

Safeguarding Children and Adults

1 Policy Summary

Approved by: Board	Owned by: Designated Safeguarding Lead
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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 potential 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 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 information on a need-to-know basis and will maintain confidentiality of all individuals involved in safeguarding concerns.
- 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 Difficult Behaviour
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Self-Harm and Suicide Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Detached Youth Work Procedure
- Training Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy

Related Local and National Policies and Documents

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

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.
- **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.
- **Early 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.

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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 – 3.2.9)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk (Section 3.3.1 – 3.3.12)
- Prevention and Early Intervention in Safeguarding (Section 3.4.1 – 3.4.5)
- 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 – 3.7.6)
- 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)
- Roles and responsibilities (Section 3.11.1 – 3.11.8)
- Compliance & Enforcement (Section 4)
- Review and Updates (Section 5)
- Appendix (Section 6)
 - Categories of Abuse for Children (Appendix 1 and 2)
 - NSPCC guidance of Gillick Competence and Fraser Guidelines (Appendix 3)
 - Six Principles of Safeguarding Adults (Appendix 4)
 - Categories of Abuse for Adults (Appendix 5)
 - Principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (Appendix 6)

- Establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices in Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities by NSPCC (Appendix 7)
- Contact Telephone Numbers for Children and Adults Social Care (In and Out of Hours) for BANES, Somerset and Dorset (Appendix 8)
- Safeguarding concerns impacting Children and Adults (Appendix 9)
- YCSW Safeguarding Escalation Flowchart (Appendix 10)
- Internal Safeguarding Contact Telephone Numbers YCSW (Appendix 11)

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 (2018), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), 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 possible risks posed within the wider community, recognising the different relationships a child has in their school, peer groups, online and in their community. 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. Capacious 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, online and in their community.
- 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, Head of Operations and Practice (HOP) 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 The organisation engages in targeted early 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, HOP, 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 recognise the importance of cultural competence within safeguarding and ensures that safeguarding decisions consider the cultural backgrounds and individual circumstances of children, young people, and adults. NSPCC information on establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices in Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities is linked 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.
- 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 Head of Operations and Practice or 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. 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 (2024), 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, HOP 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 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.
- 3.6.14 A diagram outlining this process is available in Appendix 10. Contact Details for the Safeguarding Team are available in Appendix 11.
- 3.6.15 Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the reporting and escalation process, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis with relevant individuals or agencies.
- 3.6.16 YCSW ensures affected individuals, whether raising concerns or subject to them, are supported through counselling services, employee assistance programs, or external referrals where appropriate.

3.6.17 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 bodies to share information, coordinate interventions, and ensure a consistent safeguarding approach.

3.7.3 YCSW works across several Local Authority areas and works to ensure communication and escalation is consistent across Local Authority borders. A list of the different Local Authority Services can be seen in Appendix 7.

3.7.4 Effective and lawful information-sharing practices are a cornerstone of YCSW's safeguarding approach, ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are addressed collaboratively while respecting confidentiality and adhering to data protection laws.

3.7.5 YCSW values the expertise of external agencies and seeks to learn from serious case reviews (SCRs), safeguarding adult reviews (SARs), and other reports to continuously improve its safeguarding practices

3.7.6 YCSW works to maintain strong relationships with external safeguarding partners and ensuring that partnership working is a core part of safeguarding practice.

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 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.
- 3.8.5 Staff and volunteers working directly with vulnerable groups receive additional training on specific safeguarding topics, including contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, and digital safeguarding.
- 3.8.6 The Safeguarding Trustee is required to undertake Advanced Children and Adults Safeguarding Training and keep up to date with changes in legislation.
- 3.8.7 YCSW's Training Policy outlines procedures for delivering, monitoring, and reviewing safeguarding training, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and organisational priorities.
- 3.8.8 YCSW provides support to staff and volunteers affected by safeguarding issues through access to supervision, counselling, and employee assistance programs.
- 3.8.9 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 is maintained throughout the process, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection laws.
- 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 Roles and responsibilities

3.11.1 Effective safeguarding requires a shared commitment across YCSW. The following outlines the key roles and their responsibilities:

3.11.2 **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

3.11.3 **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.

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

- Owns, maintains and updates the Safeguarding Policy.
- Provides guidance and training to staff and volunteers.
- Oversees safeguarding concerns and incidents.
- Liaises with external safeguarding bodies.

