

Children's University Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Review Date: Mar 2025

Approved by Trustees on:

Review Date: December 2025

You are advised that a printed version may not be the latest available version. The latest version, which supersedes all previous versions, is available in Drop Box. Those to whom this policy applies, are responsible for familiarising themselves with the latest version and for complying with the policy requirements at all times.

Children's University Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Summary

Children's University Trust exists to encourage, track and celebrate access to positive activities and safe places where we can help children to be healthy, confident, responsible, resilient and successful. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard children's welfare and are committed to effective practice which protects them from harm. We believe that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. An essential part of our work therefore is our clear commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children who participate in Children's University.

Leadership for safeguarding at Children's University Trust lies with its Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

In the absence of the DSL, the designated safeguarding deputy at Children's University Trust is the The Safeguarding Trustee: Tania Hardcastle taniahardcastle@gmail.com

The Chair of Children's University Trustee Board is: Victoria Charles vicky_charles@shelter.org.uk 07980 925266

Children's University Trust will work proactively to develop a safeguarding culture and every member of staff and member organisation has a vital role to play within this.

All Children's University Trust staff should:

- adhere to the safeguarding children procedures of the setting they are visiting, as well as adhering to Children's University Trust procedures;
- follow the safeguarding code of conduct at all times;
- be able to recognise any welfare concern they have about children, including suspected abuse;
- report any sign of abuse or disclosure of abuse verbally to the DSL immediately and then send a written record of the report to them by confidential email;
- direct concerns and safeguarding concerns and allegations about the behaviour of staff towards a child to the CEO on the same day that it is noted - staff who have concerns or who have been informed of inappropriate behaviour by other staff must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.
- feel able to challenge decision-making in regard to safeguarding with other agencies and to see this as their right and responsibility in order to promote best practice; and
- use emergency procedures if the child is in immediate danger.

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1.1 Rationale

Children's University Trust exists to encourage, track and celebrate access to positive activities and safe places where we can help children to be healthy, confident, responsible, resilient and successful. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard children's welfare and are committed to effective practice which protects them from harm. We believe that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. An essential part of our work therefore is our clear commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children who participate in Children's University.

As a Registered Charity that works with children, Children's University Trust is required to have safeguarding policies in place by the Charity Commission and by statutory safeguarding guidance. We fully recognise the vulnerability of children and we will work to ensure that we will take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them. Having safeguards in place within our organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of the children that participate and benefit from Children's University, but also enhances the confidence of parents, staff, volunteers, Trustees, members and the general public with regard to our organisation.

This policy has been produced in order to inform everyone associated with Children's University Trust of their obligations regarding the safeguarding of children, to assist them in meeting their responsibilities, and to inform them about where they can go for advice and support.

The term 'staff' in this policy will be used to refer to: paid staff of Children's University Trust, volunteers, anyone undertaking work experience or a work placement with Children's University Trust and our Trustees; 'parents' will include 'carers', and 'children' will include children and young people up to the age of 18.

1.2 Aims

Children's University Trust aims to:

- Regard the welfare of the child as paramount within our work;
- Ensure that children are protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation;
- Ensure that safeguarding is a key responsibility of every adult involved in our organisation and that everyone who comes into contact with children via our programme is supporting and confident to promote safer practice and to take prompt action if they have concerns;
- maintain best practice in regard to safeguarding and comply with our legal responsibilities;
- ensure safe and enjoyable environments for all the children participating in Children's University;
- continually develop a 'child focused approach' to all safeguarding and to listen to the voice of the child ensuring they are valued and respected;
- identify and respond to all children in need of support and/or protection, whilst recognising the exceptional vulnerability of some of those participating in Children's University;
- ensure children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating, aiming to intervene at the earliest possible stage;
- take any disclosure of abuse extremely seriously as children rarely lie about abuse;
- prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children through Children's University Trust and continually develop an ongoing culture of vigilance within the Children's University network that recognises 'it could happen here';
- ensure all suspicions and safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse by staff and volunteers will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;

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- proactively ensure that our processes work holistically to expose the full extent of any abuse, keeping in mind that it's possible that staff who are safeguarding children participating in Children's University may only have one small piece of the jigsaw; and
- work collaboratively and cooperatively in collaboration with other organisations, children and their parents or carers, sharing information appropriately and, where necessary, professionally challenge to ensure best practice.

1.3 Definitions

Safeguarding children is a relatively new term which is broader than 'Child Protection'. It has been defined as:

'The action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm... everyone's responsibility...defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

Effective safeguarding of children therefore includes prevention, early intervention and Child Protection.

Child Protection is a vital part of everyone's safeguarding responsibilities. This is defined 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.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

This document recognises all welfare concerns, including preventative safeguarding, Early Help and abuse.

Within legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years.

1.4 Safeguarding Leadership

Leadership for safeguarding at Children's University Trust lies with its Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The DSL is the first formal point of contact for all staff, children and other professionals regarding concerns for the welfare of any child, and they should ensure a cohesive, transparent and corporate approach to this critical area. The CEO will also manage all safeguarding concerns and allegations made against Children's University Trust staff.

In the absence of the DSL, the designated safeguarding deputy at Children's University Trust is Trustee Tania Hardcastle.

In the absence of the DSL and deputies, decisions will be made by the most senior member of staff on duty.

The Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DST) at Children's University Trust is: Tania Hardcastle

The Chair of Children's University Trustee Board is: Victoria Charles.

1.5 Scope and implementation

This policy is the responsibility of everyone who works at, manages, volunteers for or visits Children's University Trust. The DSL will ensure that this policy is brought to the notice of everyone throughout their time at our charity, so that they fulfil their duties to co-operate with this policy. We will ensure that the member organisations we work with will have safeguarding procedures in place and share this

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safeguarding policy with them. We will ensure everyone is informed of this policy by ensuring the policy appears on our website. All Children's University Trust staff will receive this policy, a briefing in safeguarding and all the other Children's University Trust policies related to safeguarding during their Induction within the first three months of their employment. All staff that come into contact with children as part of their job shall be provided with up-to-date safeguarding training as well as updates as necessary (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children and children at risk effectively. Trustees should also be invited to undertake safeguarding training and offered updates. Some members of Children's University Trust staff and Trustees involved in recruitment should have received Safer Recruitment Training from an accredited trainer. The DSL and the Deputy DSL will undertake advanced safeguarding training for DSLs at least every 2 years.

All Children's University Trust staff will receive regular supervision sessions and annual appraisals to ensure they understand and are supported individually with their safeguarding responsibilities. A record of staff training is kept on each member of staff's individual continuing professional development record and on our Single Central Record. Any breach of policy or procedures is treated seriously and could result in disciplinary action; this includes failure to report and maintain safeguarding records as well as inappropriate conduct.

