

Safeguarding Policy August 2022

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Foreword by Roxanne Lawrance, Chief Executive Officer

At Teens Unite, we believe the safety and well-being of children and young people is of the utmost importance and that they have a fundamental and equal right to be protected from harm regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We fully recognise our statutory responsibility for safeguarding: the safety, protection and well-being of all children and young people that we support and interact with is paramount and has priority over all other interests. This includes responding immediately and appropriately where there is a suspicion that any young person supported by us may be a victim of bullying, harassment, abuse (including physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect.

Teens Unite has an absolute commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and demonstrates this with

- A clear commitment from Senior Management and Board of Trustees on the importance of safeguarding and promoting welfare
- Recruitment and management procedures that have a clear focus on safeguarding
- Appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers, not limited to, but including Disclosure & Barring Service checks
- Guidance provided and explained to all staff and volunteers. This is documented in handbooks that both staff and volunteers are required to read and sign to confirm they understand
- Training provided and regularly refreshed for all staff by a CPD (Continuous Professional Development) accredited provider
- All staff being identifiable by a Teens Unite branded lanyard featuring photo ID and an up-to-date DBS certificate number
- All staff being identifiable at events by their Teens Unite Staff branded workwear
- A culture of listening to and engaging with young people and vulnerable adults; taking account of their views in the development of our services
- Appropriate “whistleblowing” procedures and a culture that enables concerns about safeguarding and promotion welfare to be addressed

Teens Unite encourages a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue, with young people seeking their views in ways that are appropriate to their age, culture and understanding.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people.

This policy was last reviewed on

11th August 2022, it will be reviewed on or before 10th August 2023

Signed: Roxanne Lawrance, Chief Executive Officer



Organisational responsibilities

Teens Unite will be responsible for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, designating a specific team member to manage the Safeguarding Policy and its implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

Teens Unite will ensure that the designated Safeguarding Lead participates in regular safeguarding training on a regular basis so that they are aware of the procedures of identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse and neglect and are up to date with any legal changes.

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this safeguarding policy and related relevant procedures as part of their induction and their contract of employment.

All staff and volunteers will be informed and have access to regular training as required to update their knowledge on safeguarding. Information on the training can be found here

<https://staffskillstraining.co.uk/course/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults-certification/>

<https://staffskillstraining.co.uk/course/safeguarding-children-certification/>

<https://staffskillstraining.co.uk/course/safeguarding-adults-certification/>

<https://staffskillstraining.co.uk/course/child-internet-safety-course/>

Teens Unite will work in accordance with guidance and good practice from

Hertfordshire Children's Services 0300 123 4043

Hertfordshire Constabulary 101 (999 in an emergency)

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 8088 088

FGM Helpline 0800 028 3550

Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

Teens Unite will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers have timely and relevant safeguarding training.

The Safeguarding Lead will take appropriate action following any expression of concern, disclosure or reported incident and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Any new member of staff or volunteer with direct contact with young people will be taken through this safeguarding policy as part of their induction process and offered training soon after commencing their post.

All staff and volunteers will participate in timely and relevant training.

All staff have a duty of care to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation, or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the procedures detailed below in this policy.

If in any doubt about what action to take, employees must seek advice from the Safeguarding Lead or in their absence the CEO or Board of Trustees.

Safeguarding Information

Definitions of Harm

For the purpose of this policy, Teens Unite has adopted the following definitions

