Safeguarding Children and Adults

1 Policy Summary

Approved by: Board of Trustees	Owned by: Designated Safeguarding Lead
Approved date: 04/06/2026	Effective Date: 04/06/2026
Version: 2026.01	Review due: 04/06/2027

Policy Statement

- We are dedicated to the well-being and protection of all children and vulnerable adults. We will take all necessary steps to ensure their safety.
- We recognise that that some children and adults may face additional vulnerabilities.
- Our safeguarding practices comply with relevant legislation, including but not limited to the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, and the Care Act 2014.
- We will conduct regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential safeguarding risks.
- We will provide appropriate support to children and vulnerable adults involved in safeguarding concerns
- We are committed to promoting equality and inclusion and will ensure that all individuals are treated fairly, without discrimination ensuring that everyone feels valued and supported.
- We are committed to a child-centred approach in all safeguarding practice. We will actively listen to children and young people, ensure their voices and lived experiences are recorded and considered, and use this information to inform safeguarding decisions. We will promote consistent, trusted relationships with children and young people to support open communication and effective safeguarding.
- We have clear reporting procedures for suspected abuse, harm, or neglect.
- We will ensure all allegations are taken seriously and handled promptly and appropriately.
- All records are securely stored

- We work with external agencies, including social services and police, to respond to safeguarding concerns.
- We will share relevant safeguarding information lawfully, appropriately and proportionately where this may assist another organisation or practitioner to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Information will not be withheld solely because consent has not been obtained or because a concern has not reached a formal safeguarding threshold.
- We implement strict recruitment processes to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers.
- We provide ongoing training to employees and volunteers on safeguarding procedures.
- All employees and volunteers are responsible for adhering to this policy and reporting any concerns.
- We will conduct audits and evaluations to ensure the effectiveness of our safeguarding measures.
- We will regularly review and update the safeguarding policy to reflect changes in legislation and best practices.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for overseeing safeguarding practices and ensuring compliance with this policy.
- Employees and volunteers will have access to support services and guidance when dealing with safeguarding issues.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how YCSW works to protect children and adults at risk. By having a robust Safeguarding Policy, YCSW can ensure compliance with local, national and sector standards. In providing guidance on the responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding, YCSW ensures that volunteers, staff and trustees understand their roles in keeping people safe. This policy also provides assurances to members of the public and service users around YCSW's recognition of its responsibility to safeguard Children and Vulnerable Adults.
YCSW is committed to creating a safe and positive environment. Safeguarding is essential to creating an environment which is safe, respectful and supportive. It is fundamental to ensuring that individuals live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

YCSW recognises that Safeguarding is not just about responding to risks but setting a foundation for safe practices across the organisation and creating a culture and an environment in which people can thrive.

Scope

This policy covers all YCSW activities and applies to anyone involved with the organisation, including trustees, staff, volunteers, and partners. It ensures the safety and well-being of children, young people, and adults at risk. It should be noted that YCSW services work across multiple Local Authority areas and there are differences in the safeguarding process in different Local Authority areas. This policy takes into account Bath and North East Somerset, Somerset and Dorset processes.

Related Policies and documents

YCSW Policies

- Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Managing Young People's Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Self-Harm and Suicide Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Detached Youth Work Procedure
- Training Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Alt Ed Attendance Policy
- Knife & Weapons Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Related Local and National Policies and Documents

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, including the information sharing duty under section 16LA
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Protection of Children Act 1978

- Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Serious Violence Duty (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022)
- Charities Act 2011
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Information Sharing Duty: Statutory Guidance for Safeguarding Organisations and their Practitioners (DfE, 2026)

2 Definitions

- **Abuse** – A form of maltreatment that can be physical, emotional, sexual, or take the form of neglect, causing harm or the risk of harm to an individual. (See Appendix 1 for details of types of Abuse for Children and Appendix 2 for Categories of Abuse for Adults at Risk.)

- **Adult at Risk** – An adult aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves due to their needs.

- **Child** – Any individual under the age of 18

- **Child Exploitation (CE)** – When someone uses a child for financial gain, sexual gratification, labour or personal advantage. Using cruel and violent treatment to force a child to take part in criminal or sexual activities often leads to physical and emotional harm to the child, to the detriment of their physical and mental health, education, and moral or social development.

- **Contextual Safeguarding** – An approach that considers the risks posed to individuals outside their homes, such as in schools, peer groups, or online spaces.

- **Conspiracy Theories**- a belief that some influential or controlling organization or group is secretly responsible for a notable event or phenomenon.

- **County Lines -** A term used to describe to illegal drugs dealing networks used by gangs and criminal networks between large urban centres, small towns and rural areas. Gangs and organised criminal networks using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

- **Data Protection Act 2018** – UK legislation that controls how personal information is used by organisations, ensuring that data is handled lawfully and securely.

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – The person appointed within the organisation to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection concerns.

- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)** – A trained individual who supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in their responsibilities. Deputy DSLs may handle safeguarding concerns, provide advice to staff, and act as a point of contact when the DSL is unavailable.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** – A government body responsible for carrying out checks to ensure individuals are suitable to work with children or adults at risk.

- **Disinformation**- false information that is intended to mislead; deliberate misinformation.

- **Family Help** – Support provided to children and families at the earliest stage to prevent problems from escalating.

- **Escalation Pathways** – Defined routes for reporting and resolving safeguarding concerns, particularly when initial steps do not resolve the issue.

- **Extremism**- Extremism was defined by the Home Office in 2011 as a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – The individual responsible for overseeing allegations made against individuals working with children.
- **Mental Capacity** – The ability to make decisions for oneself. A person may lack capacity if they are unable to understand, retain, or weigh information needed to make a decision. Mental Capacity is time and decision specific, so an individual may have been assessed as lacking capacity to make decisions around one aspect but be capacitous in other areas, they may also be deemed to have capacity and later circumstances change and they do not or visa versa. An individual is presumed to have capacity unless proven otherwise.
- **Misinformation** - false or inaccurate information.
- **Modern Slavery** - A form of exploitation in which an individual is controlled, coerced, deceived, threatened, or forced into work or activities for another person's gain. Modern slavery can include human trafficking, forced or compulsory labour, criminal exploitation, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, and situations where a person is unable to leave due to threats, violence, manipulation, or abuse of power.
- **Online Safeguarding** – Protecting individuals from risks associated with digital platforms, such as cyberbullying, grooming, or exposure to harmful content.
- **Prevent Duty** – A legal duty for certain organisations to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, particularly through safeguarding practices.
- **Radicalisation**- Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It is in itself a form of harm.
- **Teachable Moments** – Opportunities to educate young people during interventions to prevent future harm or risky behaviours.
- **Trafficking**- The movement of humans from one place to another for the purposes of forced labour, slavery or sexual exploitation is understood to be one of the fastest-growing areas of transnational criminal organisations and has devastating effects on the victims.
- **Safeguarding Concern** – Any worry or issue that indicates a child or adult may be at risk of harm.