1.6 Other Children's University Trust policies related to safeguarding:

This policy works with the following related policies:

- Antibullying;
- Complaints;
- Equalities;
- Online Safety;
- Privacy;
- Recruitment and Selection; and
- Whistleblowing.

1.7 Monitoring

Children's University Trust recognises the Trust's responsibility for monitoring safeguarding. Safeguarding will be a standing agenda item for the Trustees and we will carry out safeguarding audits as deemed necessary.

1.8 Review

Children's University Trust regularly reviews our procedures in light of experience and changes to legislation and regulations. This policy should be formally reviewed at least every year.

1.9 Law and Guidance

This policy works within the legal framework created by the following legislation and conventions:

Children Act 1989

United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991

Human Rights Act 1998

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Children Act 2004

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Equality Act 2010

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Children and Families Act 2014

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The key statutory guidance we adhere to includes Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), which highlights two main principles that all settings must adhere to when working with children:

- those working with children should always adopt a child-centred approach to safeguarding; and
- it is everybody's responsibility to keep children safe.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) explains the statutory safeguarding responsibilities of those organisations who are registered to work with children and children at risk including schools, and those working in partnership with them, and is a useful document for charities who work with children.

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2014) is statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities.

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2. Safeguarding Responsibilities

2.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies

The Trustees should ensure that Children's University Trust designates an appropriate, experienced, senior member of staff to take lead responsibility for safeguarding, the DSL. This person should have the status and authority within the organisation to carry out the duties of the post, including access to needed resources and, where appropriate, the ability to support and direct staff. Actions but not overall responsibility can be delegated to a Deputy. The areas of responsibility for the DSL within Children's University Trust include:

- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police;
- refer, and support staff and member organisations to refer, cases of suspected abuse to local referral agencies;
- refer, and support staff and member organisations to refer, cases to the Channel programme (part of the prevent strategy) where there is a radicalisation concern;
- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention;
- be quick to respond to concerns about Children's University Trust staff by managing initial safeguarding concerns and allegations and complaints, carrying out appropriate investigations and sharing concerns with the local authority designated officer;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed from or left Children's University Trust due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- coordinate online safety for Children's University Trust;
- manage Risk Assessments, maintaining a risk register which is regularly reviewed;
- liaise with Children's University Trust staff on matters of safeguarding, acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- undergo training to develop the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role, updated at least every two years;
- ensure their knowledge and skills are refreshed (via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals as required, and at least annually;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and reviews, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- be alert to the specific needs of vulnerable children;
- keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of safeguarding concerns and referrals and if appropriate, share any information with other settings;
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures Children's University Trust may put in place to protect them;
- ensure all related safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately, and that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed every year (as a minimum);
- ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available publicly;
- link with Children's University Trust member organisations regarding safeguarding matters;
- always be available for Children's University Trust staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns (in person, phone, Zoom or other such media) and arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours activities;
- oversee any budgetary allocations for safeguarding;
- undertake any safeguarding audits as necessary, including audits of the Single Central Record;
- ensure they are not disqualified from holding a Senior Manager position; and
- ensure that these duties can be carried out by the Deputy DSLs in their absence.

2.2 Trustees

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The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard children participating in Children's University and having regard to their statutory duties.

Trustees should:

- ensure safeguarding is a key governance priority and know that they will be held responsible for any possible breaches of trust or duties;
- follow relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance;
- set and constantly develop an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding;
- ensure there are effective and up to date systems in place to safeguard and promote children's welfare and to protect them from abuse and maltreatment of any kind;
- appoint a DSL and a lead Trustee for safeguarding (DST);
- make sure that everyone working at Children's University Trust knows how to deal with safeguarding issues, and that they know that it's safe to report incidents and concerns with the assurance that these will be handled properly and promptly;
- regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant;
- review which posts at Children's University Trust can and must have a DBS check and have a risk assessment process in place for posts which do not qualify for a DBS check;
- be alert to the possibility that adults may use Children's University Trust to deliberately gain access to children to abuse them, and responsibly handle all incidents or safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse and reports of safeguarding risks or procedural failures;
- not lead potential witnesses or contaminate evidence;
- identify and manage risks and emerging risks, and make changes to reduce the risk of any further incidents;
- make reports where necessary to the police, local authorities and other agencies, and, where the criteria are met, send a serious incident report to the Charity Commission;
- ensure reports are managed, recorded and stored appropriately;
- agree the Trust's safeguarding policy, making sure it is fit for purpose, adheres to statutory national guidance, includes a safeguarding code of conduct for staff, reviewed annually, and is available on the Children's University Trust website;
- prevent the Trust from being abused for extremist purposes, including ensuring there are appropriate risk assessments in place;
- discuss and appraise the annual safeguarding report for Trustees;
- not let one Trustee dominate its work and work together to safeguard children in their care; and
- declare they are not disqualified from Trusteeship.

2.3 Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST)

The Trustees should nominate someone to take leadership responsibility for the Trust's safeguarding arrangements, i.e., the designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST). The DST should:

- receive reports from the DSL of any occasions when there are safeguarding concerns or issues;
- ensure that safeguarding is a standing agenda item at Trustee meetings;
- give regular verbal updates to the Trustees concerning safeguarding matters;
- provide the annual review of safeguarding to the Trustees, stating:
 - any changes to the Trust's safeguarding policies;
 - safeguarding training undertaken by the DSL and Deputy DSLs, and other staff;
 - the number of welfare incidents and cases (without name or detail); and
 - any other safeguarding issues.

2.4 Chair of Trustees

The Chair of Trustees has the responsibility of contacting the local authority designated officer directly if there is an allegation of abuse made against the DSL.

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2.5 All staff

All staff at Children's University Trust, regardless of their seniority or role, have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children at risk. All staff should:

- be aware of and understand this policy;
- attend appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and read safeguarding and child protection updates;
- promote fundamental British values, challenge extremism, and identify children and families who may be vulnerable to radicalisation;
- be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection;
- know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected and how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality;
- be aware of the process for making referrals;
- ensure that if, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child that they make a referral to the emergency services immediately;
- be able to record their safeguarding concerns clearly and appropriately;
- not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe;
- be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision and share information while maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality;
- raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in any safeguarding regimes using appropriate allegation, professional challenge, escalation and Whistleblowing procedures;
- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned;
- act in the best interests of the child;
- comply with appropriate DBS and safer recruitment checks; and
- always speak to the DSL if they are unsure about any aspect of safeguarding.

2.6 All member organisations

All organisations working under a membership agreement with Children's University Trust must operate within statutory safeguarding requirements and satisfy the Trust's minimum safeguarding standards (see Appendices). In addition, member organisations are expected to:

- keep the DSL informed if there are any major safeguarding incidents which have taken place within their Children's University activities;
- inform the DSL about any person where permission has been removed for them to carry out work with children participating in Children's University because, in their opinion, such person has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children;
- provide copies of any formal safeguarding complaints received from service users; and
- be prepared to audit their safeguarding procedures at the request of Children's University Trust.

