

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

STAGEBOX UK

Stagebox believes that the health, welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all people without exception have a human right to be protected from abuse of any kind regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender identity, lifestyle or family make-up, or beliefs.

This policy applies to all staff and students of Stagebox. Those people will be informed of the policy and procedures where appropriate.

Effective safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults begins with staff being well informed and aware of safeguarding issues, and following procedures. Stagebox are required to report any concerns of potential risk to self/others or of abuse immediately through the procedures outlined in this policy.

All concerns of potential risk to self/others and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by staff and responded to appropriately & sensitively. In some cases this may require Stagebox to make a referral to children's services, the local Safeguarding board and in emergencies, the Police.

Safeguarding Lead: Jasmine Quinlan-Gardner

We will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel safe, can talk freely about their feelings and experiences in structured ways, and are listened to.
- Take effective, timely and robust action to protect children and vulnerable adults and report concerns according to the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Ensure there is a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting of staff; ensure all relevant staff are adequately aware of and supported in child protection and safeguarding reporting, know who the Child Protection & Safeguarding Leads are and how to implement this procedure.

The duties and procedures used to inform this policy are:

- Children's Act 1989
- Children's Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
- Every Child Matters
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Definition of a child

A child is legally defined as any person under the age of 18.

We may often prefer to use the words 'young person' to describe teenagers though this definition does not exist in law. It is important to be clear that any young person up to their 18th birthday is legally regarded as a child.



2.2 Definition of significant harm

For both children and vulnerable young people, what triggers safeguarding action is a concern that the child or adult is experiencing or at risk of significant harm.

The law says that significant harm “is the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child” (or also, vulnerable adult).

Significant harm therefore triggers action that must involve statutory agencies. The local authority is the agency with legal responsibility for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and for assessing whether significant harm exists. This includes harm related to being drawn into radicalisation or extremism.

However, sometimes staff members have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult which don't reach the threshold of significant harm but which nevertheless require action. Government defines harm as “the ill-treatment or impairment of health or development, including self-harm suffered by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another”. This includes concerns about the physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development of a child or vulnerable adult; or involves experiences that affect their physical or mental health.

Concerns about harm should never be ignored, even if they seem minor. However, they may not warrant a formal or immediate referral to the local authority. Within Stagebox this decision is ultimately the responsibility of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Leads.

Staff members have a responsibility to report concerns according to the procedures in this policy. Staff should not make decisions in isolation but use existing mechanisms for discussion.

2.4 Definition of abuse

Abuse can consist of a single or repeated act of harm or exploitation. It may be perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Abuse can be physical, verbal, psychological, emotional, or a result of neglect or an omission to act. Neglect is the failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and psychological needs.

For vulnerable adults, abuse can also occur when the person is persuaded to enter into a financial arrangement or sexual relationship to which they have not, or could not, consent to or understand.

Abuse can occur in a wide range of circumstances and be perpetrated by a wide range of adults. Children can be abused by other children. The law recognises four types of abuse (physical, emotional, neglect and sexual), with a fifth (financial) also applying to vulnerable adults. These types of abuse are defined in Appendix 1.

Possible signs of abuse are given in Appendix 2.

2.5 Thresholds of need

Safeguarding procedures are based on an assessment about the child or vulnerable adult's needs. Statutory guidance groups need to be divided into four levels, with different duties at each level.

Level 1: Universal needs – the child or adult doesn't have any additional needs at the moment and universal services are adequate in meeting the needs they do have.

Level 2: Low needs but someone is vulnerable – the needs of the child or adult are not clear, not known or not being met. This is of concern. This is the threshold that triggers internal procedures (Well-being and Fitness to Study or a safeguarding cause for concern).

Level 3: High or complex needs – the needs of the child or vulnerable adult require longer interventions to be met, are at a high level and/or require statutory or specialist interventions. This is the threshold that triggers social care intervention or in the case of concerns about radicalisation, a potential referral to the local authority Channel Panel.