- **Purported Intimate Images** - Content (image, video etc) which appears to be of, or to include a photo or video of a person, but in which they have not physically been photographed/videoed. This can be computer/AI generated- commonly known as 'Deepfake'. The laws around 'deepfake' also include images or content which isn't 'realism'- i.e. cartoons.
- **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** – A regulation that outlines requirements for handling personal data securely and transparently in the UK.
- **Whistleblowing Mechanisms** – Tools and processes that enable staff and volunteers to report concerns about unsafe practices or misconduct within an organisation without fear of reprisal.
- **YCSW** – Youth Connect South West, the organisation responsible for this safeguarding policy.

3 Policy Detail

Policy Contents

- A Separate but United Safeguarding Framework (Section 3.1.1 - 3.1.4)
- Safeguarding Children (Section 3.2.1 - 3.2.10)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk (Section 3.3.1 – 3.3.12)
- Prevention and Early Intervention in Safeguarding (Section 3.4.1 – 3.4.6)
- Recognising Differentiated Thresholds and Rights (Section 3.5.1 – 3.5.6)
- Reporting and Escalating Safeguarding Concerns (Section 3.6.1 – 3.6.17)
- Multi-Agency Collaboration in Safeguarding (Section 3.7.1 – 3.7.8)
- Training and Support for Staff and Volunteers (Section 3.8.1 – 3.8.9)
- Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers (Section 3.9.1 – 3.9.8)
- Monitoring and Reviewing Safeguarding Practices (Section 3.10.1 – 3.10.8)
- Safeguarding Decision Making, Roles and Responsibilities (Section 3.11.1 – 3.11.7)

- Roles and Responsibilities (Safeguarding Governance Structure) (Section 4.1.1 – 4.1.9)
- Compliance & Enforcement (Section 5.1.1 – 5.1.7)
- Review and Updates (Section 6.1 – 6.5)
- Appendix (Section 7)
    - 7.1 & 7.2 Categories of Abuse for Children (Appendix 1 and 2)
    - 7.3 NSPCC guidance of Gillick Competence and Fraser Guidelines (Appendix 3)
    - 7.4 Six Principles of Safeguarding Adults (Appendix 4)
    - 7.5 Categories of Abuse for Adults (Appendix 5)
    - 7.6 Principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (Appendix 6)
    - 7.7 Establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices in Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities by NSPCC (Appendix 7)
    - 7.8 Contact Telephone Numbers for Children and Adults Social Care (In and Out of Hours) for BANES, Somerset and Dorset (Appendix 8)
    - 7.9 Safeguarding concerns impacting Children and Adults (Appendix 9)
    - 7.10 Online Safeguarding Risks (Appendix 10)
    - 7.11 YCSW Safeguarding Escalation Flowchart (Appendix 11)
    - 7.12 Internal Safeguarding Contact Telephone Numbers YCSW (Appendix 12)

3.1 A Separate but United Safeguarding Framework

3.1.1 UK legislation recognises that an individual becomes an adult when they reach their 18th birthday. This is universal and there are no exceptions- an individual will be considered by law an adult irrespective of mental capacity, disability or childhood experience. YCSW works with young people across this age and need continuum; this is reflected in the policy document.

3.1.2 There are distinct legal and practical differences between safeguarding Children under 18, and Adults at Risk aged 18 and over. This policy acknowledges these and ensures that this is reflected in the support provided by YCSW.

3.1.3 YCSW recognises certain safeguarding concerns can pose risks to both adults and children. Appendix 9 gives further examples of types of abuse which pose a risk to both children and adults.

3.1.4 To ensure a seamless transition for young people policy as they move from 'childhood' to 'adulthood', this policy adopts an integrated approach to safeguarding, addressing the differing safeguarding requirements and needs of the young people supported by YCSW.

3.2 Safeguarding Children

3.2.1 Safeguarding Children is underpinned by statutory guidance, including, Children Act (1989 and 2004), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), the Education Act (2002), the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), The Children and Families Act (2014) the Children and Social Work Act (2017).

3.2.2 YCSW recognises that children under the age of 18 cannot legally consent to abuse or neglect, and safeguarding actions must always prioritise their welfare and protection.

3.2.3 The Children's Act (2004) places a specific duty on all agencies who have direct contact with children to ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded in their work. YCSW actively promotes a culture where children feel safe, respected, and confident to raise concerns or disclose abuse.

3.2.4 YCSW has a duty to provide clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns involving children. All staff and volunteers must be vigilant to the signs of abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect, and act immediately to report concerns in line with this policy. A list of forms of abuse impacting children can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

3.2.5 Children can be at risk of harm from circumstances within their home environment. However, it is important to consider 'Contextual Safeguarding' and the possible risks posed in different contexts outside the home and within the wider community. Staff should recognise the different relationships a child has in their school, peer groups, and in their community. It is important to be aware that the child's context goes beyond their physical environments, more information about the risks encountered by young people online is seen in Appendix 10. Staff should be aware that children may be at risk of harm from issues or behaviour commonly dismissed as 'normal teenage behaviour', such as sexting or risk of violence from peers. As with other risks, if identified, this would require an escalation response as outlined in Section 3.5.

3.2.6 Practitioners must consider the environment they work with young people in and assess any risks posed by the environment, peers or other persons. Specific safeguarding measures are applied during activities involving children, including risk assessments, supervision, and adherence to safe working practices.

3.2.7 When a concern is raised and found not to be a safeguarding issue, but the young person still requires welfare support, their competence and capacity to make decisions should be considered regarding the support they access and how/if this is communicated with their parents/carers. Staff should encourage young people to discuss concerns with their parents/carers. If they are reluctant, this should be explored, and support should be offered to help them communicate. YCSW respects that children aged 16 and 17, or those under 16 who are deemed Gillick Competent, may receive treatment without their parents' or carers' consent or, in some cases, their knowledge. This also applies to young people with SEND unless they are deemed to lack capacity in this area (see Section 3.3 and Appendix 6). **It is crucial to remember that consent is not valid if the young person is being pressured or influenced by someone else. The child's safety is paramount, and child protection concerns should always be shared with relevant agencies, even against the young person's wishes. Further information on Gillick competence from the NSPCC is linked in Appendix 3.**

3.2.8 YCSW works collaboratively with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships to ensure that children's safety and welfare are prioritised.

3.2.9 Staff and volunteers are required to be vigilant and report any concerns promptly, following the escalation procedures outlined in this policy.

3.2.10 YCSW ensures all staff receive training specific to safeguarding children, with a particular focus on recognising and addressing the vulnerabilities of young people aged 12-17.

3.3 Safeguarding Adults at Risk

3.3.1 Safeguarding adults at risk is underpinned by statutory frameworks, including the Care Act (2014), Mental Capacity Act (2005), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), Domestic Abuse Act (2021), and the Children and Families Act (2014).

3.3.2 The Care Act (2014) highlighted that an 'Adult at Risk' is an adult (aged 18 or over) who:

a) Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).
b) Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
c) As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

3.3.3 YCSW works to support adults in line with the six Principles of Safeguarding Adults as outlined in the Care Act (2014). The Principles of Empowerment, Prevention, Protection, Proportionality, Partnership, and Accountability. Further details regarding these can be seen in Appendix 4.

3.3.4 YCSW recognises the different types of abuse affecting adults including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, self-neglect, domestic violence, modern slavery, and discriminatory abuse (See Appendix 5 for further details).