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3. Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Children's University staff

3.1 Safer Practice

Children's University Trust recognises that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for the children in their care. However, as a result of their knowledge, position and the authority invested in their role, adults always hold a position of power over people and there is therefore great potential for exploitation and harm. Instructors and leaders who involve children in exciting and creative activities can sometimes acquire a 'guru-like' status with them and may exercise an unnatural and unhealthy influence. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that this unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. On the other hand, working with vulnerable children in informal situations may also give rise to misunderstandings which at worse can give rise to unnecessary and unsubstantiated safeguarding concerns and allegations which can be upsetting and time consuming for our organisation to manage.

An effective safeguarding code of conduct for Children's University staff ensures that children are safeguarded in our setting and also that staff are protected against needless safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse. It makes clear the behaviour that is expected when coming into contact with children, and therefore makes any conduct not in accordance with the Code easily identifiable. It is not meant to inhibit natural interactions with children but to support respectful relationships between Trust staff and the children they come into contact with. Children's University Trust aims to give a clear message to our staff that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and that, where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow; accordingly, this document may be referred to in disciplinary proceedings. Much of the ideas and principles in this document are taken from the non-statutory document: 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children in education settings' (2019), which is endorsed and recommended by the Safer Recruitment Consortium.

All those working with children at Children's University Trust should:

- follow the safeguarding code of conduct at all times;
- be responsible for their own actions and behaviour;
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions;
- work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way;
- discuss and/or take advice promptly from the DSL about any incident which may give rise to concern;
- contribute positively to the Trust's ongoing culture of vigilance, challenging unacceptable behaviour, and promptly reporting all safeguarding concerns and allegations/suspensions of abuse in other staff; and
- continually monitor and review their practice.

The Trust understands that any safeguarding code of conduct cannot cover all situations that may arise and that sometimes staff may feel that they must make decisions which directly contravene this guidance in the best interests of the children in their charge. We support individuals making professional judgements when necessary as long as they are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should always record and report these matters to the DSL.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring Risk Assessments are produced as necessary for all the work delivered by Children's University Trust staff. If staff have a concern about a particular area of work, for example a certain event, they should contact the DSL and if necessary, they will ensure a Risk Assessment is completed, which will be retained securely in the office.

3.4 Bullying

See 5. Safeguarding information 5.1 Bullying

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3.5 Communication, including online safety

All communications with children should be transparent and open to scrutiny. Children's University Trust staff should not request or respond to any personal information other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should avoid any communication with children which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'.

Children's University Trust staff should aim to not give their personal contact details to children for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities. Contact with children using IT should be mediated through the Trust, unless there are particular circumstances that necessitate direct contact and are therefore risk assessed accordingly (e.g., use of mobile phones during outings). Essential communication with children must be agreed in advance with the DSL. **If children attempt to contact or correspond with Children's University Trust staff directly or indirectly for personal reasons using social media or any other technology, staff should not respond and must report the matter to the DSL.**

Children's University Trust staff may have access to confidential information about children which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Online records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them. Children's University Trust staff are expected to comply with laws on Data Protection and any breaches of this may result in disciplinary action. Information a staff member receives in the course of their job must not be used for their own benefit or the benefit of others, and must not be disclosed to anyone outside Children's University, except in the public interest, which includes safeguarding. Children's full name will not be used anywhere on our literature.

Email and the internet are available for communicating Children's University Trust business. Staff attention is drawn to the fact that external email is not secure and that this must be taken into account in choosing how personal and confidential information is communicated. Staff must ensure that they do not make inappropriate comments in any emails. It is recognised that from time to time, email may be used for personal reasons unrelated to business. Such use should be brief, outside of working hours (except in a case of emergency) and must exclude activities prohibited by Children's University Trust.

Most mobile phones now have access to the internet and picture and video messaging and may present opportunities for unrestricted access to the internet and sharing of images. Other mobile devices with this facility include laptops, tablets, watches and gaming hardware. Personal mobile phones and other devices may be used in some situations, as long as it is for business and emergency purposes only. If this is deemed to be a safeguarding issue this will be dealt in accordance with our disciplinary policies.

Children's University Trust respects staff members' private life. However, it must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Staff using social networking websites in their private life must refrain from promoting themselves as working for the organisation, in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the Trust into disrepute. They must not identify other staff or children without their consent and must not make any defamatory remarks about the Trust, children or other staff and Trustees, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the charity. Staff must not disclose personal data or information about Children's University Trust, children and families or staff that could breach legislation (e.g. photographs, images). Staff should not engage in any activity or communication with children and families in social media sites. They should be aware of possible wider implications when entering any personal details on any online sites.

3.6 Conduct

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All Children's University Trust staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and the respect of the general public and those with whom they work. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing Children's University Trust into disrepute.

3.7 Dress and appearance

Children's University Trust staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately and safely for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation. Staff should never comment on the dress and appearance of children.

3.8 Drugs

See 5. Safeguarding information 5. Drugs

3.9 Employment Checks

All Children's University Trust staff with direct access to children will be required to have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with Barred List. The Trust will check this is in place on appointment. If there is a break in service of more than three months (not including maternity leave or sickness) or a specific concern that arises during employment, Children's University Trust may carry out another DBS check using the DBS update service. It is noted and accepted that the Trust will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via DBS check and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children. It is the responsibility of staff members to keep the Trust informed if there has been any involvement in criminal activity during their employment.

3.10 Favouritism

It can be tempting to lavish praise and attention on children who appear to be developing quickly and showing talent. It is wrong however to do this in a way that undermines other children or makes anyone feel inferior. Children's University Trust believes it is important to give proportionate attention to all children under the supervision of an adult.

3.11 Gifts and Rewards

Children's University Trust staff need to be aware of the safeguarding implications of gift giving. Gifts can be a sign of infatuations, favouritism and grooming. There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is usually acceptable. It is, however, unacceptable for Children's University Trust staff to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. If in doubt, the staff member should consult the CEO. Staff should never give gifts or reward to any children or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. Any reward given to a child should be in accordance with agreed practice, recorded and not based on preferential treatment. Staff should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of injustice. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria and there should be a clear audit trail indicating how decisions were made.

3.12 Infatuations

All Children's University Trust staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for children to be strongly attracted to a member of staff. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to cultivate this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted. Any member of Trust staff who believes that a child has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately

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report this to the DSL. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned. The DSL should give careful thought about the intervention. The staff member and child should be spoken to and then the DSL should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all. This plan should involve all parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

3.15 One to One situations

One to one situations are unlikely to occur through the work of Children's University Trust and the Trust's staff should avoid these situations at all times.