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

- Supports the DSL in responding to safeguarding concerns, maintaining records, and ensuring compliance with safeguarding procedures.

3.11.6 **Safeguarding and Interface Officer:**

- Supports the DSL and DDSL in maintaining records of concerns.
- Supports staff with understanding safeguarding processes and responding to concerns.

3.11.7 **Line Managers:**

- Ensure their teams understand and apply the safeguarding policy.
- Monitor compliance with safeguarding policy and procedures

- Provide support for staff with welfare or safeguarding concerns and escalate concerns when necessary to the DSL or DDSL as outlined in this document.
- Ensure that practitioners have an opportunity to discuss any welfare or safeguarding concerns in their monthly supervision.

Where involvement in safeguarding events results in anxiety or stress which requires support beyond the line manager's abilities; line managers should support staff and volunteers to access clinical supervision and/or support via Occupational Health Services.

3.11.8 **All Staff and Volunteers:**

- Completing mandatory safeguarding training.
- Reporting concerns promptly to their line manager and DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Continue to work with the young person and any relevant family or services to mitigate risk and promote the individual's wellbeing in accordance with their support plan.
- Upholding safeguarding principles in daily practice.
- Maintaining high quality documentation and records of support, concerns and any actions taken.

4 Compliance & Enforcement

4.1.1 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:

4.1.2 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).

4.1.2 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.

4.1.3 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).

4.1.4 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.

4.1.5 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.

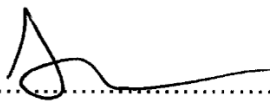
4.1.6 Monitoring:

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

5 Review and Updates

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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: 04/03/2025

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1

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.

6.2 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.
Child Exploitation	<p>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.</p> <p>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.”</p>
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.

	<p>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.”</p> <p>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.”</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</p>	<p>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</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>As with other forms of Child Exploitation, the imbalance of power is a common feature.</p> <p>The previous section highlighted types of sexual abuse- CSE can be physical contact or non-contact activities and can occur in person or online.</p>
<p>Sexting</p>	<p>Online sexual abuse can include self-generated indecent imagery (sexting). This can involve:</p> <p>sending flirty or sexual messages, including 'nudes', to other children/peers</p> <p>Or</p> <p>adults exploiting, grooming or bullying a young person or child to share images</p> <p>It is important to note it is against the law to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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.

6.3 Appendix 3

Information from the NSPCC on Gillick competence and Frasier guidelines can be accessed [here](#)

6.4 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.

6.5 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, and forced labour and domestic servitude.
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.

6.6 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.

6.7 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](#).

6.8 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

6.9 Appendix 9

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.