Level 4: Complex or acute needs – the needs of the child or vulnerable adult are immediate, complex or acute. There are high risks and intensive statutory support is required. This is the threshold of child protection. People's situations can go up or down these levels. The aim is that, through appropriate action and support, the level of need goes down. It is ultimately the responsibility of Social Services to judge which level of need a child or vulnerable adult is at. There are no hard and fast rules as it depends on the circumstances.

Child protection teams are only legally responsible for providing services for people at level 4, although they will usually be involved with people at level 3. Other health, education, voluntary or support services will pick up working with children and



vulnerable adults judged to be at level 2.

Many referrals made to Social Services will not meet level 4 after assessment and a referral will be closed or passed back to the institution. However, Social Services/ the local authority will always help a referring agency to make a judgment about need and staff should never hesitate to refer if necessary.

This information is provided as a background explanation. Stagebox staff should not be making an assessment of level of need. This is ultimately a job for Social Services. Within Stagebox the Child Protection and Safeguarding Leads are ultimately responsible for the triggering of safeguarding referrals to external agencies.

2.6 Definitions of student and staff member in relation to safeguarding

This policy uses a number of words to describe the people who are involved in Stagebox and its activities. This section defines what those words mean.

2.6.1 Staff member

Staff member means anyone with a contract (either written or verbal) from Stagebox, including those working as visiting Professionals or working on a freelance basis.

All staff will always be encouraged to share safeguarding concerns that they may have/ witness.

3. RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Responsibilities of Stagebox

- Stagebox will ensure that staff and students are aware of this safeguarding policy and that relevant staff members attend appropriate safeguarding training including Prevent training
- The relevant agencies will be notified if abuse is identified or suspected, following the procedures in this policy. ● Stagebox will support and where possible secure the safety of children and vulnerable adults and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk.
- Stagebox will ensure that enhanced DBS checks are undertaken for all staff who do direct work with children and vulnerable adults where this might involve support work and/or one-to-one work.

3.2 Responsibilities of Stagebox staff

- Staff must make sure they are familiar with the safeguarding policy and procedures and able to follow procedures if appropriate.
- Staff are responsible for their professional conduct.
- Staff should always take action according to this policy if they have safeguarding concerns.

3.3 Responsibilities of statutory agencies

- Local authorities have a legal duty to protect children and vulnerable adults and to investigate where there is a reason to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult may be suffering significant harm, including being drawn into for example, far-right extremism as well as al-Qaeda related extremism and others
- Local authorities do not have a legal duty to take action where the threshold of harm has not reached 'significant' but they may choose to do so.
- Local authorities have the legal duty to decide if what someone is experiencing amounts to 'significant harm'. ● The police have a duty to investigate when an alleged crime – or evidence of a crime has taken place. ● Whether the significant harm a child experiences is legally a crime is the responsibility of the police and Crown Prosecution service to decide.

3.4 Rights of those who report abuse

- All those reporting abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, or making an allegation or expressing concern, whether they be



staff, students, carers or parents will be reassured that they will be listened to and taken seriously and that their concerns will be acted on in accordance with this policy.

- This includes a respect for confidentiality for staff members reporting concerns of abuse
- Children/Young Adults will be given immediate protection from the risk of reprisals or intimidation.
- Staff will be given support and afforded protection if necessary in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

3.5 Rights of children and vulnerable adults

- All children have the right to be listened to and to have alleged incidents and concerns taken seriously and acted on in an appropriate way.
- Children have the right to receive sensitive, fair and respectful treatment during the processes undertaken in line with this policy.
- Children have the right to have their wishes and feelings taken into account when safeguarding decisions about actions are being made.
- Students have the right to be consulted and informed about decisions made about them, including if the actions taken by Stagebox under this procedure are against their wishes, and to receive information about the actions taken and their outcomes.

4. OVERALL GOOD PRACTICE PROTOCOL

4.1 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

All freelancers working with Stagebox who have contact with children will have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. For more information on the Disclosure and Barring Service, please see <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

4.2 Induction & training

- All Stagebox staff/freelancers will familiarise themselves with all policies and procedures during induction into their role.
- All staff/freelancers will be made aware of who the Child Protection and Safeguarding Leads are and how to implement the safeguarding policy.