3.16 Membership working

Children's University Trust must always ensure that our member organisations have effective safeguarding policies in place (as specified in the Partner and Licensee Membership Agreement) and display good practice in regard to safeguarding, adhering to the Children's University Trust's Minimum Safeguarding Standards. Any concerns that Children's University Trust staff have of poor safeguarding practice in member organisations should be reported to the DSL at the time they are noted.

3.17 Photography

For the purposes of this section, photography includes images, video and sound recordings. Children's University Trust recognises that photographing children participating in Children's University activities and celebrations is an essential element to the positive promotion of what we do. At the same time, images are easily transferred and pose a real safeguarding issue to children. It should be borne in mind that photographic images can be a source of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information which can be invaluable to a dedicated paedophile. The filming of children must be controlled and only carried out for a proper purpose and with the correct authority. When assessing the risks of any situation where images are taken or intended to be taken, the primary factor is the potential for inappropriate use of such images.

3.18 Physical Contact

Children's University Trust staff may find that participating children, during the course of graduations or other situations, seek out non-threatening physical contact but staff should ensure that all physical contact is in public, at the invitation of the child, not over-long and not intimate.

3.22 Settings or venues

Staff working for Children's University Trust visit member organisations and may also visit participating children in a variety of different settings or venues. On visiting a different setting or venue, all staff should find out the health and safety, safeguarding and emergency policies and procedures of the venue or setting. All significant incidents (including accidents resulting in any kind of medical attention, violent or threatening behaviour of children, signs or disclosures of any welfare issue, or near misses) that occur whilst during work by staff in different settings or venues must be recorded and sent to the DSL. In some settings like schools, incidents that have occurred should be reported using the setting reporting procedure and in this case, staff must ask for a copy of the record, and any subsequent investigation documents to send to the DSL. This allows us to monitor issues that Children's University Trust staff are having, and helps to identify reoccurring problems.

3.23 Sexual activity

Sexual activity involves physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, and also includes non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. Any sexual activity by a member of Children's University Trust staff with or towards a child is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff to engage in sexual activity with a

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child under 18 years of age, even if it appears the child is consenting and is over the age of 16, as all staff members working with children at Children's University Trust are in a position of trust. Over the age of 18, a sexual relationship between a staff member and a child will be regarded as a breach of trust and the staff member disciplined.

3.24 Social contact outside the workplace

Children's University Trust staff should never deliberately seek out any social contact with children outside of the workplace. They should actively discourage children or parents who seek to establish social contact. Staff should be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the family and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse. Other informal social contact can lead to child sexual exploitation, radicalization and/or staff exerting inappropriate influence on children and possibly bringing Children's University Trust into disrepute (e.g. circulating propaganda). Outside of Children's University Trust, it is likely that staff may meet children and families coincidentally. In all cases, staff must ensure that they maintain professional boundaries at all times and be aware of their use of alcohol.

3.25 Special Educational Needs (SEN) and physical disabilities

Children's University Trust is committed to providing children with SEN and/or who have physical disabilities with access to Children's University. We aim to include them, to value them and to support them, and to make any reasonable adjustments accordingly. We will work with member organisations and Learning Destinations to adapt existing activities and to provide additional activities in order to provide a welcoming and inclusive service for children of all abilities. The Trust aims to promote and value diversity and difference, and challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices. All children will be encouraged to value and respect others with SEN and disabilities via Children's University.

3.28 Unrealistic Expectations

Placing unrealistic expectations of success on a child can be emotionally abusive. Children's University Trust believes that each child has their own natural ability which can be developed, but that adults should be aware of their limitations and be realistic about their goals.

3.29 Verbal Abuse

Speaking to a child by using verbal admonishments instead of encouragement and tuition can become verbal abuse. Swearing and the use of inappropriate language, metaphor or simile can also constitute abuse and can be threatening to children, giving rise to anxiety and fear. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated by Children's University Trust.

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4. Safeguarding Procedures

4.1 Site Specific Considerations

Our member organisations work with a large number of children across a broad geographical area in a diverse range of settings and the Trust is committed to taking an active interest in their work. On visiting a member organisation, Children's University Trust staff ***should adhere to the safeguarding procedures of the setting they are visiting, as well as adhering to the Trust's own procedures.***

While visiting member organisations all Children's University Trust staff must:

- carry appropriate, easily visible Trust identification at all times;
- record all significant incidents that occur in liaison with the setting, including: accidents resulting in any kind of medical attention, incidents (such as violent or threatening behaviour of children), disclosures of any welfare issue, or near misses;
- request a copy of any incident or concern form they are asked to fill in at a setting, and any subsequent investigation documents, and send to the DSL.
- ensure that they are in a suitable space which conforms to health and safety regulations and can be open to observation by other adults.

4.2 Recognising signs

All Children's University Trust staff have a key role in recognising any welfare concern they have about children, including suspected abuse. Small as well as more obvious unexplained changes may indicate a cause for concern. Effective safeguarding means that all welfare concerns need to be taken seriously. Not all concerns about children relate to abuse; there may well be other explanations or other welfare concerns that do not meet thresholds. It is important that staff keep an open mind and treat every concern with the utmost seriousness.

Abuse in children is defined as: *'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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.'* *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one child or more. Abuse or neglect may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Children's University Trust staff are not responsible for diagnosing or investigating abuse, however, they do have a clear responsibility to be aware that all is not well with a child and to be able to recognise the signs of abuse (concerns arising from the appearance and the behaviour of the child and/or the abuser). The possibility of abuse should be reported if there are a number of signs or any of them stand out to a marked degree. It is also possible that children may show no outward signs and hide what is happening. Staff need to be sensitive in particular to signs of abuse in children with limited or non-verbal communication as statistically these and other disabled children are more likely to be abused. Staff should also be made aware of any children who are especially vulnerable (including children with Early Help or Child Protection plans and with care and support needs, children in care, newly adopted children, young carers and those with disabled parents) and be extra vigilant.

There are 4 recognised broad categories of abuse of children: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect. These and other complex types of abuse are defined and symptoms laid out in Section 5 of this document. A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

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If Children's University Trust staff are concerned about children, they must give children the opportunity to disclose by asking open questions based on what they have observed (e.g. 'I see you have a bruise...tell me about that.'). If the child does not disclose, staff should report anyway.

4.3 Disclosure

Children's University Trust staff work towards forming positive and trusting relationships with the children they come into contact with. At times this may mean that children feel that they can confide about aspects of their life that may cause staff concern for their general welfare. Trust staff may also receive a disclosure from a concerned relative or friend about a child. All Trust staff should therefore be alert to possible disclosures. The disclosure may be that a child is being abused – or it may be that they feel vulnerable in other ways that are more general welfare concerns. Effective safeguarding means that any welfare concern needs to be taken seriously.