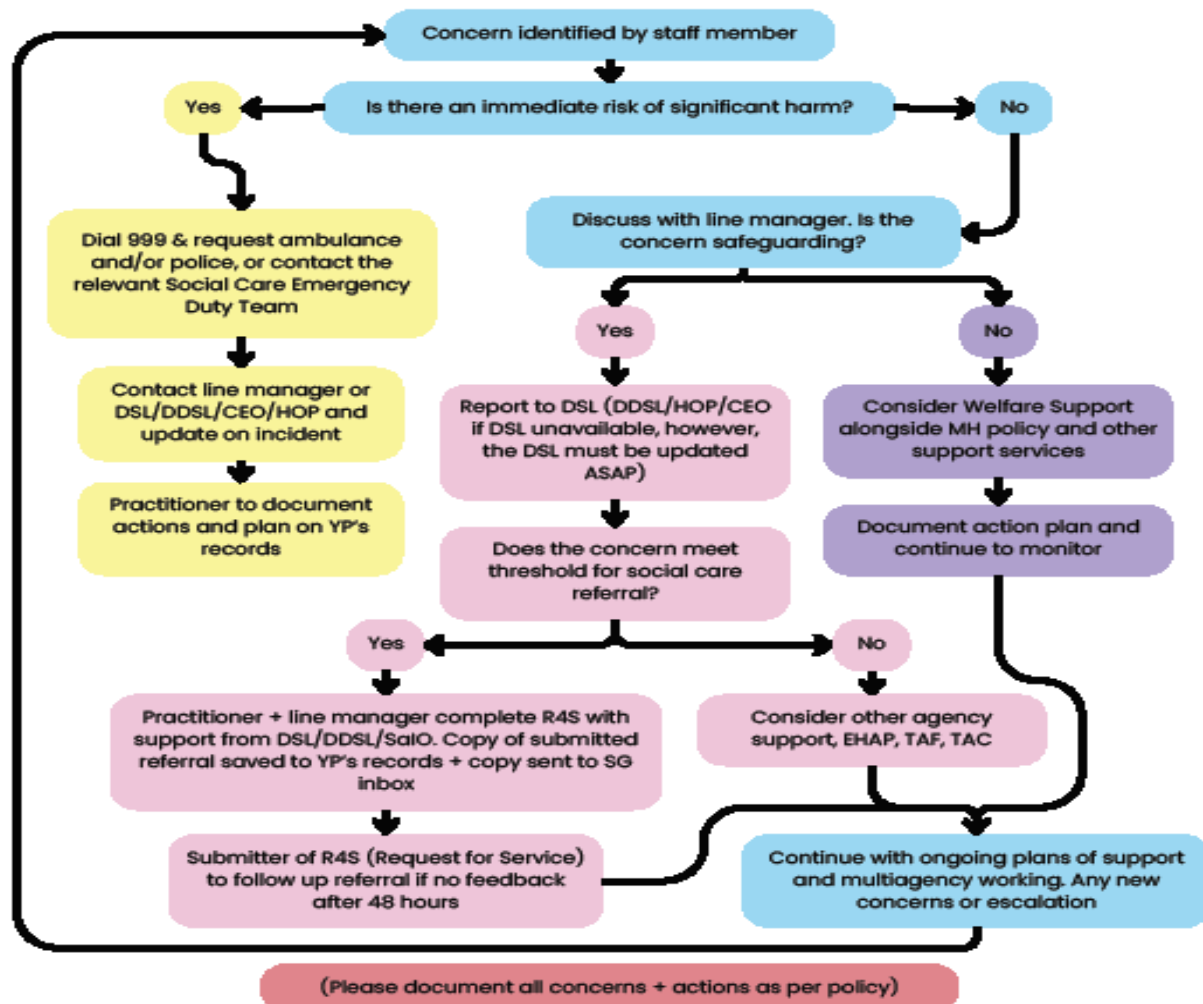
<p>Modern slavery</p>	<p>Modern slavery can affect anyone, regardless of age and gender. Research in March 2022 reported an increase of 27% in the number of modern slavery offences involving a child victim recorded by the police in England and Wales. Modern slavery is mostly a hidden crime, and getting a true picture of its prevalence is very challenging. Modern slavery is seen as an umbrella term.</p>
<p>Forced Marriage</p>	<p>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 lacks 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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>'Honour' Based Abuse</p>	<p>Honour Based Abuse is a form of Domestic Abuse which is motivated by the abuser's perception that a person</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Victims of Honour Based Abuse are 7 times more likely to be experiencing abuse from multiple perpetrators.</p>
<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or</p>

	<p>during the first pregnancy. However, most cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Virginity Testing</p>	<p>As of 2022, Virginity testing is illegal in the UK under The Health and Care Act 2022.</p>

6.10 Appendix 10

Safeguarding flow chart



Emergency Services- 999

Children's Social Care Out of Hours Emergency Duty Teams:

BANES – 01454 615165
 Dorset- 01305 221000
 North Somerset – 01454 615 165
 Somerset – 0300 123 2327

Emergency Duty Team Out of Hours Social Care Adults:

BANES – 01454615165
 Dorset – 01305 221000
 North Somerset – 01454 615 165
 Somerset – 0300 123 2327



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 Deputy DSL
 07530 263493



Jayne Lewis
 Deputy DSL
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Irina Mann
 Safeguarding & Interface Officer
 07530263492



Sam Plummer
 CEO / HOP
 07980998670



TBC
 Designated Safeguarding Trustee
 TBC

6.11 Appendix 11



You should always feel safe with Youth Connect South West



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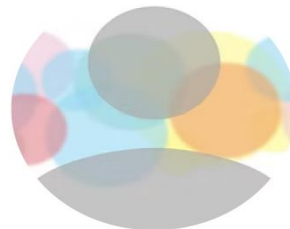


Safeguarding and Interface Officer

Irina Mann

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07530263492



Designated Safeguarding Trustee

TBC

contact@ycsw.org.uk

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)

