participation/representation of people who lack capacity is also important

(DoH, 2009)

Cornwall Council fully endorses and adheres to the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy. (www.cornwall.gov.uk/safeguardingadults).

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Multi-agency roles and responsibilities document and the Alerter's Guide 'No to Abuse'

Policy Objectives

Our main policy objective is to ensure that we will with our partner agencies promote safeguarding as the moral norm so that it becomes everybody's business. By everybody's business we mean that staff and managers in all organisations working with children and families, including vulnerable

adults, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and their active role in working together to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm.

For this policy to be effective it is essential that each agency and person working in that agency has an applied understanding of what safeguarding means, knows that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, knows the signs and symptoms of potential harm, how to access safeguarding information, advice and guidance, and is committed to making an informed contribution to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

The following principles will underpin all of our work with children and young people. Our approach will be:

- child centred – seeing and listening to children and young people
- rooted in understanding child development
- support the achievement of best possible outcomes for children
- holistic in approach – seeing the whole of the child and not just aspects of their lives
- understand diversity, the impact of discrimination and how to ensure equality of opportunity
- respect for the views of parents/carers and actively involve them in assessment and care planning
- identify and build on strengths and protective factors, as well as identifying and addressing difficulties and risks
- work collaboratively between agencies, sharing information as appropriate
- provide support as a continuing process not for brief periods in relation to particular events
- monitor and review the impact of intervention on a child's welfare and overall developmental progress
- achieve good standards in safeguarding practice consistently and be informed by evidence.

Cornwall Council is a member of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Safeguarding Children Board and therefore subscribes to the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures, www.swcpp.org.uk and range of supplementary instructions issued from time to time on the basis of multi-agency agreements to policy, procedures and guidance.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

The following principles will underpin all of our work with vulnerable adults

- Everyone has the right to live his or her life free from violence, fear and abuse
- Everyone has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation

- Everyone has the right to independence, which carries with it a degree of risk

Cornwall Council is a member of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board which includes senior representation from all partner agencies. The aims of this board are:

- To minimise the risk of abuse to vulnerable adults and to protect vulnerable adults effectively where abuse has occurred or may have occurred.
- To ensure Multi-agency partners work effectively together to develop and implement Safeguarding Adults strategies, policies and procedures.

Equality and Diversity

This policy should be read with Cornwall Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy. Equality is based on the idea of fairness whilst recognising that everyone is different, and diversity is about the ways in which people differ and about recognising that differences are a natural part of society. Cornwall Council expects that all elected members, staff and volunteers who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults treat them as individuals and make them feel respected and valued as an essential part of our commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Review

This document will be reviewed in 2014 or as legislative changes require.

Responsibilities for Safeguarding

Cornwall Council will ensure that:

All Cornwall councillors, senior managers and the governing bodies of maintained and voluntary-aided schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, that they demonstrate leadership, are informed about and take full responsibility for the actions of staff who provide services to children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers at all levels.

This means:

- Ensuring the highest standards of safe recruitment, supervision and management oversight of Council staff, particularly but not exclusively those working directly with children and young people;
- Advising and supporting schools and governing bodies to take full responsibility for monitoring the actions school-based staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- Ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are seen and listened to and that their views are taken fully into account when making decisions
- Taking appropriate action regarding any concerns expressed about their welfare, commensurate with their rights to privacy and wherever possible on the basis of informed consent
- All members of staff and volunteers who are employed by or on behalf of the authority, and who have contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers, will have a clear understanding of the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding
- A statement of the Council's responsibilities towards children, young people and vulnerable adults will be available to all staff; this will include effective systems to ensure that complaints about non-compliance with safeguarding procedures and policies can be made by children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff and other people - and that they receive an appropriate response
- Regularly refreshing our policies and procedures about safeguarding in light of lessons from research and serious case reviews and maintaining an action plan for continuous improvement
- Promoting the highest standards of safeguarding practice across the sector, including robust standards for safe recruitment and ongoing checks
- Carrying out annual audits on our performance and complying fully with the requirements of both the safeguarding boards to undertake statutory audits

The Council and each Directorate has clear lines of accountability in relation to its work in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and delegated decision-making.

This means:

- The Director of Services for Children, Schools and Families has statutory duty and is accountable for ensuring that satisfactory arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Cornwall.
- The Director of Service for Adult Care and Support has a coordinating role in developing the local policies and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse (see 'No Secrets' – section 1.4).
- Constituent Directorates will have in place a named senior manager who takes strategic responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within that Directorate. This includes strategic responsibility for safer recruitment, ongoing safer employment, including training and the management of allegations, the monitoring of safeguarding arrangements and the management and support of other named staff who have safeguarding roles

and who are trained and able to provide advice on procedure in relation to appropriately passing on concerns relating to children, young people, vulnerable adults and staff.

