

Safeguarding – Child Protection Statement, Policy and Procedures

Statement

Our Vision is for a Fair Start for the babies of young parents.

Our WILD babies and children have the right to be protected from harm or abuse, and to grow up in a safe and loving environment.

WILD acknowledges our duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We believe that the welfare and interest of children and unborn children are paramount in all circumstances, regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or any other characteristic or membership of any community.

WILD knows that some children, including disabled children and those from some specific communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse, including exploitation, female genital mutilation, fabricated or induced illness, forced marriage, modern slavery, so-called honour-based violence and radicalisation.

Research indicates that young babies are particularly vulnerable to abuse, but that organisations such as WILD working with families during pregnancy and can help minimise harm.

At WILD we will work together with all young parent families to protect and nurture their children, and keep them safe from harm. This means we will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people;
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of unborn children;
- Ensure everyone at WILD understands their safeguarding responsibilities;
- Provide learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns;
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse;
- Provide support to people who raise or report concerns;
- Provide support for team members in dealing with concerns;
- Ensure confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored;
- Prevent the employment of people who may present a risk to children;

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Policy Owner: Jo Davies & Ellie Nicholas **Date of Policy:** 01/06/2024 **Review date:** 01/07/2025

- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in place;
- Work effectively in partnership with other agencies.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted, including training, and following them is mandatory for everyone involved in WILD. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed and may result in dismissal or exclusion from WILD.

The policy will be reviewed every year, or following changes in legislation and guidance, or as required by our Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

Safeguarding Child Protection Policy

Law, Policies and Guidance

WILD is committed to safeguarding practice which reflects statutory responsibilities and works within The **Children Act 1989 and 2004**, Section 11 of the **Children Act 2004**, the Protection of Children Act 1999, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023' ([Working Together](#)), **Southwest Child Protection Procedures (SWCPP)** and 'What To Do If You Are Worried About A Child' ([What To Do](#)).

WILD's **Child Protection Policy** provides an overview of WILD's specific child protection procedures, but all team members and volunteers will need to use **SWCPP**, **Working Together** and **What To Do** as part of WILD's key safeguarding policy documents.

This policy also works alongside local guidance for specific types of abuse. Team members should use these guidance documents when supporting children and families experiencing these specific safeguarding issues:

- Exploitation: [Cornwall Exploitation Strategy](#)
- Neglect: [Cornwall Neglect Strategy](#)
- Child Sexual Abuse: [Cornwall CSA Strategy](#)
- Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence: [Cornwall DASV Strategy](#)
- Radicalisation preventing Extremism: [Safer Cornwall Preventing Violent Extremism](#)
- Fabricated or Induced Illness: [NHS Fabricated Illness Guidance](#)
- Modern Slavery: [Safer Cornwall Modern Slavery](#)
- So-called Honour-based Violence: [Police So-Called Honour-Based Abuse](#)
- Female Genital Mutilation: [NHS FGM Guidance](#)

WILD actively works with multi-agency safeguarding partners, including:

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- [Cornwall's Our Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (OSCP) - Team members should use the OSCP website for guidance on all aspects of safeguarding children, including safeguarding referral forms and documents.
- [Safer Cornwall](#) - Team members should use the Safer Cornwall website for guidance on all aspects of safer communities, including domestic abuse and sexual violence, and preventing extremism and exploitation.

Definitions of Abuse

Working Together defines **Safeguarding** as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Working Together defines **Child Protection** as part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse of children includes one or more of the following types of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Exploitation (criminal or sexual or Modern Slavery)
- Neglect
- Fabricated, Fictitious or Induced Illness (FII)
- Forced Marriage
- So-called Honour-based Violence
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation

Definitions of all these types of abuse are attached as an appendix to this policy, and can also be found using the links above.

WILD has other comprehensive policy documents in relation to Safeguarding Adults, DBS checks and Safer Recruitment.

WILD Safeguarding Practice

Safer Recruitment

WILD's **Safer Recruitment Policy** and **Disclosure and Barring Policy** outline WILD's duties and procedures to ensure safer recruitment of team members and volunteers, including use of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and references. All roles within WILD are considered as 'regulated activity'. All roles within WILD are also subject to **Disqualification by Association** declarations.