3.3.5 YCSW recognises that Adults have a right to Self-Determination. Capacitous adults may make unwise choices around a risk in their lives or choose not to act to protect themselves.

3.3.6 Safeguarding adults requires respecting an adult's right to make their own decisions, even if those decisions are considered unwise, unless they lack capacity as defined by the Mental Capacity Act (2005). YCSW recognises the five underpinning principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) (See Appendix 6) and, for those adults assessed as lacking capacity, the importance of involving the individual and their advocates as appropriate.

3.3.7 The adults supported by YCSW are under the age of 25, and many remain in the same contexts and environments that they were in prior to their 18th birthday. Therefore, it is still relevant to consider Contextual Safeguarding as an approach to understanding and responding to an adult's experiences of significant harm beyond their family and home. This approach recognises the different relationships individuals have in their schools, peer groups, and in their community. It is important to be aware that the individual's context goes beyond their physical environments, more information about the risks encountered by young people online is seen in Appendix 10.

3.3.8 Practitioners should consider the location that they work in, and any potential risks posed, as well as assessing the risks that young people may be exposed to outside their place of education, as well as inside it.

3.3.9 Practitioners should also take into consideration any additional needs an adult may have and any reasonable adjustments that should be made to support the adult in recognising any risks posed to them and make decisions around their safety.

3.3.10 Staff and volunteers are required to be vigilant and report any concerns promptly, following the escalation procedures outlined in this policy.

3.3.11 The DSL, DDSLs, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Safeguarding and Interface Officer (SaIO) are required to undertake training specific to safeguarding adults, with a particular focus on recognising and addressing the vulnerabilities of young adults aged 18 to 25.

3.3.12 YCSW promotes inter-agency collaboration to safeguard adults, working with local safeguarding adult boards and relevant agencies to address risks and provide appropriate support.

3.4 Prevention and Early Intervention in Safeguarding

3.4.1 YCSW is committed to a proactive safeguarding approach, focusing on prevention and early intervention to reduce risks and promote the well-being of children, young people, and adults at risk.

3.4.2 Early intervention strategies include identifying potential risks at the earliest opportunity and providing timely support through multi-agency collaboration and internal processes.

3.4.3 YCSW fosters a culture of openness and trust, encouraging individuals to raise concerns or seek support without fear of judgment or reprisal.

3.4.4 Staff and volunteers are trained to identify early indicators of safeguarding concerns and to act swiftly to mitigate risks through appropriate intervention.

3.4.5 Staff and volunteers have completed PREVENT training and are expected to identify concerns that a young person may be being exposed to extremist views in physical or online communities. Staff will escalate these concerns to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL/DDSL will liaise with appropriate partner agencies to assess risk and complete appropriate referrals.

3.4.6 The organisation engages in targeted family help initiatives in partnership with external agencies, ensuring support is available for individuals and families before issues escalate.

3.5 Recognising Differentiated Thresholds and Rights

3.5.1 YCSW appreciates the unique developmental and legal needs of children, young people, and adults at risk.

3.5.2 In recognising that the potential for ongoing risk as young people move from childhood to adulthood, YCSW work to support seamless transitions for young people moving from children's safeguarding services to adult safeguarding frameworks.

3.5.3 DSL, DDSL, CEO and SaIO are trained to understand the legal and practical differences in safeguarding thresholds for children and adults, ensuring their responses align with the specific needs of each group and comply with statutory guidance.

3.5.4 YCSW recognises that young adults aged 18 to 25 may face additional vulnerabilities during their transition to independence, including risks related to exploitation, mental health challenges, and financial instability. Safeguarding measures are tailored to address these risks while empowering young people to build resilience and autonomy.

3.5.5 YCSW recognises the importance of cultural competence, anti-discriminatory practice, and anti-racist safeguarding approaches. Safeguarding decisions will consider the cultural backgrounds, identities, lived experiences, and individual circumstances of children, young people, and adults. YCSW acknowledges that racism, discrimination, prejudice, and bias may impact safeguarding experiences, professional decision-making, and outcomes, and expects staff to challenge discriminatory behaviour, language, attitudes, and systemic barriers where identified. NSPCC guidance on establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory safeguarding practices for children from Black, Asian, and minoritised ethnic communities is referenced in Appendix 7.

3.5.6 In line with NSPCC guidance, YCSW promotes a proactive safeguarding approach, emphasising early intervention to prevent harm and reduce risks, particularly for those transitioning between services or facing complex safeguarding needs.

3.6 Reporting and Escalating Safeguarding Concerns

3.6.1 YCSW requires all safeguarding concerns, whether relating to children, young people, or adults, to be reported promptly in line with this policy. All staff and volunteers are obligated to act on concerns without delay.

3.6.2 Staff and volunteers must report welfare concerns to their line manager. This discussion should review the reasons for concern. Any concerns pertaining to mental health should be dealt with in accordance with the Mental Health, Self Harm and Suicide Policy. Any unexplained disengagement from support, or unexplained non-attendance at YCSW sessions should be escalated to the line manager, and DSL if appropriate. Any unexplained or sudden non-attendance within Alternative Education should be managed according to the Alt Ed Attendance Policy.

3.6.3 Following discussion with a line manager, any suspected or identified safeguarding concerns or escalations should be escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). Should a practitioner's manager not be available, it would be appropriate to directly escalate to the DSL/DDSL.

3.6.4 If the DSL or DDSLs are unavailable, safeguarding concerns must be escalated to the CEO. If there is no senior manager available, and there are immediate risks posed to an individual, escalation should be directly to the Emergency Services or relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care. Please see Appendix 8 for a list of relevant contact numbers.

3.6.5 YCSW provides services to young people outside of normal working hours, in these circumstances, a senior manager will be on call until the sessions have finished. Practitioners should escalate any safeguarding concerns that arise in these sessions to the on-call senior manager.

3.6.6 The discussions should include details about the situation causing concern, any background information which provides context to the concern, what actions have already been carried out by the practitioner. Following this, a plan should be formulated collaboratively and should include any advice received from the manager or DSL. This plan should include a timescale for any actions and individuals responsible for carrying out the actions. This should be clearly documented on the Young Person's records.

3.6.7 Concerns involving immediate danger or significant harm must be reported to emergency services (e.g., police, ambulance) without waiting for internal processes to conclude. Following management of the incident, the internal escalation procedures should be completed; practitioners should ensure that communication with the appropriate manager has occurred, and the incident is documented fully.

3.6.8 All reports of safeguarding concerns must be documented thoroughly by the staff member raising the concern on the caseload management system, including details of the concern, actions taken, advice received, and any follow-up actions required. Records must include accurate details of who was involved, what occurred, where and when the incident or concern arose, including relevant dates, times, names, and locations. Wherever possible, records should include the individual's exact words using direct quotations. Staff must clearly distinguish between factual information, professional observations, and professional opinion or judgement. Documentation must comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR.

3.6.9 YCSW supports staff in raising concerns through whistleblowing mechanisms, ensuring they can report unsafe practices, unresolved safeguarding risks, or misconduct without fear of reprisal.