- Constituent Directorates and schools will ensure that every member of staff knows how to seek advice and report any concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Individual responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be encompassed within relevant job descriptions and procedures.
- The Assistant Chief Executive will champion safeguarding corporately on behalf of CLT and ensure all directorates are involved in policy shaping, safeguarding training, programme development and learning from serious case reviews through a corporate safeguarding steering group to which all directorates are expected to nominate a senior representative.
- Each Directorate will nominate safeguarding advocates who will work within their service and directorate in order to promote awareness of the safeguarding agenda, act as a sign post to specialist officers and to support staff through the referral process where necessary.

Providing Services

All policies, procedures and services take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults; and so far as possible will be informed by the views of children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers. All policies and key budget decisions must be supported by an assessment of the impact that may be caused (for example age or vulnerability).

This means:

- The Council, in collaboration with its partners, will provide a range of preventive and statutory services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that services to children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers are provided safely and effectively, and are accessible.
- That Cornwall Council understands its role as corporate parent of children in public care depends upon ownership and leadership at a senior level including elected members and embedding of that understanding throughout the Council's workforce. As corporate parent Cornwall Council understands, acts upon its responsibility, and has monitored arrangements in place to achieve good parenting for all children in its care, an essential part of which is to safeguard and promote their education.

Multi-Agency Working - Working Together

Good interagency and multi-disciplinary working is promoted and maintained both within the Council and with other organisations. Standards

of practice in work with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers are regularly reviewed in line with relevant national Guidance.

This means:

- Ensuring that the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board are provided with appropriate support to carry out their duties in partnership with other local organisations in Cornwall.
- Commissioned organisations, including the voluntary sector, providing services to children, young people, vulnerable adults, their families or carers and to schools will demonstrate standards of safeguarding compliant with those of Cornwall Council, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Board and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board.
- Information is shared efficiently and effectively in respect of issues that may affect the safety and welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. Clear protocols are in place and understood by staff, so ensuring that information is shared appropriately and as the law prescribes.
- Concerns are shared early in order to prevent any problems escalating.
- Ensuring that the Council has a network of trained, accessible safeguarding advocates to support staff to make alerts

Staff Awareness

The Council considers that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. In particular the Council will ensure that all staff in contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults or who have access to sensitive information about children, young people or vulnerable adults, know what to do and how best to share information in order to ensure that children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers receive necessary services - especially when they are concerned that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm – and that all staff have access to support and appropriately expert advice in this context.

This means:

- That all staff employed by the Council who have access to children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers, and those who have access to sensitive information, will have induction and on-going training so that they know of the appropriate procedures and personnel in place, and of their role in responding to concerns about children, young people, vulnerable adults and other safeguarding matters. Additionally, line management and/or supervision is in place to appropriately support staff.

Safe Employment

Robust procedures are in place to ensure that staff who have access to children, young people and vulnerable adults or access to sensitive information about children, young people and vulnerable adults are employed safely.

This means:

- There is a culture throughout the Council that enables safeguarding issues to be addressed.
- Recruitment and vetting procedures prevent unsuitable people from having contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>
- Staff who work or have contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families or carers have appropriate safeguarding and safe working practices training, including induction, consistent with their role and function. This training will reflect the necessity for effective multi-agency and inter-professional working – both within the Council and with other organisations. The content and standard of this training will be approved by Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Board and/or Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board.
- Safe working practices are promoted and poor and unsafe practice is challenged, <http://www.safechildren-cios.co.uk/Default.aspx?page-126> and click on “Reference Library” [left hand panel], “Links to National Documents and Guidance”, and “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People”.
- Allegations or concerns about staff relating to children or young people are handled effectively and in accordance with ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’,) 6.24, Appendix 5 (DCSF2006) and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Board management of allegations procedures, www.safechildren-cios.co.uk
- Allegations or concerns about staff relating to vulnerable adults are handled in accordance with the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults policy, www.cornwall.gov.uk/safeguardingadults
- Effective arrangements such as a whistle blowing policy, which explicitly describes arrangements for sharing concerns about the behaviour of colleagues and other members of staff are described at induction and training and well-publicised by the Council to its employees
<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=20645> .

Monitoring Outcomes

Cornwall Council and affiliated organisations collect, analyse, monitor and review a wide range of data associated with safeguarding objectives arising from the outcomes listed above and report on a range of these objectives to its partners and regional and national government.

The corporate steering group monitors progress against our corporate and directorate improvement plans on a quarterly basis. The Council is also independently audited annually by the LSCB and the Adults Safeguarding Board.

References

1. Working Together to Safeguard Children (DCSF, 2010)
2. Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DCSF, 2007)
3. What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DCSF, 2006)
4. If this were my child - A Councillor's Guide to being a good corporate parent (DfES 2003)
5. Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People (DCSF 2007)
6. www.swcpp.org.uk
7. No Secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (DOH, March 2000)
8. Safeguarding Adults: a national framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in safeguarding adults work (ADSS {Association of Directors of Social Services} October 2005)
9. www.cornwall.gov.uk/safeguardingadults
10. Safeguarding Adults Report on the consultation on the review of 'No Secrets' (DoH, 2009)

Prepared by

Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group

17 July 2012

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