Training and support

- All team members and volunteers (including Trustees) will complete initial Safeguarding Awareness training when they join WILD.
- All team members will complete WILD's half-day Safeguarding Training, delivered by our safeguarding team.
- Team members with specific safeguarding responsibilities will complete higher level multi-agency safeguarding training.
- Safeguarding will be a standing agenda item in both Team meetings and Trustee meetings.
- Team meetings, training and communications will include opportunities to learn from national or local reviews.
- Supervision and coaching sessions for team members and volunteers will include safeguarding discussions.
- Team members and volunteers dealing with child protection issues will be supported by our safeguarding team, and through reflective practice coaching and external supervision.

Working with families to prevent abuse

- Children will be encouraged to learn about choices, safety, and about their own feelings and ways to express them, and be supported to build confidence and language to ask for help.
- Young parents will be encouraged to learn about child development, positive relationships, attachment, and the impact of abuse and neglect on children's wellbeing and development.
- Young parents will be encouraged and supported to make safer choices and practice protective parenting behaviours.

Reports and Concerns

Child Protection concerns can be brought to WILD's attention in a number of ways, including:

- Reported by a child;
- Reported by a young parent;
- Allegation or concern raised by another agency;
- Allegation or concern raised by another third party (e.g. another young parent);
- Incident of abuse witnessed by WILD team members or volunteers;
- Concerning behaviour witnessed by WILD team members or volunteer, including relating to sexual behaviour, exploitation, fabricated/induced illness;
- Any bruises, cuts or other injury on a non-mobile child;
- Unexplained or concerning bruises, cuts or other injuries on a mobile child or young person;
- Incidents of neglect observed by WILD team members or volunteers
- Social networking or online concern observed by WILD team members or volunteers;
- Missing children or young people;
- Through a child's play or artwork.

Dealing with a report of abuse from a child or young person

WILD Team members and Volunteers will:

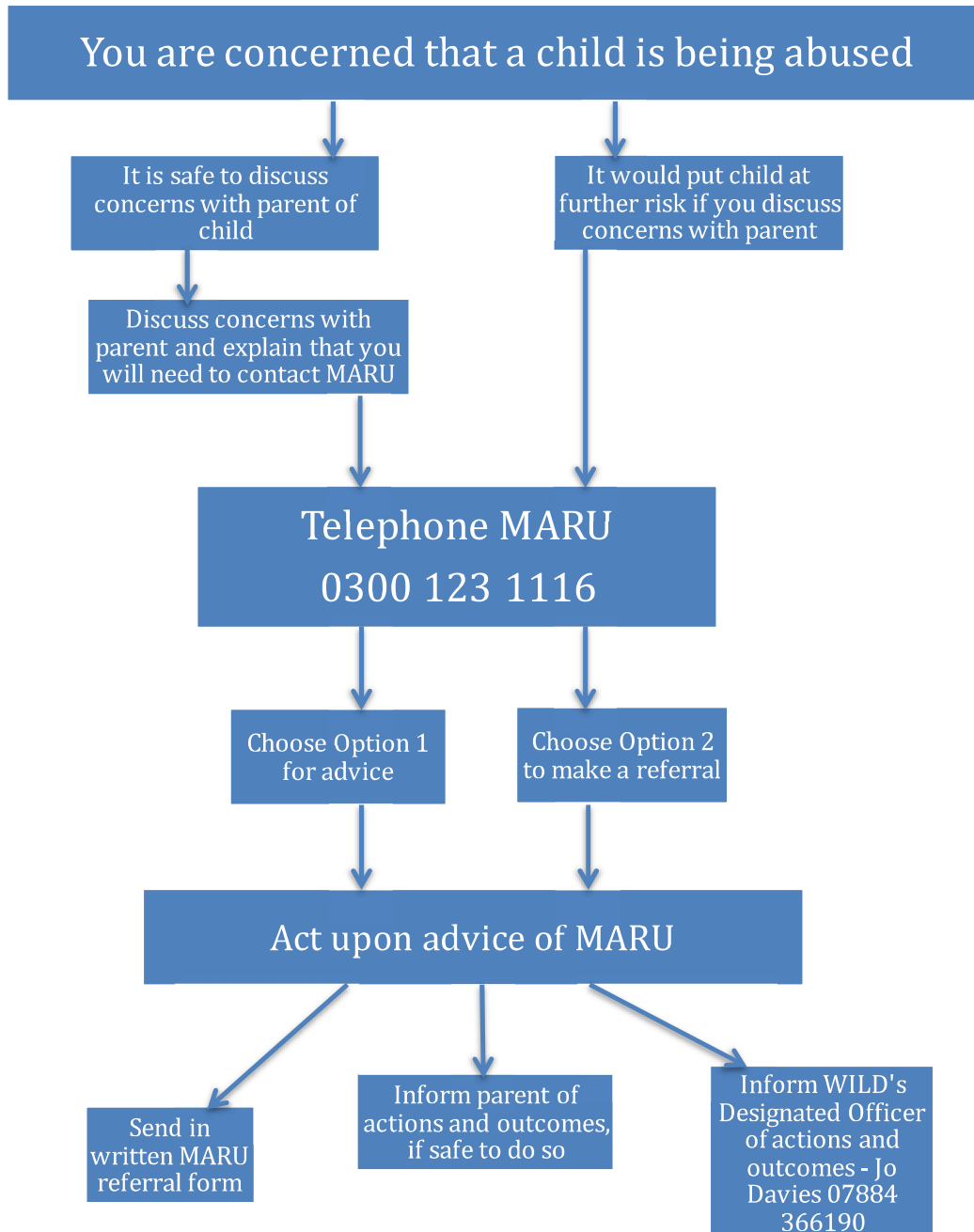
- Calmly listen and take the report seriously;
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in talking about what has happened;
- Inform the child or young person that the information will need to be shared;
- Clarify, but not investigate, any unclear aspects of the report;
- Take action immediately - do not wait until the end of the session;
- If the child or young person needs medical attention, seek medical assistance (including emergency assistance where needed);
- If the child or young person needs immediate first aid, deliver first aid or immediately inform the First Aider on the premises.