3.6.10 YCSW recognises that, following the updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), schools and colleges maintain safeguarding responsibility for any children on roll who are accessing Alternative Provision. YCSW acknowledges the importance of escalating new or escalating safeguarding concerns to the appropriate organisation for children in line with this policy.

3.6.11 When working with external partners or contractors, YCSW requires all safeguarding concerns to be reported by YCSW staff through YCSW's internal procedures, ensuring consistency and accountability. Escalation to external partners or organisation should be completed, where appropriate, following discussion with a senior manager.

3.6.12 Where a practitioner or manager feels that a concern has reached threshold for Social Care referral, a discussion should be had with the DSL prior to a Request for Service submitted. In the absence of the DSL, a discussion should be had with the DDSL, or CEO. If a decision is made that a Request for Services should be submitted, this should be completed by the practitioner and their line manager, with support from the DSL, DDSL or SaIO. Following a submission of a Request for Service, a copy should be saved to the Young Person's records and a further copy sent to safeguarding@ycsw.org.uk. The submitting individual is responsible for following up any referrals if there has been no contact from Social Care in 48 working hours.

3.6.13 A decision that a concern does not meet the threshold for referral to Children's Social Care does not mean that relevant safeguarding information should not be shared. Staff, managers and safeguarding leads should consider whether sharing relevant information with another organisation or practitioner may assist with assessment, early help, prevention, support or safeguarding.

3.6.14 As part of the registration or assessment of young people accessing YCSW services, practitioners should make enquiries with the young person and their family about any other agencies providing support. Should the practitioner become aware that the young person or family are being supported by a Social Worker, they should contact the appropriate Social Work team and make enquiries regarding the risks posed to the young person and the plan of support. This should be escalated by the practitioner to their line manager and the DSL/DDSL who will review ongoing concerns and support. The practitioner should document that an enquiry into social services support has been made in the young person's records.

3.6.15 A diagram outlining this process is available in Appendix 11. Contact Details for the Safeguarding Team are available in Appendix 12.

3.6.16 Confidentiality must be respected throughout the reporting and escalation process. However, confidentiality must not prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing. Relevant information should be shared lawfully and proportionately where this may assist another organisation or practitioner to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Consent is not always required for safeguarding information to be shared, and information should not be withheld solely because consent has not been obtained or a child or parent objects to sharing. Wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, children, young people and families should be informed about what information is being shared, with whom and why.

3.6.17 YCSW ensures affected individuals, whether raising concerns or subject to them, are supported through counselling services, employee assistance programs, or external referrals where appropriate.

3.6.18 Safeguarding procedures, including reporting and escalation pathways, are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and best practices. Updates are communicated effectively to all staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers receive regular training on reporting and escalation procedures to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities in safeguarding situations.

3.7 Multi-Agency Collaboration in Safeguarding

3.7.1 YCSW is committed to working collaboratively with statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk.

3.7.2 YCSW actively engages with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs), Local Safeguarding Adult Boards (LSABs), and other relevant safeguarding bodies to share information, coordinate interventions, and ensure a consistent and person-centred safeguarding approach.

3.7.3 YCSW works across several Local Authority areas and seeks to ensure communication, professional challenge, escalation, and safeguarding responses remain effective and consistent across Local Authority boundaries. A list of relevant Local Authority services can be found in Appendix 8.

3.7.4 Effective, proportionate, and lawful information-sharing practices are a cornerstone of YCSW's safeguarding approach. Information is shared appropriately to ensure safeguarding concerns are addressed collaboratively while respecting confidentiality, data protection requirements, and the rights and dignity of individuals.

3.7.5 YCSW will share relevant information lawfully, appropriately and proportionately in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and the Information Sharing Duty: Statutory Guidance for Safeguarding Organisations and their Practitioners (2026).

3.7.6 Where the statutory information sharing duty applies, relevant information must be shared where YCSW considers that sharing may assist another relevant organisation or practitioner to assess need or risk, make decisions, provide support or take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. A child does not need to have reached a particular safeguarding or statutory threshold before relevant information can be shared. This may include information relevant to early help, prevention, emerging concerns and unmet need.

3.7.7 Relevant information may relate directly to the child or to another person connected with the child where that information is relevant to safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare. Information may include contextual, historical or pattern-based information where this contributes to understanding the child's circumstances, needs or risk.

3.7.8 Consent is not always required before sharing safeguarding information. Information must not be withheld solely because consent has not been obtained, a child or parent objects to sharing, or because of general concerns about confidentiality or data protection. Wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, YCSW will be transparent with children, young people and families about information sharing.

3.7.9 In exceptional circumstances, information should not be shared where professional judgement determines that sharing would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing it. Staff should consider whether identified risks can be mitigated, for example by limiting the information shared. Where practicable, staff must seek advice from the DSL/DDSL and clearly record the decision and rationale.

3.7.10 Where YCSW receives a request for relevant safeguarding information from another organisation or practitioner, this should be considered promptly. Information-sharing decisions should be clearly recorded, including what information was shared or withheld, with whom, the purpose of sharing and the rationale for the decision.

3.7.11 YCSW recognises that racism, discrimination, prejudice, and bias can influence how safeguarding concerns are identified, assessed, and escalated, including in multi-agency contexts. Where there are concerns that discrimination may have contributed to a failure to escalate or appropriately respond to safeguarding risks, YCSW will actively challenge this with partner agencies and advocate for a review of decision-making. Safeguarding practice must take full account of the cultural backgrounds, identities, lived experiences, and individual circumstances of children, young people, and adults at risk.

3.7.12 Staff must identify and appropriately challenge discriminatory behaviour, language, attitudes, or systemic barriers—both within YCSW and in multi-agency working—that may negatively affect safeguarding decisions or access to support. Staff are expected to use reflective practice and professional curiosity to recognise and reduce the impact of conscious and unconscious bias, and to escalate concerns where discrimination may have affected safeguarding outcomes.

3.7.13 YCSW values the expertise of external agencies and seeks to learn from serious case reviews (SCRs), safeguarding adult reviews (SARs), thematic reviews, and national safeguarding guidance to continuously improve safeguarding practice.

3.7.14 YCSW works to maintain strong relationships with external safeguarding partners and recognises that effective partnership working is central to safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk.

3.8 Training and Support for Staff and Volunteers

3.8.1 YCSW is fully committed to Safer Recruitment Practices and Procedures. All staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to YCSW's Safer Recruitment Policy.

3.8.2 YCSW is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills required to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk effectively.

3.8.3 Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers, tailored to their roles and responsibilities, and delivered as part of their induction and through regular updates.

3.8.4 Safeguarding training will include staff responsibilities for appropriate information sharing, including when consent is not required, sharing information before statutory safeguarding thresholds are reached, recording information-sharing decisions, and seeking advice where staff are uncertain whether information should be shared.

3.8.5 Specialist safeguarding training is provided to Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Deputy DSLs, ensuring they are equipped to manage concerns, provide guidance, and liaise with external agencies.

3.8.6 Staff and volunteers working directly with vulnerable groups receive additional training on specific safeguarding topics, including contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, and digital safeguarding.

3.8.7 The Safeguarding Trustee is required to undertake Advanced Children and Adults Safeguarding Training and keep up to date with changes in legislation.