A disclosure may involve a criminal offence and if poorly handled could increase the risk for the victim and could undermine a potential prosecution. In the event of a disclosure, Children's University Trust staff must take the following action:

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child is actually saying
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you
- Know that children rarely lie about abuse and indicate that you are taking the matter extremely seriously (without saying they believe them which may compromise evidence)
- Do not promise that this can be kept secret; explain that the information will have to be passed on to appropriate agencies to keep them safe
- Do not interrogate, or push for more information. Ensure that any questions asked are open, not leading closed questions. It is not the role of staff to investigate but to report concerns
- Do not ask them to repeat what they have said to another member of staff
- Ensure that they are informed about what will happen next, so they can be reassured about what to expect
- Make a note of any conversations, trying to make these as detailed as possible, including when and where the conversations took place
- **Report any disclosure of abuse verbally to the Trust's DSL immediately and then send a written record of your report to them by confidential email.**

4.4 Recording

Effective record keeping is essential to help Children's University Trust identify needs at an early stage. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues are taken as a whole that any general welfare or abuse becomes clear. Any member of Children's University Trust staff who has any kind of concern relating to the welfare of children must make an accurate record as soon as possible and send this to the DSL.

All welfare records should be:

- clear, straightforward and avoid jargon
- concise
- accurate
- contemporaneous
- contextualised
- correctly dated
- written as to differentiate between facts, opinion, judgments and hypothesis
- signed with the name of the signatory clearly printed; and
- written with a mind that the subject of a record does have the right in law to request access to them at any stage.

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The record should explain:

- what was seen in appearance and behaviour of the child: when and where (include if relevant a site map indicating the position of any bruises or marks, trying to indicate size, colour and shape)
- what was said by the child using the exact words used
- a note of any other people involved e.g., as witnesses
- what the staff member thought and why they thought it
- what the staff member did; and
- any other relevant information.

If abuse is suspected, the Children's University Trust staff member MUST record this on the same day that the concern is noted.

The DSL is responsible for keeping all welfare records concerning children secure at Children's University Trust. These records should be kept separately from general information kept about children. Information should be shared with all those who need to have it. Other professionals and parents may have access to the records only by permission of the DSL (who may decide that it is in the interests of the child or professional not to share them).

All records about safeguarding concerns and allegations about Children's University Trust staff should be kept by the CEO in a central and secure location and separate from personnel records. Details of safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other safeguarding concerns and allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, and decisions reached, is kept on a member of staff's confidential personnel file, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS disclosures reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation resurfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the person has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. The Information Commissioner has published guidance on employment records in its Employment Practices Code and supplementary guidance, which provides some practical advice on employment retention.

4.5 Reporting and Referring

Children's University Trust staff spotting the signs of abuse or receiving a disclosure of abuse must report to the DSL immediately. If the DSL is not available, the member of staff MUST report the Deputy DSL, and, if they aren't available, the most senior member of staff they can find. If, in exceptional circumstances, nobody else is available, staff should contact the local safeguarding referral agency directly or the police in an emergency. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

If the concern implicates the DSL, the matter should be discussed with the DST or the Chair of Trustees. If staff are working within another organisation, they should also report to the DSL of that organisation. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

When reporting, Children's University Trust staff should supply the DSL with a verbal account of what happened which can allow the DSL to ask specific questions as necessary. Staff should then record the

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incident by email and send this to the DSL as soon as they can (do not put the name of the child in the email header). After reporting, possible options for action could then be:

- *Encourage the setting to monitor and carry on recording incidents and take no further action at the present time.*

If it is decided that a referral should not be made at the current time, it may be important to monitor the child's behaviour closely and carefully record any further concerns.

- *Discuss with parents, schools and/or other agencies*

Parents, schools and/or other agencies could be contacted at the earliest opportunity to ascertain if there is a known reason for the concern (e.g. a change in family make-up, death of family member). The conversation can be carried out by the DSL or the staff member, whichever is deemed most appropriate. Children's University Trust may need to take no further action in terms of referring after this discussion. The discussion will need to be recorded, including why the Trust is not referring further if that is the case. If staff have concerns that either the child needs more support, but concerns do not reach thresholds, early intervention can be sought directly through seeking help from external agencies. If, after discussion with the parents, schools and/or other agencies, staff feel that the child is in need of safeguarding services, they must be referred to local referral agencies or the Police on the same day the concern was noted.

- *Refer*

Referral means sharing information about concerns with outside agencies. A safeguarding referral is normally carried out by a DSL, but any member of staff can refer. If a child already has a social worker, the referral should be made directly to the social worker. Otherwise a child can be referred to a safeguarding referral agency in the following ways:

- **Only if Children's University Trust is the best placed agency to make the referral** Inform parents that the child will be referred to the local safeguarding referral agency IF IT IS BELIEVED THAT DOING SO PUTS THE CHILD AT NO FURTHER RISK. It is important to make the parents understand that there is a policy in place which must be followed. Staff should tell the parent that our safeguarding policies are designed to provide protection for children and help for parents.
- **Only if Children's University Trust is the best placed agency to make the referral** Discuss with the local safeguarding referral agency without informing the parents, IF IT IS BELIEVED THAT DISCUSSING WITH A PARENT WILL PUT A CHILD OR THEM AT FURTHER RISK. If parents haven't been informed, the local safeguarding referral agency will want to know the reasons why.

Note: The local referral agency can be contacted to discuss the family without giving contact details of the family. This is called an 'anonymized enquiry'. Staff will be required to identify themselves as professionals while making an anonymized enquiry. An anonymized enquiry can also be made to the NSPCC, or the Police on 101.

- *Contact the Emergency Services*

Children's University Trust staff and the DSL may feel, after discussion, at this stage it is appropriate to contact the emergency services at once (see 4.5 below).

Whatever the course of action decided upon on after reporting a concern, the details of the meeting and any action agreed must be recorded by the DSL.

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If, after a referral, Children's University Trust may decide to check that the child has indeed been referred. Any serious concerns encountered during the course of any visit will be followed up by the Trust's DSL.

4.6 Emergencies

In some instances, Children's University Trust staff may be the first to recognise that a child may need immediate attention resulting from abuse. The emergency procedure can also be applied if the member of staff feels that the child is in immediate danger. Depending on the circumstances Trust staff may need to:

- Telephone for an ambulance or the police (dial 999)
- Ask a doctor to call
- Ask a parent or another professional to take the child to the doctor or the hospital at once
- Offer to take the child to the hospital/surgery/clinic for immediate medical attention as appropriate; and/or
- Take the child to the hospital/surgery/clinic anyway.