4.3 Record keeping: the Record of Safeguarding concern form

- Staff will keep a written record of any safeguarding concerns
- Staff will discuss concerns with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead.
- Confidential information will be kept securely by the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead. Written documentation will be kept for as long as deemed necessary, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- It is important that this information is recorded as factually as possible. Records kept by staff about children and vulnerable adults should include what was said or
- observed, all persons involved, the date and time of what has occurred, date of disclosure and if there are observable injuries.
- Any actions agreed and/or taken must also be recorded.
- Records should be completed as soon as is reasonably practical and ideally within forty-
- eight hours of a disclosure or incident occurring.
- All documentation must be given to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead who will read it.
- A written record must always be kept, even where there is no immediate referral to children's services or safeguarding adults' services. The record will be kept electronically in a secure file with limited permissions for access.

4.4 Code of Conduct

All Stagebox pupils and parents must acknowledge and sign our code of conduct on enrolment.

All Stagebox staff must observe a code of conduct and follow professional guidelines.



- Professional code of conduct requirements include maintaining professional boundaries and confidentiality, according to procedures.
- Any staff breaching code of conduct will activate the investigation policy.

4.5 Confidentiality

Stagebox will not disclose information about a student to a third party without the individual's consent, unless there is a risk of significant harm.

4.5.1 Confidentiality within Stagebox

Staff should be clear with students that their information is available to other staff members within Stagebox.

Some students may be anxious about who might know about their situation within Stagebox. This may happen, for example, if a student is personally known to another staff member. In this circumstance, the individual staff member should talk with the student and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead about confidentiality measures. However, a staff member should never promise to keep something secret.

Safeguarding concerns about another staff member should never be kept secret.

Procedures outlined in this policy should always be followed.

4.5.2 Confidentiality between agencies

In general, Stagebox's confidentiality statement applies except where there are safeguarding concerns about a child. In this case, a staff member should follow the procedures in this policy. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead will make a judgment based on the evidence about whether or not to refer to the local authority or other agency. This is not ultimately the decision of the staff member.

It is good practice to explain to students that, although we always strive to work with an individual's wishes, Stagebox may have a legal duty to break confidentiality against an individual's wishes if we have evidence of a real risk of significant harm (a "genuine concern for a child or vulnerable adult's welfare" is how it is described in guidance). We will always discuss this with the student and inform them of our actions, unless the paragraph below applies.

It is legally acceptable to break confidentiality without informing the child if informing them would lead to high likelihood of significant harm. For example, if by informing a child/young person they are highly likely to immediately attempt suicide, hurt someone else, or disappear etc.

4.6 Safeguarding concerns about Stagebox Freelancers/Staff

If there are safeguarding concerns about a person working for/with Stagebox Staff, our General Manager (Jasmine Quinlan-Gardner) should be informed immediately. Stagebox understands that this may be a sensitive and difficult task to undertake, but the organisation has a duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and to prevent the reputation of Stagebox being brought into disrepute.

Your first duty is to the safeguarding of children/vulnerable adults and you are never under an obligation to colleagues to keep secrets affecting safeguarding. Once you have passed on the information to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead or other senior staff member, do not talk about the disclosure with other staff members.

4.7 Getting support

It is never easy dealing with disclosures of harm or abuse to children and vulnerable adults. It is natural to have personal feelings and reactions to this. Make sure you get support for your own emotional needs using systems of support such as external support.

5. What to do if significant harm or abuse is suspected

There is no hard and fast rule about how an individual or organisation makes a judgement about whether to report a safeguarding concern to a statutory agency. It's a process of listening, gathering evidence, judging risk and taking action. However there are two

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basic rules which staff members and volunteers should always follow:

1. Do not ignore it.
2. Do not work in isolation.

5.1 Basic procedure

Basic step-by-step guide:

- Complete a Record of safeguarding concern form
 - Contact the relevant Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead to notify them of your concern •
- You might attend a meeting with the Lead
- Having notified the Lead, you might leave them to take the matter further and meet with other relevant Stagebox Staff
 - You might do this yourself at the point of disclosure
 - The Lead might agree that this will happen through another member of staff
 - The Lead should keep you informed but ask if you don't hear as soon as you'd like. Their priority will be to implement the policy and though they will endeavour to keep you informed, the matter may be complex and time consuming.