3.8.8 YCSW's Training Policy outlines procedures for delivering, monitoring, and reviewing safeguarding training, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and organisational priorities.

3.8.9 YCSW provides support to staff and volunteers affected by safeguarding issues through access to supervision, counselling, and employee assistance programs.

3.8.10 Feedback from staff and volunteers is actively sought to improve the content and delivery of safeguarding training, ensuring it remains relevant and effective.

3.9 Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

3.9.1 YCSW is committed to ensuring that all allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff and volunteers are taken seriously and managed promptly, fairly, and in accordance with statutory and organisational procedures.

3.9.2 All allegations involving harm or potential harm caused by a member of YCSW staff or a volunteer, to a child, young person, or adult at risk must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Deputy DSL).

3.9.3 Allegations reaching threshold must also be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, as required by statutory guidance. Referrals to LADO should be completed by the DSL/DDSL to whom the concern has been reported.

3.9.4 YCSW's Managing Allegations Policy provides comprehensive guidance on the processes for handling allegations, including reporting, investigation, and resolution.

3.9.5 The organisation's Whistleblowing Policy ensures that all staff and volunteers can raise concerns about unsafe practices or misconduct without fear of reprisal.

3.9.6 Support is available for all parties involved in an allegation, including alleged victims, accused individuals, and affected colleagues, to ensure well-being and fairness throughout the process.

3.9.7 Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, with information shared lawfully, appropriately and proportionately with those individuals or agencies who require it for safeguarding, allegation management or statutory purposes, and in accordance with data protection legislation.

3.9.8 Allegation management procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and lessons learned.

3.10 Monitoring and Reviewing Safeguarding Practices

3.10.1 YCSW is committed to regularly monitoring and reviewing its safeguarding practices to ensure they remain effective, compliant with statutory requirements, and aligned with organisational priorities.

3.10.2 Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually or more frequently in response to significant changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational needs.

3.10.3 YCSW reviews safeguarding incidents and concerns to identify trends, improve practices, and reduce the risk of recurrence. Lessons learned are shared across the organisation to promote continuous improvement.

3.10.4 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), and Deputy DSLs maintain oversight of safeguarding practices, ensuring that monitoring and reviews are carried out systematically and effectively

3.10.5 Findings from safeguarding audits, reviews, and assessments are reported to senior leadership and trustees, ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective governance.

3.10.6 Regular monthly meetings should be held between the DSL and Safeguarding Trustee to review child protection and safeguarding referrals and concerns.

3.10.7 Safeguarding training, resources, and procedures are updated based on monitoring findings to address emerging risks and incorporate best practices.

3.10.8 External reviews or inspections are welcomed as part of YCSW's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding practice.

3.11 Safeguarding Decision Making: Roles and Responsibilities

3.11.1 This section supports staff, managers, DSL and Deputy DSLs (DDSLs) to apply the Safeguarding Flowchart consistently by clearly defining:

- the type and level of concern
- who is responsible at each stage

- who holds decision-making authority
- when escalation is required

This guidance should be used alongside the Safeguarding Flowchart, Allegations Flowchart, and Safeguarding Policy.

3.11.2 **Safeguarding Thresholds**

A safeguarding threshold is the point at which a concern moves from early identification and support to formal safeguarding intervention. This may involve escalation from:

- **Low-level welfare support**, to
- **Family help / emerging risk management**, to
- **Formal safeguarding referral (e.g. Children's Social Care, Police, Prevent, or emergency action)**

This change can occur over a long period of time (months or years), or it can occur acutely.

The safeguarding thresholds above relate to the level of intervention and escalation required. They should not be used as a threshold for information sharing. Relevant information may need to be shared at welfare, early help or emerging-risk stages where doing so may assist another organisation or practitioner to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

3.11.3 **Types of Concern and Action Route**

The escalation follows:

Staff identify → Manager supports → DDSL reviews → DSL decides

Type of Concern	What It Looks Like	Action Route
Welfare	Low-level concern; no immediate risk of harm	Staff → Line Manager
Emerging Risk	Increasing concerns; patterns developing	Line Manager → DDSL
Safeguarding Concern	Suspected abuse or significant harm	DDSL → DSL
Immediate Risk	Imminent danger or serious harm	Emergency services → DSL informed immediately

If there is any uncertainty, the concern must be treated as a safeguarding concern and escalated.

If line management is unavailable or an incident is urgent, staff must escalate concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Inform the line manager as soon as possible afterwards.

3.11.4 **Roles and Decision-Making Authority**

The following table outlines the responsibilities and decision-making authority for staff at YCSW.

Role	Responsibilities	Decision Authority
Staff	Identify, record, and report concerns promptly	No decision-making authority
Line Managers	Support welfare concerns and early help responses	No safeguarding referral authority
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Assess concerns, apply thresholds, guide staff	Initial safeguarding assessment only; must escalate where risk is significant or unclear
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Overall safeguarding lead, manages risk and referrals	Final safeguarding decision-maker
CEO	Strategic oversight and organisational accountability	No operational safeguarding decisions

3.11.5 **Mandatory Escalation Requirements**

All staff must escalate immediately if any of the following apply:

- risk of harm is suspected or identified
- concerns are escalating or recurring
- the situation is unclear or complex
- concerns involve staff or volunteers

- there is discomfort, uncertainty, or professional concern
- allegations are made against staff or volunteers

If in doubt, always escalate.

3.11.6 **DDSL Escalation Requirements**

Deputy DSLs must escalate to the DSL where:

- safeguarding thresholds may be met or exceeded
- risk is significant, complex, or unclear
- a referral to external agencies may be required
- concerns involve allegations against staff or volunteers

3.11.7 **Escalation When External Agencies Are Already Involved**

Where a child or young person already has involvement from external agencies (e.g. Social Care):

- **Staff**
  - Record new concerns, incidents, or changes in behaviour
  - Report immediately to DDSL/DSL
- **DSL**
  - Reassess overall risk and existing plan
  - Decide whether escalation or update is required
  - Determine appropriate professional contact (e.g. allocated Social Worker)

4 Safeguarding Governance Structure: Roles and Responsibilities

4.1.1 Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across YCSW. All staff and leaders must act promptly, record accurately, and escalate appropriately in line with this policy.

4.1.2 **Board of Trustees:**

- Provides strategic oversight and ensures compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements.

- Approves the safeguarding policy and monitors its effectiveness through regular reports.
- Designates a named Safeguarding Trustee who regularly reviews practice and reports to the Board

4.1.3 **CEO**

- Holds overall accountability for safeguarding across the organisation
- Ensures effective policies, procedures, and a strong safeguarding culture
- Appoints and supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Oversees serious incidents and ensures appropriate responses and reporting
- Ensures safe recruitment, training, and supervision of staff and volunteers.

4.1.4 **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):**

- Oversees the operational implementation of the safeguarding policy.
- Reviews and recommends amendments to the policy.
- Ensures organisational adherence to safeguarding practices.

4.1.5 **Designated Safeguarding Lead – (DSL):**

- Owns, maintains and updates the Safeguarding Policy.
- Leads on safeguarding decision-making and referrals
- Provides guidance and training to staff and volunteers.
- Manages safeguarding concerns and escalations
- Liaises with external safeguarding bodies.