Procedure to follow if you are concerned a child is being abused

(PLEASE ALSO SEE FLOWCHART)

WILD Team members and Volunteers will:

- Telephone the MARU (Multi-Agency Referral Unit) to make a referral and/or gain advice;
- Follow up the call to the MARU by submitting a MARU Referral Form when a referral has been made;
- Take actions on the advice of the MARU;
- Store the MARU referral form, according to WILD's record keeping procedures, in a safeguarding work record on the child or young person's individual Lamplight record;
- Store any other recordings of the concern, report or incident, according to WILD's record-keeping procedures, in a safeguarding work record on the child or young person's individual Lamplight record;
- Liaise with other agencies if required or advised (e.g. police);
- Gain medical assistance where necessary;
- If the child or young person needs immediate first aid, deliver first aid or immediately inform the First Aider on the premises;
- Inform WILD's Designated Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy or Chair of Trustees in their absence) of actions taken;
- Discuss concerns with the parent, explain necessary actions and offer support (this applies in all situations, unless this would potentially place the child at further risk);
- Gain agreement from the parent to share information where possible (however information shared to protect children from harm or risk of abuse can be shared without agreement from the parent);
- Speak with other agencies as required (e.g. police or MARU).



Concerns about Unborn Children

Concerns for the welfare of an unborn child include:

- Concerns that the pregnant parent's current behaviour, health, or state of mind poses a threat to the unborn baby;
- Concerns that the pregnant parent may not be able to care for the unborn baby appropriately, or meet their needs;
- Concerns that the behaviour of the father, co-parent (or any other person) poses a threat to the unborn baby;
- Concerns that the behaviour of the father, co-parent (or any other person) will impact on the ability of the pregnant parent to care for the unborn baby safely.

WILD team members and volunteers will:

- Act immediately on concerns for the welfare of an unborn child by contacting the MARU and following our flow chart (above);
- Follow the SWCPP Unborn Child Protocol.

Concerns about actions of a colleague

Please refer to WILD's **Whistleblowing Policy**.

Support for children and families experiencing safeguarding concerns

WILD is committed to supporting children and their families when safeguarding concerns are raised and through any processes or actions that may result from these concerns.

WILD will:

- Appoint keyworkers to work with children who are subject to safeguarding concerns;
- Offer individual support to parents who are, or whose child is, subject to a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need plan, Public Law Outline, care proceedings, or where there are other safeguarding concerns;
- Complete and review weekly safeguarding monitoring forms for children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need plan, Public Law Outline, care proceedings, or where there are other safeguarding concerns, for times when they attend our services;

- Attend multi-agency meetings to advocate and represent the child. This may include offering support to parents regarding understanding proceedings and having their voice heard, in accordance with the ***Signs of Safety*** approach;
- Produce reports for multi-agency meetings, in accordance with Cornwall's [Signs of Safety](#) approach;
- Work closely with other professionals to support parents to put formal plans into action.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

WILD team members and volunteers will operate within WILD's Confidentiality and Data Protection policies. WILD recognises the need to share information where appropriate in order to protect children, and will share appropriate information to keep children safe.