It is important to remember that a child is the legal responsibility of parents or a guardian and that that person must be involved in the matter as soon as practicable, and IF IT IS BELIEVED THAT DOING SO PUTS THE CHILD AT NO FURTHER RISK. Having taken the necessary emergency action, any suspected abuse must be reported to the DSL. A record of an account of the emergency must be written retrospectively when it is possible to do so.

4.7 Safeguarding concerns and allegations

Children's University Trust acknowledges that people may target our charity in order to gain access to vulnerable children. People may abuse a position of trust they hold within a charity. We are committed to practicing an ongoing culture of vigilance within our charity that questions poor behaviour in adults and has high expectations of safer conduct. The following signs and symptoms may mean that Children's University Trust staff or Trustees are involved in abuse:

- Paying an excessive amount of attention to children
- Providing presents, money or having favourites
- Seeking out particularly vulnerable children
- Trying to spend time alone with a particular child or group of children on a regular basis
- Making inappropriate sexual comments
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed; and/or
- Encouraging secretiveness.

There may be occasions where an individual only feels comfortable raising a concern anonymously and the Trust will always take such concerns seriously. However, anonymous concerns make investigation difficult. Also, it can be difficult to assess the extent to which the matter has been raised in 'good faith'. Therefore, there may be instances where, having seriously considered the concern and taken all information available into account, the Trust may not be able to pursue an anonymous concern. This policy, therefore, encourages individuals to disclose their identity to those who need to know it; this ensures a thorough investigation and that the matter is dealt with appropriately. It also enables feedback to be provided.

Concerns and safeguarding concerns and allegations about the behaviour of Children's University Trust staff towards any child on any occasion should be directed to the CEO/DSL on the same day that it is noted. ***Staff who have concerns or who have been informed of inappropriate behaviour by other staff must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.***

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Where there is a complaint or allegation against a member of Children's University Trust staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a safeguarding agency investigation; and/or
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and safeguarding agency investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

The CEO must seek to clarify the nature of the concerns by asking the following about the staff member who is the subject of the allegation:

- have they behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child?
- have they possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child?
- have they behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child which may have indicated the he or she is unsuitable to work with children?

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue. If it appears that there is a case of suspected abuse towards a child, the CEO/DSL should contact the DST and the local authority Designated Officer (DO) at the earliest opportunity. Children's University Trust will ensure that local authorities are given all the assistance they require in pursuing any investigation in these situations. The DO should be given a signed and dated written record of the concerns. Trust staff should maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being considered or investigated and follow local information sharing protocols. The CEO/DSL should then follow advice on how to deal with the allegation, including the possibility of staff suspension. The CEO/DSL engaged in 'accused person' liaison shall maintain an accurate log of contacts, timings, matters discussed and advice given. At no time should they discuss blame or any forthcoming case or proceedings.

If the allegation of abuse towards a child by a member of Children's University Trust staff is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the Trust ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the DO will discuss with us whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of inclusion on the barred lists is required. There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS and to the Charity Commission, where they think that an individual has engaged in conduct (including inappropriate sexual conduct) that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, Children's University Trust should review the circumstances of the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the Trust's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This should include issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified.

4.8 Support to staff

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery of abuse or another welfare concern will raise concern amongst staff. Children's University Trust assures all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns. The Trust will also ensure that supervision and support is available both during and following an incident or allegation. In the most serious cases, it may be possible to access counselling. Children's University Trust staff may also be subject to safeguarding concerns and allegations of abusing children which may involve suspension. During suspension, the

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member of staff will be offered support in the form of a person within the Trust who will be named to act as a contact point (this will be another manager other than the person who currently line manages them). If the accused person is subsequently exonerated, then their re-entry into work should be carried out with care. Whilst every effort should be made to manage this process with common sense and compassion. It will not be an easy situation to resolve, and the CEO/DSL will seek advice.

4.9 Confidentiality

The law does not allow anyone to keep concerns relating to abuse to themselves and confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of the information will prejudice the welfare of the child. Children's University Trust staff have a responsibility to share relevant safeguarding information with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies. Any information sharing will be done in line with statutory guidance. It is important to remember there can be significant consequences to not sharing information as there can be to sharing. Children's University Trust staff must use their professional judgement to decide whether to share or not, and what information is appropriate. A record of what information has been shared, with whom, the date and why should be kept. Parents must submit a written request to access their child's safeguarding records and sharing confidential information with them will not take place by Children's University Trust if doing so would put the child at significant risk. In the event of an investigation, it is essential that no information on any safeguarding concerns relating to a child or Children's University Trust staff member is disclosed inappropriately. Any such leaks could have serious consequences for both the people concerned and any investigation. It is very important that only those who need to know actually know, to avoid rumours and gossip that could affect those personally involved and Children's University Trust.

4.10 Recruitment of staff

Children's University Trust recognises that some people who seek to abuse children will also seek employment which brings them into contact with them. We adhere to safer recruitment procedures as set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023). All Children's University Trust staff, unsupervised volunteers and Trustees working directly with children or with access to information about children will undertake pre selection checks which should be recorded on our Single Central Record (SCR). A statement about commitment to safeguarding should be incorporated in any job advert and applicants will be supplied with links to this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. At least one Safer Recruitment trained staff member or Trustee will be appointed to recruitment panels. Children's University Trust will ensure that, when requesting references for a paid or unpaid member of staff, the following paragraph will be included: *"In commenting on the applicant, please bear in mind that it is the organisation's duty to protect children from harm and any information relating to their suitability for this work should be disclosed"*. At interview, candidates will always be required to explain questions arising from their references. More detailed information on Safer Recruitment procedures appears in our Recruitment and Selection Policy. Existing Children's University Trust staff will be encouraged to join the DBS update services to allow checks to be made as necessary.

4.11 Complaints

External agencies, parents or members of the public should use our Complaints Policy to raise concerns about safeguarding issues within Children's University Trust. Staff and Trustees who have concerns about institutional abuse within the Trust should use the Whistleblowing policy. Any safeguarding concerns and allegations about Children's University Trust staff or volunteers should use the safeguarding concerns and allegations procedures stated above. Any accusations of institutional abuse and/or mishandling of safeguarding concerns and allegations by management should be made using the Whistleblowing policy.

4.12 Partnership working

Children's University Trust is committed to due diligence when working with other organisations. We will make sure they are suitable by having appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and that there are

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clear lines of responsibility and reporting between all bodies involved. We will have written agreements in place that will set out our safeguarding expectations, and monitoring and reporting arrangements (see Children's University Trust Membership Agreement and Member Organisation Minimum Standards).

4.13 Escalation and professional challenge

Occasionally situations arise when professionals feel that a safeguarding decision made by someone else is not safe. Disagreements could arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around:

- levels of need
- roles and responsibilities
- the need for action; and
- communication.