4.1.6 **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSLs):**

- Supports DSL in responding to safeguarding concerns
- Undertakes initial assessments and applies thresholds
- Maintains safeguarding records and supports staff practice
- Escalates complex or high-risk cases to DSL without delay

4.1.7 **Safeguarding and Interface Officer:**

- Supports DSL/DDSL with recording and administration of safeguarding concerns

- Maintains accurate safeguarding records and systems
- Supports staff understanding of safeguarding processes

4.1.8 **Line Managers:**

- Ensure teams understand and apply safeguarding policy
- Monitor safeguarding compliance within their teams
- Provide supervision and support for welfare concerns
- Escalate safeguarding concerns appropriately to DSL/DDSL
- Ensure safeguarding is discussed in regular supervision
- Support staff wellbeing following safeguarding incidents and signpost to additional support (e.g. clinical supervision or Occupational Health where required)

4.1.9 **All Staff and Volunteers:**

- Complete mandatory safeguarding training
- Identify and report safeguarding concerns promptly
- Record concerns accurately and factually
- Follow safeguarding procedures and escalation routes
- Continue appropriate professional engagement with children/young people in line with support plans where safe to do so
- Maintain high-quality safeguarding records and documentation
- Uphold safeguarding principles in all practice

5 Compliance & Enforcement

5.1.1 Non-compliance with the YCSW Safeguarding Policy is taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action or other corrective measures to ensure the safety and well-being of children, young people, and adults at risk. The following outlines the consequences and steps related to non-compliance:

5.1.2 Disciplinary Action:

- Staff or volunteers found to be in breach of safeguarding policies or failing to report concerns appropriately may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or voluntary roles.

- For serious breaches, referrals will be made to regulatory or statutory bodies, including the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

5.1.3 Corrective Measures:

- Instances of non-compliance will be addressed through coaching, additional training, or closer supervision as appropriate.
- In cases of procedural lapses, the organisation will review and amend safeguarding practices to prevent recurrence.

5.1.4 Incident Reporting:

- All instances of non-compliance must be documented and reported to the DSL or a DDSL.

- Serious breaches will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team and, where necessary, external safeguarding bodies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

5.1.5 Support for Individuals:

- Where non-compliance stems from misunderstanding or lack of awareness, support will be provided to the individual to improve their understanding and adherence to safeguarding expectations.

5.1.6 External Reporting:

- For significant incidents of non-compliance, YCSW may be required to report to external authorities, including local safeguarding partnerships, regulatory bodies, or law enforcement.

5.1.7 Monitoring:

- Patterns of non- adherence to this policy will be reviewed as part of ongoing internal monitoring conducted to identify trends and inform organisational improvements.

6 Review and Updates

6.1 The YCSW Safeguarding Policy is a Tier 1 policy and is reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with statutory requirements, aligned with organisational priorities, and effective in practice. This review is formally recorded and approved by the Board of Trustees.

6.2 Unscheduled reviews are triggered by:

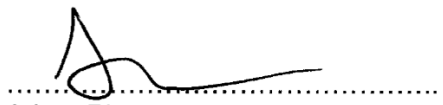
- Changes in legislation or statutory guidance requiring immediate policy updates.
- Significant safeguarding incidents, risk assessments, or inspections indicating the need for urgent amendments.
- Feedback from stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, service users, or external safeguarding partners.

6.3 Urgent amendments can be provisionally implemented by the policy owner in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), with formal ratification by the Board of Trustees at the next scheduled meeting.

6.4 The policy owner is responsible for ensuring that all updates are communicated to staff and volunteers and that relevant training or guidance is provided to ensure understanding and compliance.

6.5 Updated versions of the policy are stored centrally, with previous versions archived in accordance with YCSW's document retention guideline.

Formal Approval



Adam Pitt

Date: 04/06/2026

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1

Safeguarding Note:

YCSW recognises that children and young people may experience multiple and overlapping forms of abuse. Safeguarding concerns should not be viewed in isolation, and professionals should consider the wider context of the child's life, including home, peer relationships, school, community, and online environments.

The four main categories of **abuse for children** are:

Neglect:	Failure to meet a child's basic needs. This includes ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care, and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.
Physical Abuse	Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer deliberately fabricates symptoms or induces illness in a child
Sexual Abuse	Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. Sexual Abuse can include physical contact or non-contact activities. It includes, but is not limited to: Rape, indecent exposure; sexual harassment; inappropriate looking or touching; sexual teasing or innuendo; sexual photography; subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts; and sexual assault or sexual acts.
Emotional Abuse	Persistent emotional maltreatment, causing severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. This includes threats of harm or abandonment; deprivation of contact; humiliation; blaming; controlling; intimidation; coercion; harassment; verbal abuse; cyberbullying; isolation; or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Coercive Control	Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour used to dominate, manipulate, isolate, or intimidate a child or young person. It may include emotional abuse, threats, surveillance, restriction of movement, financial control, humiliation, and controlling communication. It is often a feature within domestic abuse, teenage relationship abuse, exploitation, and grooming.

7.2 Appendix 2

Children can also be impacted by sub-categories of abuse. This list is not exhaustive.

Domestic Abuse	Under the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), children in England and Wales are recognised as victims of domestic abuse if they "see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse". It specifies that domestic abuse occurs if those involved in the abusive behaviour are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other. This includes teenage domestic abuse and may involve coercive control, emotional abuse, and patterns of controlling behaviour.
Teenage Relationship Abuse	Teenage relationship abuse refers to abusive behaviours within intimate or peer relationships involving young people under 18. This can include emotional, physical, sexual, and digital abuse, as well as coercive control and harassment. Abuse may be normalised, minimised, or misunderstood by the young person experiencing it, particularly where grooming, manipulation, or dependency is present.
Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)	Honour-based abuse refers to incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend perceived family or community honour. It can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, coercion, threats, control, and forced marriage. Victims are often controlled by family or community members and may experience fear, isolation, and restricted freedom.
Child Exploitation	Child Exploitation is when someone uses a child for financial gain, sexual gratification, labour or personal advantage. Using cruel and violent treatment to force a child to take part in criminal or sexual activities often leads to physical and emotional harm to the child, to the detriment of their physical

	and mental health, education, and moral or social development. The Home Office (2019) recognises that "The exploitation of children can take a number of different forms and perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse at the same time, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation." Children and young people may experience exploitation alongside other forms of abuse, including domestic abuse, sexual abuse, coercive control, and online harm.
Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	CCE involves children and young people up to the age of 18, it has been identified that children involved in CCE are getting younger, meaning that it is important to consider that children from all ages and backgrounds could be at risk. Keeping Children Safe in Education outlines that Child criminal exploitation "occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in… criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence." It is important to note that "They [children] may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to." The imbalance of power is a common feature across all forms of CCE. Often children and young people will receive something in exchange for them completing acts or 'favours' for the person exploiting them. These may be material items, such as money or gifts; it may also be more complex to identify, such as status in a group or gang or somewhere to live. The imbalance of power means that the child or young person may appear to have a choice, or even believe themselves that they have a choice, but often they do not.