- Neglect – the persistent failure to meet the basic physical and physiological needs of the young person that results in serious impairment of their health and development, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, and failure to respond to basic emotional needs, such as being cared for when sick
- Abandonment – leaving a child alone and unattended in circumstances that are inappropriate for their age/level of ability
- Emotional abuse – persistent, emotional ill treatment that has a severe adverse effect on the emotional development of children and young people. It may involve conveying to them that they are not wanted, not loved, or worthless. It may involve inappropriate expectations (such as taking on the responsibility of an adult within the family) being placed on the young person leaving them frightened and unable to cope. It may also involve the threatening, exploitation or corruption of children and young people
- Physical abuse – hitting, kicking, shaking, slapping, and throwing, scalding, burning, poisoning, drowning, suffocating, or other action intended to cause physical harm or ill health to the child or young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer covers up the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person in their care
- Racial abuse – any type of verbal or physical abuse that is directed at an individual or group because of their racial or ethnic background
- Witnessing ill treatment including domestic abuse of another person – this may impact the health or development of a child or young person
- Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation – forcing or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware or has knowledge of what is happening. It includes child prostitution, encouraging children or young people to watch or participate in the production of pornographic material, online grooming, encouraging children and young people to behave in sexual inappropriate ways. Sexual acts include penetrative (rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts such as touching or stroking.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines “consent” as “if he agrees by choice and has the capacity to make that choice”. The Act removes the element of consent for many sexual offences for:

- Children/young people under 16 (including under 13)
- Children/young people under 18 having sexual relations with a person of trust (for example teachers, youth workers, foster carers, police officers)
- Children/young people under 18 involved with family members over the age of 18
- Persons with a mental disorder impeding choice or who are induced, threatened or deceived
- Persons with a mental disorder who have sexual relations with care workers

In relation to young people under the age of 13, consent is irrelevant. The law says “a child under the age of 13 does not, under any circumstances, have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity”.

The police must be informed immediately of any sexual activity involving a child under 13 years of age.

General Safeguarding Advice

- Remember not to be a young person’s friend, always maintain a professional manner when working with them
- Do not accept a young person as a friend on social networking sites that you use
- Always keep a record of any text or email exchanges with a young person (staff will use work telephones where available)
- Always be aware that your comments or actions may be perceived differently than intended, so be sensitive to the situation
- Do not meet a young person alone, this is for the safety and well-being of the young person but also yourself. Where this is necessary, try to use public spaces for one-to-one meetings if you are not meeting in the Teens Unite office
- Avoid detailed discussions about your personal experience with, for example, drugs, alcohol, sex
- Never speak to the press about a child or young person without permission from Teens Unite.

Reporting Procedures

In all cases it is vital to take every action which is needed to safeguard the child, children, and young person (s). *Immediate* action may be necessary in the following situations

- If emergency medical attention is required, phone the emergency services or take the child/young person to the nearest Accident & Emergency Department
- If the child/young person is in immediate danger the police should be contacted by calling 999

Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse or harm must be reported immediately or as soon as practicably possible on the day of the occurrence to our Safeguarding Lead

Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge

The Safeguarding Lead must record the concern, with the staff member or volunteer using the appropriate Reporting Form. The safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the Incident Report or Request for Support referral form is immediately passed on to the most senior person responsible for safeguarding or Hertfordshire Children’s Services (Hertfordshire’s Adult Care Services for those over the age of 18). This form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead (or in their absence the CEO) to deal with all safeguarding matters. If further referral is necessary, it will either be through the Hertfordshire Children or Adult Care Services, or the Police.

The Safeguarding Lead (CEO in their absence) will be responsible for informing the employee who reported the disclosure of any action taken and any outcome if this is appropriate.

Responding to a disclosure

If the child or young person is not in immediate danger, contact

Safeguarding Lead

Lesley Morris

Lesley@teensunite.org

01992 440091

Chief Executive Officer

Roxanne Lawrance

Roxanne@teensunite.org

01992 440091

Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding

Dr Anesha Patel

info@teensunite.org marked FAO Dr Anesha Patel

01992 440091

Reacting to a disclosure

- Listen carefully rather than asking leading questions
- Never *promise* any particular action or NOT to disclose any information shared
- Allow silence and/or allow the child or young person to be upset
- Try to relate to the age, understanding or special needs of the child or young person
- Write down carefully the information you have been given as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours and only including what you have been told
- Discuss this as soon as possible with the Safeguarding Lead
- Any decision not to tell the parents must be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead unless the child or young person is in immediate danger

Parents/Carers

It is good practise to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, you must NOT discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances

- Where sexual abuse or exploitation is suspected
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected
- Where female genital mutilation is a concern
- In cases of forced marriage
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child/young person or others at immediate risk

Allegations made against staff or volunteers

When any form of complaint is made against an employee or volunteer it must be taken seriously. The complaint should initially be dealt with by the most senior member on site at the time the complaint is made. If the complaint is against the most senior member of staff on site, then the Safeguarding Lead, CEO or Trustee must be informed.