Staff at Children's University Trust should feel able to challenge decision-making in regard to safeguarding with other agencies and to see this as their right and responsibility in order to promote best practice. An escalation and professional challenge policy aims to provide workers with the means to raise concerns they have about decisions made by other professionals or agencies by:

- avoiding professional disputes that put children at risk or obscure the focus on the child
- resolving the difficulties within and between agencies quickly and openly; and
- identifying problem areas in working together where there is a lack of clarity and to promote the resolution via amendment to protocols and procedures.

Effective working depends on an open approach and honest relationships between professionals. Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children. The safety of individual children is the paramount consideration in any professional disagreement and any unresolved issues should be addressed with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the child. Resolution should therefore be sought within the shortest timescale possible to ensure the child is protected. Disagreements should be resolved at the lowest possible stage, however if there is a risk of immediate harm discretion should be used as to which stage is initiated.

If the disagreement is between a Children's University Trust staff member and their manager then the staff member should consider our Grievance Procedure.

4.14 Support for children and families

In minor incidents it may only be necessary for Children's University Trust staff and member organisations to offer help, advice and support to children and families affected by safeguarding concerns. In cases where matters have been referred to the police or the local safeguarding referral agencies, these agencies have, or regularly call upon, support agencies and groups who will help children and families through this traumatic part of their life. Referral agencies may be consulted, and agreement made regarding this delicate process.

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5. Safeguarding information: different welfare concerns and risks to children

It is not possible to identify all the risks to children; however, Children's University Trust feels strongly that some attempt to identify those risks currently apparent should be made.

The following list is a guide to the sort of issues that give rise to concern.

5.1 Bullying including cyber bullying

Bullying can seriously damage confidence and self-esteem and lead to serious and prolonged emotional damage. Those who conduct the bullying or witness it can also experience emotional harm. Bullying is therefore a key safeguarding concern. It is important that incidents of bullying are distinguished from isolated incidents. Bullying is considered to be repeated violence, mental or physical, conducted by an individual or a group and directed against other individuals and can take place between children, between children and staff, or between staff. Bullying can occur for a variety of reasons, all of which should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately. Bullying may also occur outside of Children's University Trust activities, or through social networking sites.

There are a number of signs that may indicate that someone is being bullied:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and / or becoming withdrawn, clinging, depression, tearful, emotionally up and down, absenteeism
- a drop off in performance
- physical signs such as; stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, or damaged clothes
- bingeing for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol; and
- shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within our Children's University network. If bullying does occur, victims should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. More information can be found in our Antibullying and Online Safety policies.

5.2 Child Criminal Exploitation (County Lines)

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the Police should be considered. County lines exploitation:

- can affect any child (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Criminal exploitation is a form of abuse and extremely serious. Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.3 Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (CSE)

CSE 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 child under the age of 18 into sexual

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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. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Signs of CSE in a child include:

- unexplained gifts or new possessions
- association with other children involved in exploitation
- older boyfriends or girlfriends
- sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- changes in emotional well-being
- misuse of drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly missing sessions.

Some children are groomed through a partner who then forces them into having sex with others. On rare occasions children can be trafficked over different parts of the country by organised gangs of exploiters. Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse and extremely serious. Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.4 Children Missing Home or Care

When a child goes missing or runs away they are at risk. Children may run away from a problem, such as abuse or neglect at home, or to somewhere they want to be, or they may have been coerced to run away by someone else. There are particular concerns about the links between children and the risks of sexual exploitation. Missing children may also be vulnerable to other forms of exploitation, to violent crime, gang exploitation, or to drug and alcohol misuse. Children in Care missing from their placements are particularly vulnerable. The police will prioritise all incidents of children categorised as 'missing' from home or care as medium or high risk, depending on the circumstances and the vulnerability of the child. When a child is found, the attitude of professionals towards them can have a big impact on how they will engage with subsequent investigations and protection planning. However "streetwise" they may appear, they are children and may be extremely vulnerable to multiple risks. A supportive approach, actively listening and responding to a child's needs, will have a greater chance of preventing them from going missing again and safeguarding them against other risks.

5.5 Children Missing Sessions

Sometimes children who are regularly attending Children's University validated activity sessions may stop turning up with no satisfactory explanation. Action at a local level via the Learning Provider/Destination should be considered to contact the school or parent for more information.

5.6 Children and the Courts

Children are sometime required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Making arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service which may be useful for some parents.

5.7 Children with Family Members in Prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

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5.8 Contextual Safeguarding

Children's University Trust staff must be able to spot the risks of abuse facing children outside the domestic sphere. This is known as contextual safeguarding, or considering the wider environmental factors present in a child's life that may pose a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that Children's University provides them as much information as possible as part of the referral process when called to do so. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

5.9 Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA)

DVA is the abuse of one person over another who is, or has been, in a relationship. The abuse may be verbal, sexual, physical, emotional or financial, and is usually, but not exclusively, perpetrated by men against women. It occurs in all groups and sections of society and may be experienced differently to, and compounded by racism, sexuality, disability, age, religion, culture or class. The current government definition describes DVA as:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate members or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.' Source: Home Office, *Domestic Violence: A National Report (2012)*.

Children's University Trust is committed to supporting the wellbeing and safety of its staff and children participating in Children's University and acknowledges the profound and damaging effects of DVA on them. Children are always damaged by living or witnessing DVA. It is estimated that 90% of children are in the same or next room when abuse occurs. Children over the age of 16 (and younger) may also experience DVA within their own relationships. We are committed to taking positive action against DVA and to actively support victims and to protect children affected by it. Children's University Trust will work towards creating an environment that raises awareness of DVA, and communicates to children that Children's University is a safe place to ask for help.

Children's University Trust staff should be able to recognise the signs of DVA, which include:

- victim tries to hide injuries, or minimises their extent or cause, appears frightened, overly anxious or depressed and/or is submissive or afraid to speak in front of others
- victim always attends unnecessarily and may refuse to leave, and/or may be aggressive or dominant; and
- children showing the signs and symptoms of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect.

If they suspect DVA, Children's University Trust staff should take the initiative and ask direct questions to suspected victims and not assume someone else will ask about it. They must always be guided by the need to keep a victim safe, and the fact that everyone who is being abused by someone close to them is the subject of a crime. Staff should never ask about DVA when anybody else from the family is present; this includes staff, children or other family members. Children or other family members should never be used as interpreters. Staff should never accept culture or religion as an excuse for DVA. They should think of the DVA conversation as the start of the process, not a one-off event, as not all victims are going to open up the first time they realise that someone thinks that they are being abused. A victim might deny or play down DVA as part of a coping mechanism. Staff should accept 'no' as an answer and continue to be supportive, and if possible discreetly offer a leaflet with helpline numbers. They should be prepared to ask again in the future.