	CCE often overlaps with other forms of harm, including sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, and online grooming.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. In return for gifts, money, drugs, affection, and status, children and young people are coerced, manipulated and deceived into performing sexual activities. Children and Young People can be tricked in to believing they are part of a loving and consensual relationship. This could be framed as a relationship centred on friendship or mentoring or as a romantic relationship. As with other forms of Child Exploitation, the imbalance of power is a common feature. The previous section highlighted types of sexual abuse- CSE can be physical contact or non-contact activities and can occur in person or online. CSE may occur alongside other forms of abuse including coercive control, peer exploitation, domestic abuse, and online grooming. It may also take place within teenage relationships. Please see Appendix 10 for further information about Online risks.
Sexting	Online sexual abuse can include self-generated indecent imagery (sexting). This can involve: sending flirty or sexual messages, including 'nudes', to other children/peers Or adults exploiting, grooming or bullying a young person or child to share images It is important to note it is against the law to: • take, have or distribute a sexual photo of someone under 18, including selfies • have or pass on indecent images of someone under 18 • encourage or incite someone under 18 to take or send 'sexts' or 'nudes' • for a young person under 18 to take a photo of their own genitals, whether the image is shared on or not Online abuse may occur alongside offline abuse and can be used as a tool for coercion, grooming, blackmail, or exploitation.

	Please see Appendix 10 for further information about legalities of Intimate Images.
Child Marriage	The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 raised the legal age of marriage to 18 in England and Wales to protect children from forced marriage. This means that it is not possible for anyone under the age of 18 to enter into a marriage or civil partnership and 16- and 17-year-olds cannot marry or enter into a civil partnership under any circumstances. Child marriage may be linked to honour-based abuse and coercion.

YCSW recognises that safeguarding concerns rarely occur in isolation. Children and young people may experience multiple, overlapping, and interconnected forms of harm. Staff should adopt a contextual safeguarding approach, considering risks across home, peer groups, school, community, and online environments when assessing safeguarding concerns.

7.3 Appendix 3

Information from the NSPCC on Gillick competence and Frasier guidelines can be accessed here

7.4 Appendix 4

The Six Principles of Safeguarding Adults

Empowerment	People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
Prevention	It is better to act before harm occurs
Protection	Support and representation for those in greatest need.
Proportionality	The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
Partnerships	Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
Accountability	Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

7.5 Appendix 5

Categories of Abuse for Adults

Physical Abuse	Hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
Sexual Abuse	Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
Psychological Abuse	Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyberbullying, isolation, or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
Financial or Material Abuse	Theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance, or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.
Neglect and Acts of Omission	Ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care, and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.
Self-Neglect	A wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or

	surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
Domestic Abuse	Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. It includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, and so-called 'honour-based' violence.
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, domestic servitude, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and forced or compulsory work
Discriminatory Abuse	Harassment, slurs, or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion
Organisational Abuse	The mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support, or systematic poor practice that affects the whole care setting.

7.6 Appendix 6

Principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005)

A presumption of capacity	Every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise. This means that you cannot assume that someone cannot make a decision for themselves just because they have a particular medical condition or disability.
Individuals being supported to make their own decisions	A person must be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions. This means you should

	make every effort to encourage and support people to make the decision for themselves. If lack of capacity is established, it is still important that you involve the person as far as possible in making decisions.
Unwise decisions	People have the right not to be treated as lacking capacity merely because they make a decision that others deem 'unwise'. Everyone has their own values, beliefs and preferences which may not be the same as those of other people.
Best interests	Anything done for or on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity must be done in their best interests.
Less restrictive option	Someone making a decision or acting on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must consider whether it is possible to decide or act in a way that would interfere less with the person's rights and freedoms of action, or whether there is a need to decide or act at all. Any intervention should be weighed up in the particular circumstances of the case.

7.7 Appendix 7

Establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices in Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities by NSPCC (21.10.2024) is available here.

7.8 Appendix 8

Children's Social Care Services

Local Authority Area	In Hours Social Care Contact Number	Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team Contact Number

Bath and North East Somerset	01225 39 61 11 or 01225 47 79 29	01454 615165
Somerset	0300 123 2224	0300 123 2327
Dorset	01305 228558	01305 221000

Adults' Social Care Services

Local Authority Area	In Hours Social Care Contact Number	Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team Contact Number
Bath and North East Somerset	01225 394570	01454 615165
Somerset	0300 123 2224	0300 123 2327
Dorset	01305 221016	01305 221000

7.9 Appendix 9

Safeguarding concerns impacting both Adults and Children

County Lines	County lines is a term used to describe to illegal drugs dealing networks used by gangs and criminal networks between large urban centres, small towns and rural areas. Gangs and organised criminal networks using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.
Trafficking	The movement of humans from one place to another for the purposes of forced labour, slavery or sexual exploitation is understood to be one of the fastest-growing areas of transnational criminal organisations

	and has devastating effects on the victims.
Modern slavery	Modern slavery can affect anyone, regardless of age and gender. Research in March 2022 reported an increase of 27% in the number of modern slavery offences involving a child victim recorded by the police in England and Wales. Modern slavery is mostly a hidden crime, and getting a true picture of its prevalence is very challenging. Modern slavery is seen as an umbrella term.
Forced Marriage	Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage, and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in UK. This includes taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place). It also includes arranging a marriage for someone who acks the mental capacity to marry (whether they are pressured or not). In February 2023 it became illegal for anyone under 18 to be married or enter into a civil partnership, even with parental consent. It is important to note that a forced marriage can occur in any cultural, religious and socio-economic environment; and that an arranged marriage with both parties giving their full consent is **not** a forced marriage.

'Honour' Based Abuse	Honour Based Abuse is a form of Domestic Abuse which is motivated by the abuser's perception that a person has brought or may bring 'dishonour' or 'shame' to themselves, their family or the community. It can take many forms, and can be complex to identify, but centres around the idea of controlling individuals to make them behave in certain ways or subscribe to certain beliefs. For some people, the concept of 'honour' is prized above the safety and wellbeing of individuals, and to compromise a family's 'honour' is to bring dishonour and shame – which can have severe consequences. As a result, this can be used to justify many types of abuse, and even disownment or physical harm. Honour Based Abuse is not a cultural tradition or religious practice; it is a form of abuse that can occur within any community, regardless of faith or background. Victims of Honour Based Abuse are 7 times more likely to be experiencing abuse from multiple perpetrators.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	FGM is a procedure which involved the partial or total removal of the female genital organs for non- medical reasons. The practice is extremely painful and has serious health implications, both at the time that the mutilation is carried out and later in life. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community.

	The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, most cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight. In the UK, FGM has been a specific offence since 1985. In 2003 the Act was modernised and made it an offence to: perform FGM abroad; assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself; assist a non-UK national or resident to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or permanent UK resident. It is illegal for a UK resident or national to be taken abroad for FGM to be performed.
Virginity Testing	As of 2022, Virginity testing is illegal in the UK under The Health and Care Act 2022.