Step 1. If a student makes a disclosure directly to you, record basic factual information (but do not quiz the person as this might affect a later court case in instances of abuse). This might be done in immediate response to a disclosure from a student, or it might be done as a result of concerns being raised by other staff that you manage.

Step 2. Talk to Stagebox Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead about the safeguarding concern or disclosure. Agree what immediate action you should take. If you didn't start a Record of safeguarding concern form at step 1, do so now at step 2.

Step 3. Tell the child/young performer what you are going to do next. Explain that you cannot promise confidentiality when there is evidence or disclosure about a safeguarding concern. Parental permission is sought when referring children, unless this might place the child at risk. Tell the student that you must disclose the information to Stagebox Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead, who may decide that Social Services must be informed.

Where the concern is raised by professionals and recorded at Stagebox, the student must be informed at the earliest practical opportunity and throughout the process, unless this might raise the risk of significant harm.

If a colleague shares a concern about a staff member within Stagebox or another agency you must inform the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead without delay and before the end of the working day.

Staff members should be aware that it is their duty to tell the appropriate person when significant harm is disclosed or you have a safeguarding concern. It is not their duty to make a judgement about what action Stagebox should take (this is the responsibility of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead).

If the situation is urgent, take action to protect the student. This may involve:

- calling an ambulance so the student is taken by health care professionals to A&E
- calling the police (999) 5. If significant harm is suspected, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead (or other member of staff if agreed) will refer the matter to the relevant Social Services team or local authority Channel liaison officer in the case of a concern about possible radicalisation. This is done by phone to a referral and assessment team or emergency duty team on the same day or at least within 24 hours and followed up in writing.

Step 4. If the Lead is not sure whether to make a referral, they will call the relevant Social Services team/ local authority contact for advice.

Step 5. If harm is suspected but isn't significant (i.e. at level 2), you will agree a plan of action and support with the student. You would notify the Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead by completing a Record of Safeguarding concern form.

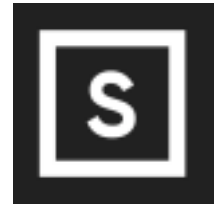
Step 6. You or the person leading the reporting, record all conversations and concerns.

Step 7. A safeguarding concern can be stepped up to a more serious level if the situation changes, plans are not kept or needs change. Similarly, a situation can be stepped down.

Once referred, it is the local authority's legal duty to assess the threshold of risk and need, and decide on further action (or not). In general, only 20% of referrals to Social Services lead to Child in Need or Child Protection measures.

5.2 Actions by the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead (or other relevant manager or senior staff member) After discussing the allegations and finding there are immediate concerns of danger, the concern needs to be referred immediately

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to the local social services team (no later than 24 hours). Any referral made by phone must be followed up in writing within 48 hours of the referral.

Social services will acknowledge receipt of the referral and will decide on the course of action to be taken within one working day. This will be fed back to the referring agency / person. If a response is not forthcoming the Lead will pursue the referral. A response is vital in order to be assured that a referral has been considered.

At this stage the local authority may decide not to take it further or to refer elsewhere or to carry out an initial assessment that may lead to emergency action to protect the child or vulnerable adult.

If for any reason Social Services cannot be contacted, the concern can be reported to the local Police Child Protection Team or Community Safety Unit.

5.2.1 Having discussed the matter with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead or manager and there are no serious concerns

Other referral options may be appropriate to offer the individual further support, or an agreed process of working with the individual within Stagebox so that their progress can be monitored and reviewed regularly.

Even though there are considered to be no major concerns and no referral is made, the process needs to be documented using the Report of Safeguarding Concern form. Any documentation should be sent to the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead to be placed in the person's file.

