



## The SUN Network Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Policy

### 1. Introduction

Although The SUN Network does not work with children or young people, risk factors still exist, and it is necessary for the organisation to consider children in relation to their responsibilities to keep them safe from harm. The safeguarding of children under the age of 18 years, is everyone's responsibility and The SUN Network is committed to the protection and welfare of children. Where there is a concern that a child is at risk due to a disclosure being made to a SUN Network staff member, or a staff member noticing the signs of abuse, action will be taken. This policy aims to set out the circumstances and procedures staff should use when faced with a Child Protection issue. The SUN Network staff and board members, volunteers and any other person employed by The SUN Network will adhere to the following legislation for safeguarding children.

The Childrens Act 1989 and 2004 cover the legislation relevant to this policy. More information on the Children's Act 2004 can be found at : [Children's Act 2004 | What is it?, Key Principles & Safety \(online-learning-college.com\)](#)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 also covers the legislation required to work collaboratively with other agencies to safeguard children. More information can be found here: [Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Summary \(thesafeguardingcompany.com\)](#)

Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues

### 2. Implementation of this Policy

The SUN Network will meet our commitment to keeping children safe. For example by:

- Listening to children and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead and a member of the board who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation
- Writing detailed safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Making sure all staff and volunteers understand and follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Ensuring children, young people and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and children know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns.
- The SUN Network will provide Child Protection Training for staff on induction, and will be followed by refreshers where appropriate
- The SUN Network will ensure all staff and volunteers are DBS checked on a three-year cycle

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- The SUN Network will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly cycle unless there is any significant change in legislation which means a speedier review process

The responsible individual for safeguarding children is the Executive Director, Lois Sidney ([lois.sidney@sunnetwork.org.uk](mailto:lois.sidney@sunnetwork.org.uk) 07712 358172) and the board member responsible is the chair of the board Jonathan Wells ([jfgwells57@gmail.com](mailto:jfgwells57@gmail.com))

### **3. What is meant by ‘Safeguarding children’?**

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) state the following:

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children’s health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

More information can be found at: [Safeguarding children and child protection | NSPCC Learning](#)

### **What constitutes abuse?**

- Child neglect
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Child sexual abuse
- Bullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Child trafficking and modern slavery
- Peer on peer sexual abuse

- County lines involvement
- Sexting

More information on abuse can be found at: [Child abuse and neglect | NSPCC Learning](#)

#### **4. Six key points of information sharing**

1. When dealing with families, staff should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of harm or an adult at risk of harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a crime (see glossary for definition) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

2. Staff must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.

3. Staff should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information, if in your judgement on the facts of the case there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.

4. Staff should seek advice where in doubt, especially where the doubt relates to a concern about possible harm to a child or harm to others.

5. Staff should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.

6. Staff should always record the reasons for their decision – whether it is to share information or not.

#### **5. What constitutes a child safeguarding concern**

Within the context of The SUN Network services it is unlikely that staff would receive a direct disclosure from a child or young person. However, it is more likely that disclosures will come from adult service users who are either parents or in contact with children. This policy will guide staff in when and how they deal with issues related to children within this context.

Many of the people we come into contact with are parents and it is assumed that they will use The SUN Network as a result of their own mental health or drug and alcohol issues. It is understood within The SUN Network that being responsible for children and having a mental health problem or drug and alcohol problem can bring both positive and negative

issues to the fore. We do not assume however that simply having these problems makes you a bad parent or guardian.

However, should staff feel that a child is at risk, action must be taken.

## **6. What action should be taken?**

Within any context should a member of staff hear anything that constitutes harm they must follow the following procedures:

- a. Clarify with the source what you heard where possible. If this is in a group context staff must try and talk to the individual away from the group.
- b. The member of staff should make an immediate assessment regarding the context of what has been heard.
- c. Once the member of staff has decided that the concern must be investigated he/she must complete Part 1 of the Report & Action form attached (Appendix 1).
- d. This must immediately be discussed with the individual's manager.
- e. The manager will decide with the reporting staff member whether there is sufficient cause to make a referral to statutory services. This may be informed by an anonymous "what if" conversation with the contact centre. The content of this discussion should be recorded in part 2.
- f. If the manager and staff member agree that perhaps there is not sufficient concern to pursue the matter, then this must be justified on the form in Part 2. This form will still be kept on file for 3 years.
- g. The staff member and manager must also consider the level of communication that will be had with the person who raised or disclosed the concern, and with the child and family in question. Statutory advice should be sought when making this decision. There needs to be a balance with a person's right to know about information being shared about them, and the risk to a child or to a future legal procedure.
- h. Written consent should be sought if appropriate but where a verbal consent is received this must be recorded on the Report and Action form. If consent is not given, then this must also be recorded on the Report and Action form in Part 3.
- i. If the manager and reporting staff member have decided that the risk is significant and that it stands up to the tests allowing for information to be shared, then the local Child Protection Team or mental health key worker will be informed immediately.
- j. All action will be recorded in Part 4 of the Report and Action form.
- k. All conversations and actions to be recorded on the contact sheet in Part 5

These report forms will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a file named 'CHILD PROTECTION REPORTS' with restricted access.



In all cases the Chair of Directors must be informed. If there is any confusion or anxiety at any point throughout the process the Chair of Directors must be consulted.

All staff must ensure that this information is shared with the manager immediately

The timescale of this procedure will be determined by the individual nature of the incident.

This policy will be reviewed within three years or sooner if legislation changes.

For support and information please contact the following:

Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board

Phone Number: 0345 045 5203

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT): [01733 234724](tel:01733234724)

Online children referral form for Cambridgeshire County Council

[https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Make a professional referral to Cambridgeshire County Council Children Services](https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Make_a_professional_referral_to_Cambridgeshire_County_Council_Children_Services)

**Approved by The SUN Network Board of Directors Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Next Review Date: July 2026**

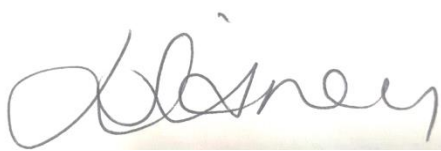
**Responsible Officer: Executive Director of The SUN Network.**

Signed: 

**Jonathan Wells**

**Chair of Directors**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Signed: 

**Lois Sidney**

**Executive Director**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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Reference: NSCPCC 'What is meant by Safeguarding Children: [Safeguarding children and child protection | NSPCC Learning](#)

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## Appendix 1

### Children's Safeguarding Report & Action form

Date;

Person completing;

Executive Director:

PART 1: Write as clearly and in as much detail as possible what you have seen and heard. Attribute all statements or views to the correct person: E.g. "A told me that she had seen B hit her child". Include details of the venue, and all other people present.

PART 2: With the Executive Director, answer these questions:

What, if anything, is the immediate risk to the child? How likely is it, and what would the impact on the child be?

Is there indication from a "what if" conversation with statutory services that a referral should be made?

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If you are not making a referral, explain why:

### PART 3: Communication

Please list below all the people involved in this incident/disclosure and explain what information about the disclosure and actions is being shared with them. Explain your decision, based on their right to information and/or consent, the paramount right of the child to safety, and the guidance you have received from statutory services.

Person	Information to be shared and why

### PART 4: Action Plan

Action	Lead person at The SUN network	To be done by	Tick when complete





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PART 5: Record of events

Date	Event	Other people involved	The SUN Network staff member

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