The senior staff member must report the complaint immediately to the Safeguarding Lead giving details of the circumstances. The Safeguarding Lead or CEO may contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will gain an initial account of what has occurred from all relevant parties, including the person against whom the allegation has been made. Teens Unite will have the right to suspend from duty any person who is a party to the allegation until a full investigation has been made.

This action does not imply in any way that the person suspended is responsible or is to blame for any action leading up to the complaint. The purpose of any such suspension is to enable a full and proper investigation to be carried out in a professional manner.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Manager, CEO or the Board of trustees to make the decision as to whether to inform Social Service and/or the Police Child Protection Unit, depending on the nature of the allegation.

Confidentiality and whistle blowing

- Teens Unite operates a confidentiality policy. However, under no circumstances will information be kept confidential that raises concern about the safety and welfare of a child or young person.
- Any staff or volunteers with concerns about anybody providing services to children and young people should report this to the Safeguarding Lead/CEO or Trustee member as appropriate. They will be fully supported throughout the process
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people in accordance with the Information Sharing Policy published by HM Government (attached as an appendix to this Policy document). The Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) are not a barrier to sharing information where a failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child/young person that they will keep secrets/not disclose potentially harmful information.

Safer Recruitment Policy Statement

Teens Unite's commitment to safeguarding children and young people will use a framework for safer recruitment and employment practice.

This will apply to all staff and volunteers undertaking activities with children and young people including training or instruction, care or supervision, providing guidance. Any work carried out should always allow for the building of relationships and trust

The purpose of safer recruitment is to ensure

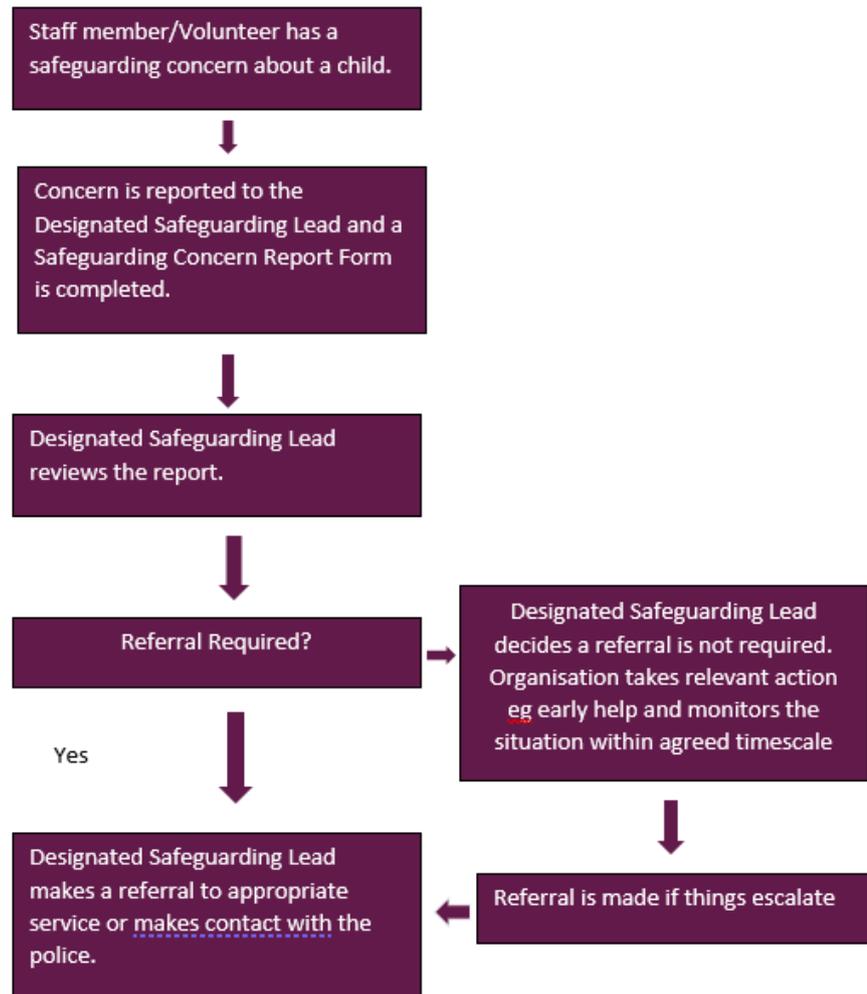
- Applicants who may wish to harm adults at risk, children or young people are deterred from applying for jobs or volunteering opportunities.