5.2.2 Having discussed the matter with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead and there are some concerns but no imminent threats to the individual's wellbeing

If the Child Protection & Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence, another senior manager, considers that the concerns do not pose an immediate and serious risk to the child or vulnerable adult they can consult with the local social services as to the most appropriate action to take to provide services to the family.

This consultation must take place as soon as possible but no later than within twenty-four hours of receiving the concerns.

6. SPECIFIC RISK AREAS

Any concerns of abuse or harm in relation to the following specific risk areas need to be dealt with using the above procedure.

6.1 Working with suicidal children/young adults

Each person who presents as being at potential risk of suicide needs to be risk assessed.

If you routinely work with children and/ or young adults outside of normal working hours (e.g. outside the hours 8am – 6pm on week days), you can receive training and support in order to be able to respond yourself. Within normal working hours, you would call for support and you would not need to manage a crisis yourself.

If the risk is considered serious or the person has just attempted suicide, the member of staff dealing with the crisis must ensure that the person accesses emergency services immediately. How this is achieved will depend on the level of distress that the person is in:

- If the person is calm and agreeing to treatment, the student will go to A&E
- If the person is badly injured or in too much distress, an ambulance should be called.
- The final option will be to call the police who will help get the person to safety.
- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead(s) must be informed as soon as possible after any suicidal interventions. ●

If a young person under 16 or young adult has disclosed that they are suicidal or at risk in any way, staff would use the Gillick Competency Test to decide if the person's parents/guardians/ carers should be informed.

6.2 Bullying or abuse including homophobic, transphobic, racist or other bullying or abuse

If a person discloses that they are being bullied or abused or at their own home, within a youth group, near their home or in another location, staff should:

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- Firstly assess if the person is in any immediate danger. If this is the case, the police need to be contacted.
- If the person is not in immediate danger, the person can be offered support to begin to talk about how they are being abused, how it is affecting them, and what action they would like to take to stop the abuse happening. Referrals can be made to external support organisations.

6.3 Children or Young Adults being drawn into extremism or radicalisation

Channel is the name for the process of identifying and referring a person at risk of radicalisation for early intervention and support. It is a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people using collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as education and health organisations, social services, children's and youth services and offender management services), the police and the local community. Channel operates to:

- Identify people at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk; and
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned. Channel may be appropriate for anyone who is vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism. Channel aims to safeguard children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism. The emphasis is on early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity.

Appendix 1 Types of abuse

2.4.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult. This situation is often described using terms such as Fictitious Illness by Proxy or Münchhausen Syndrome by proxy.

2.4.2 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the individual's emotional development and well-being. It may involve conveying to children or vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. Emotional abuse may involve threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. It can involve being drawn into radicalisation of any kind. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Emotional abuse can cause the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

2.4.3 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It

may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

2.4.4 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person, or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including

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penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sex with a child under 16 is unlawful.

There are some circumstances when consensual sex between children aged between 13 and 16 will not be prosecuted, although it is still unlawful. However, whether consent has been freely given will be a crucial factor. Sex with a child under 13 is always unlawful, regardless of the circumstances. Sex with a child aged 16 or 17 (i.e. over the age of consent) by an adult who has caring responsibilities (parent, teacher, youth leader, scout leader, support worker etc.) is unlawful. 'Sex' in all the above includes all penetrative and non-penetrative sexual acts, whether contact or non-contact.

2.4.5 Financial Abuse

Financial abuse involves theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits from children or vulnerable adults.

Appendix 2: Who might the abuser be and what are possible signs of abuse?

Who might the abuser be? Abuse is always caused by someone else. Abusers may be:

Family members, professional staff paid or voluntary workers, other adults at risk friends, young people carers, strangers. If someone is suffering abuse, you may notice one or a combination of the following: multiple bruising or finger marks injuries the person cannot give a good reason for, worsening health for no reason, weight loss, withdrawal or mood changes, tearfulness, neediness, wanting affection or being clingy, an unexplained shortage of money, inappropriate, dirty or inadequate clothing, a carer who is unwilling to let other people have access with the person.

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