7.10 Appendix 10

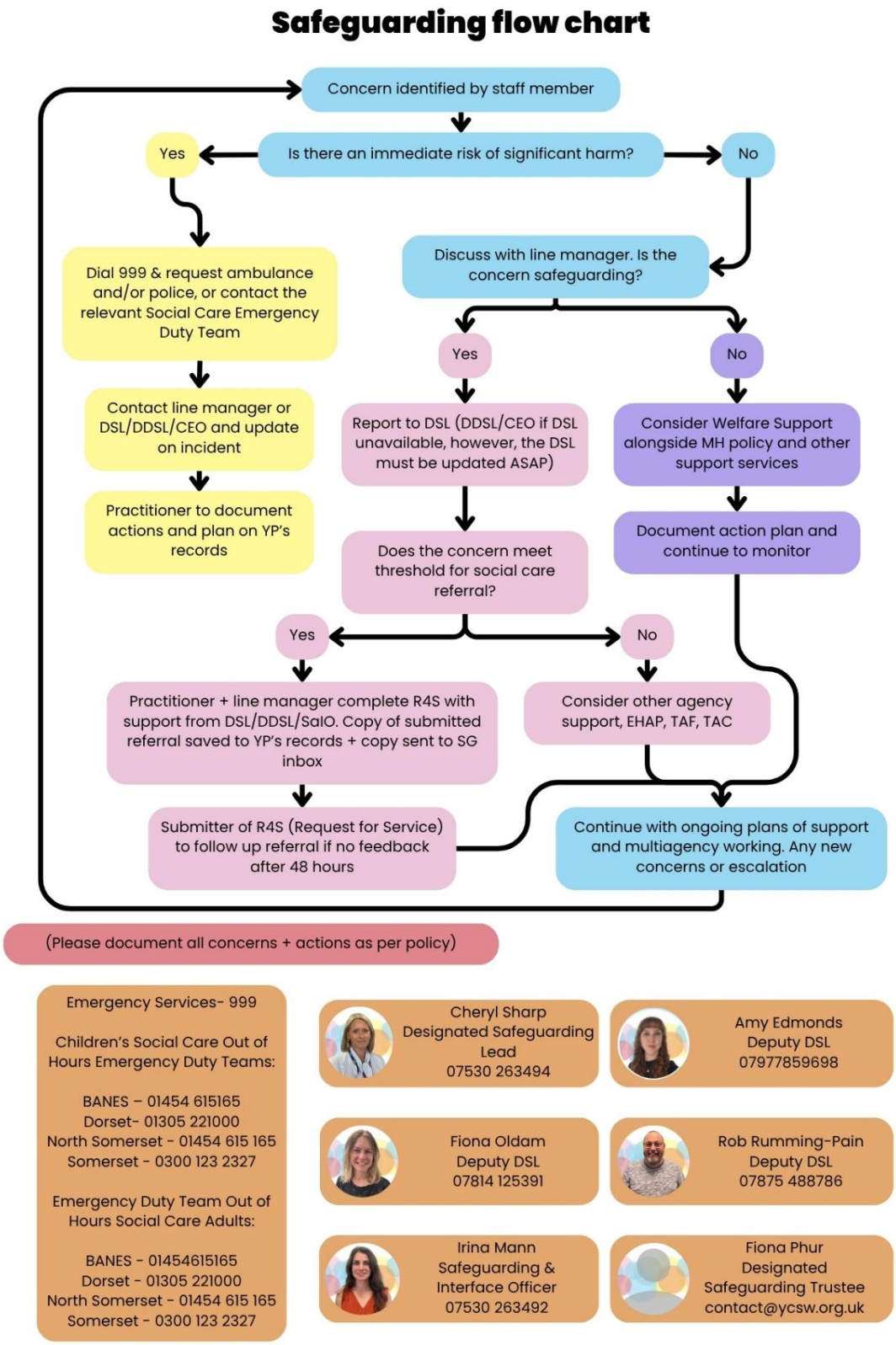
Online Safeguarding Risks

Sexting	'Sexting' is when an individual sends sexual messages and/or a naked/semi-naked image of themselves to another. Whether a child or young person takes or shares an image of themselves consensually or not, it is against the law to take, share or store a nude/semi-nude image of themselves or anyone else under 18.
Online Grooming	Grooming is a process that "involves the offender building a relationship with a child, and sometimes with their wider family, gaining their trust and a position of power over the child, in preparation for abuse." Grooming techniques can be used online to prepare children for sexual abuse and exploitation, radicalisation or criminal exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed by a stranger or by someone they know – such as a family member, friend or professional. The age gap between a child/ young person and their groomer can be relatively small.
Online Extortion and Sexual Extortion	This is a form of blackmail in which the perpetrator threatens to share sensitive/damaging information or nude/semi-nude images to force an individual to do something against their will. This can be financially motivated, with victims being asked to send money or gift cards or provide further explicit content.
AI Generated Images (Deepfakes) and Information	It's illegal to share or threaten to share intimate photos or videos of someone without their permission and this includes deepfake images. It's also illegal to create or ask someone to create fake intimate photos or videos of someone without their permission. It's illegal to make, share and possess indecent photographs and pseudo-photographs and/or videos, including deepfakes, of someone who is under 18. It does not matter if the person depicted is real or it's a fake that's been digitally created or altered.

Conspiracy Theories	Conspiracy Theories are false or misleading beliefs that explain events as 'secret plots', often involving powerful groups. These were once fringe ideas, but now, through digital media online influencers and algorithmic recommendations, are more accessible.
Disinformation and Misinformation	**Misinformation** is where false information is shared by accident without the intent to cause harm. For example, sharing inaccurate photos, quotes or dates online because you believe them to be true. **Disinformation** is false information shared deliberately to mislead and cause harm. For example, fabricated news stories and political propaganda.
Online Extremism and Radicalisation	Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It is, in itself, a form of harm. Online, young people can access extreme content and be groomed in an ideological theory which they may not encounter in person. Extremism is defined as the support or promotion of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to: • deny or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others • undermine or overturn the UK's system of democracy and democratic rights • intentionally create an environment that permits or enables others to achieve either of the above.
Bullying and Cyberbullying	Bullying is behaviour which intentionally hurts someone else. It is usually repeated over a long period of time. Cyber bullying takes place online, it can occur alongside offline bullying. Cyberbullying follows a young person wherever they go, it can occur via social networks, gaming and mobile phones.
Pro-Eating Disorder, Pro-Suicide and Self Harm Content.	Young people can use online spaces to find community and support. However, online platforms also exposure to upsetting or graphic content that could cause harm, including pro-eating disorder, and pro-suicide and self-harm.

	Content like this can be found of most online platforms including social media and video-sharing platforms, and shared further on online forums, message boards and groups that have been set up for people experiencing similar feelings. These types of content can take many forms.
Scams	Online Scams are fraudulent schemes that use the internet to trick people into giving up personal or financial information, or money. They often rely on social engineering to manipulate victims through methods like fake emails, websites and social media posts.

7.11 Appendix 11



7.12 Appendix 12

YOUTH CONNECT SOUTH WEST

You should always feel safe with Youth Connect South West



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Designated Safeguarding Deputy
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Designated Safeguarding Trustee
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If you have an immediate concern about a child or person contact;
The Police via 999 (emergency) or 101 (non-emergency/concern)
Other organisations offer 24-hour support such as Childline (0800 1111) or the NSPCC (0808 800 5000)