- Any unsuitable applicants are rejected by scrutinising applications and exploring potential areas for concern at interview
- Unsuitable appointments are not made having at least one member of the interview panel trained in safer recruitment; carrying out all relevant pre-employment checks and ensuring all new staff and volunteers are given an appropriate induction
- The identification and management of risks
- The maintenance of a safe and vigilant culture

All new staff and volunteers are to have a DBS check before commencing employment. Any failure to disclose convictions may result in disciplinary action or dismissal. Any positive disclosures will be discussed with the Safeguarding Lead, CEO or trustee. All this information will be kept on the personnel file. The DBS number and date of processing will be held on a secure database. A risk assessment will be completed if there is a positive DBS check sent back.

This Safeguarding Policy should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures and guidance and other related documents.

Procedure for responding to Safeguarding Concerns



Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead Chantelle Dix 01992-440091 chantelle@teensunite.org	Adult Care Services 0300-123-4042 www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/adults	Hertfordshire Children's Services 0300-123-4043
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Safeguarding Concern Form

This form should be completed when there is cause for concern and given to your Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

Details of Young Person:

Child's Name:
Child's Date of Birth:

Details of the person reporting concerns:

Full Name:
Post:

Do these concerns relate to a specific incident/disclosure? If YES complete Section A; If NO, move straight to Section B

Section A:

Date and time of incident/disclosure:
Location of incident/disclosure:
Date this form was completed:
Other persons present:

Section B:

Details of concern/disclosure/incident:
(What was said, observed, reported)

Action taken:
(What did you do following the incident/disclosure/concern?)

Any other relevant information:

For completion by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

DSL Response:

Action taken by DSL:

Rationale for decision making/actions taken:

Outcome of action taken by DSL:

Follow up action by DSL:

Feedback given to person reporting the concerns:

Signed by DSL:

Date:

Full Name:

Checklist for DSL:

- ✓ Concern described in sufficient detail?
- ✓ Distinguished between fact, opinion and hearsay?
- ✓ Child's own words used? (Swear words, insults or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim)
- ✓ Jargon free?
- ✓ Free from discrimination/stereotyping or assumptions?
- ✓ Concern recorded and passed to DSL in a timely manner?

Teens Unite Training Commitment

Name	Position	Training	Date	Renewal
Deb Pezzani	Founder & Ambassador	Online through Skills Academy	Aug 2022	July 2023
Roxanne Lawrance	Chief Executive Officer	Online through Skills Academy	Aug 2022	July 2023
Jodie Pezzani	Fundraising Manager	Online through Skills Academy	Aug 2022	July 2023
Lesley Morris	Safeguarding Lead & Trust & Foundations Manager	Online through Skills Academy	Aug 2022	July 2023
Yasmin Shanahan	Beneficiary Engagement Executive	Maternity Leave		
Chantelle Dix	Service Delivery Manager & Safeguarding Lead	Maternity Leave		
Katy Andrews	Beneficiary Engagement Specialist	Online through Skills Academy	August 2022	July 2023
Joshua Kane	Beneficiary Engagement Specialist	Online through Skills Academy	August 2022	July 2023

Useful Contact Information

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Hertfordshire Constabulary 101 (999 in an emergency)
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000
Childline 0800 1111
Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 8088 088
FGM Helpline 0800 028 3550