Record Keeping

WILD Team members and Volunteers will:

- Keep records of all concerns, disclosures and actions taken;
- Keep copies of all MARU Referral forms in families' confidential records;
- Keep all other records of concerns, disclosures and actions taken in families' confidential records;
- Write up records as soon as possible after a concern or disclosure has been acted upon;
- Ensure records focus on facts, actions and reviews;
- Transport physical records securely to WILD's central office, where they will be stored securely and in accordance with Data Protection procedures;
- Inform WILD Designated Officer and Deputy Designated Officer (Jo Davies and Ellie Nicholas) of all MARU referrals.

Resolving Professional Differences

WILD recognises that sometimes professionals may disagree about decisions regarding children's wellbeing or safety. We encourage mutual discussion and challenge with other professionals in order to improve children's wellbeing and safety.

WILD team members and volunteers will use Cornwall Council's [Resolving Professional Differences policy and flow chart](#) in order to resolve or escalate concerns where appropriate

Safeguarding Leadership and Governance

WILD's **Designated Safeguarding Lead** will:

- Lead the WILD team regarding all aspects of child protection;
- Lead strategic organisational safeguarding planning and practice.

WILD's **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** will:

- Support the WILD team regarding all aspects of child protection;
- Lead the Safeguarding Team.

WILD's **Safeguarding Team** will:

- Support WILD team members regarding family safeguarding responses and plans;
- Oversee action planning and review for families with more complex safeguarding concerns;
- Develop and disseminate policy, practice, learning and training.

WILD's **Trustees** will:

- Respond to concerns raised by team members or volunteers;
- Liaise with WILD's Safeguarding Team regarding complex safeguarding concerns;
- Oversee and review safeguarding policies.

Appendix: Definitions of Types of Abuse

Working Together Definitions of Abuse

Abuse:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse:

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or

grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Exploitation:

"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." Child Sexual Exploitation - Definition and a Guide for Practitioners, Local Leaders and Decision Makers (DfE, 2017).

With effect from 29 June 2021, section 69 Domestic Abuse Act 2021 expanded so-called 'revenge porn' to include threats to disclose private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress.

Child criminal exploitation is defined as: "where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology." Serious Violence Strategy (HM Government, 2018)

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], 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.

Cuckooing is a term used to describe organised criminal networks taking over the home of a vulnerable person for criminal activity, such as storing or selling drugs.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Female genital mutilation is the partial or total removal of a girl's external genitals. Her body is physically damaged when the healthy tissue of her genitals is cut away. There are no health benefits to FGM. Complex cultural and social reasons are often given about why it is practised. FGM has harmful effects on the health and wellbeing of a woman throughout her life and contravenes human, women's and children's rights.

Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) NHS Definition: The term FII covers a wide range of cases and behaviours involving parents seeking healthcare for a child. This ranges from extreme neglect (failing to seek medical care) to induced illness. Behaviours in FII include:

- A parent or other carer who convinces their child they are ill when they are healthy;
- A parent or other carer who exaggerates or lies about their child's symptoms;
- A parent or other carer who manipulates test results to suggest the presence of illness;
- A parent or other carer who deliberately induces symptoms of illness.

Forced Marriage and So-called Honour-Based Violence: CPS UK Government Definitions: A Forced Marriage (FM) is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. FM is now a specific offence under s121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and comes into force on 16 June 2014.

There is no specific offence of "honour-based crime". It is an umbrella term to encompass various offences covered by existing legislation. Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in

terrorist groups. **Prevent** aims not only to stop people becoming terrorists but to challenge and prevent the support of terrorism, radicalisation and extremism, while at the same time protecting the public. This can include tackling those who support a far right group or who carry out any other extremist activities, as well as those who engage in hate or prejudice-based bullying. The three key objectives of Prevent are to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support;
- Work with sectors and institutions where there is a risk of radicalisation which we need to address.

Modern Slavery: Safer Cornwall states that Modern Slavery is estimated to affect in the region of 20 -30 million people worldwide, who are being sold as objects. Some of this extends into the UK and into Cornwall. Modern slavery consists of four main categories;

- Sexual exploitation – where people are trafficked and are held under ‘debt bondage’. This is a criminal business, involving child abuse and prostitution.
- Labour exploitation – This can involve the agriculture and construction industries.
- Criminal exploitation – eg cannabis farming, fraudulent use of charity bags, benefits fraud, forced marriage.
- Domestic servitude – where foreign nations are exploited for low paid domestic service.