If the Trust has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to a local Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) who can refer to the local MARAC, or to the Police. If

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Children's University Trust staff have concerns about the safety of children exposed to DVA, they should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.10 Drugs

'Drugs' are taken here to mean substances that are illegal for children, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD and illegally supplied prescription drugs etc. Possession and/or use of drugs by anyone at Children's University Trust is inappropriate. In incidents involving drugs, action will proceed as follows:

1. Any medical emergencies will be dealt with accordingly
2. Children's University Trust staff can search (outer clothing or possessions) for any item if the person agrees. There must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if at all possible, they should be the same sex as the person being searched (unless where there is a reasonable belief that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff)
3. Staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search which they consider harmful or prohibited. Any illegal drugs or suspected drugs discovered must be delivered to the police as soon as possible but may be disposed of if there is a good reason to do so.

In cases of drug misuse or supply within the Children's University Network:

By a child: the case will be discussed with the child and a written record taken. If a child admits to using or supplying substances, the appropriate action will be to inform the DSL at the appropriate premises who will inform the parents. The DSL at the appropriate premises must then decide the appropriate action.

By an adult: safeguarding services will be informed by the DSL. Advice will be taken from these services and implemented as necessary.

While there is no legal obligation to inform the police, they may also be involved at the discretion of premises/activity staff who may know the child well.

5.11 Early Help

Early Help for children has been defined as *'providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early Help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.'* Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

Children's University Trust should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation

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- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited; and
- is a privately fostered child.

It is important that children in need of early intervention receive this support in a timely fashion to prevent the escalation into abuse and to lessen the risk of harm or impairment. Children's University Trust aims to work with existing services to prevent families reaching crisis point by working with those that are struggling at an early stage.

5.12 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children and children at risk. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs and symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'; Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Emotional abuse is extremely serious and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.13 Fabricated and Induced Illness Syndrome (FIIS)

FIIS is a form of mental disorder in a parent, usually the mother. Children's University Trust staff may be concerned at the possibility of a child suffering significant harm as a result of having illness fabricated or induced by their carer. Possible symptoms observed may include:

- discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions, such as the incidence of fits
- attendance at various hospitals, in different geographical areas
- development of feeding/eating disorders, as a result of unpleasant feeding interactions
- child developing abnormal attitudes to their own health
- non organic failure to thrive - a child does not put on weight and grow and there is no underlying medical cause
- speech, language or motor developmental delays
- dislike of close physical contact
- attachment disorders
- low self-esteem
- poor quality or no relationships with peers because social interactions are restricted

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- poor attendance; and
- parent (likely to be the mother) who expresses an unnatural concern for the health or welfare of their child.

FIIS is a form of abuse and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.14 Faith Abuse

Faith abuse is abuse linked to faith or belief. This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. Faith abuse is not confined to one faith, nationality or ethnic community. Examples have been recorded worldwide among Europeans, Africans, Asians and elsewhere as well as in Christian, Muslim, Hindu and pagan faiths among others. Faith abuse is extremely serious and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.15 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of physical abuse against children. FGM is also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. FGM has no health benefits. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue and interferes with the natural functions of girls' and women's bodies. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is new-born, during childhood, adolescence, at marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, in the majority of cases FGM takes place between the ages of 5-8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk. It can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, infertility as well as complications in childbirth. They can also often suffer severe psychological trauma, including flashbacks and depression.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 made it illegal to: practice FGM in the UK; take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country; and aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad. In 2015 the Serious Crime Act came into force and with it new legal powers to deal with FGM. 'Regulated' professionals (including teachers) now have the statutory duty to report to police any instance where they 'discover' that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. Anyone who fears that someone is at risk of FGM can apply to a family court for a FGM Protection Order. This includes people who think they could be victims themselves or who are already victims, local authorities, teachers, doctors, social workers or other third parties. FGMPOs will help to safeguard girls who are at risk of FGM at home or abroad. If the court makes a FGMPO, the specific conditions could include confiscating passports or travel documents to prevent girls from being taken abroad, or stopping someone from bringing a 'cutter' to the UK for the purposes of committing FGM on a girl. Signs that a child or child may be at risk of FGM could be: child is female, from a culture where FGM is practised, and an extended summer holiday to the country of origin is imminent. FGM is a form of abuse and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.16 Forced Marriage and so-called Honour Based Violence

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. When either party is under 18 it is child abuse and should always be treated as such. The terms 'honour crime', 'izzat' or 'honour-based violence' embrace a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women), including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining

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what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing against this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the 'shame' or 'dishonour' of the family. If there are concerns that a child (male or female) is in danger of a forced marriage, staff should report to the DSL on the same day the concern is noted. All those involved should bear in mind that mediation as a response to forced marriage can be extremely dangerous. Refusal to go through with a forced marriage has, in the past, been linked to so-called 'honour crimes' including murder, rape and serious physical and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is a form of abuse and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.17 Gangs and youth violence

Staff may observe early warning signs that children may be at risk of getting involved in gangs and gang culture, which can quickly escalate and become entrenched. Staff worried about a child being involved in, or at risk from gangs can call the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 for more information. The police should always be informed if the child is in possession of a knife or other weapon.

5.18 Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers may be male or female and could be any age. Many children don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust. They may also try to gain the trust of the whole family so they can be alone with the child. Groomers do this by:

- pretending to be someone they are not
- offering advice or understanding
- buying gifts
- giving the child attention
- using their professional position or reputation
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays; and
- using secrets and intimidation to control children.

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child from friends or family and making them feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make the child believe they have no choice but to do what they want. Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten their victim. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse. Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a child. They can spend time learning about a child's interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship. It's easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become 'friends' with children they are targeting. Groomers may look for:

- usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning; and/or
- public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable.

Groomers don't always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of children and wait to see who responds. Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity. Grooming children in order to abuse them is extremely serious and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.19 Hate Crime

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Children can be vulnerable to negative, extremist views. Children's University aims to be a place that inspires and engages young minds. We believe in democracy and the laws of the country, where every individual has a voice that is heard and respected, no matter what their faith or belief. We value discussion, debate and learning from others. We recognise that Hate Speech is a crime and believe that there is no place for extremism in our organisation.

5.20 Hidden Harm

Hidden Harm refers to children who are affected by their parents' drug or alcohol abuse, domestic abuse and mental illness. Parental problems can and do cause serious harm to children at every age from conception to adulthood. Effective treatment of the parent can have major benefits for the child. By working together, services can take many practical steps to protect and improve the health and well-being of affected children.

5.21 Historical abuse

There may be occasions when a child or adult will disclose abuse which occurred in the past, termed historical abuse. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current abuse as the abuser may still represent a risk to children now. Historical abuse is extremely serious and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.22 Homelessness

Being homeless, or being at risk of becoming homeless, presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- household debt
- rent arrears
- DVA and anti-social behaviour
- as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

Children's University Trust aims to work with existing services to prevent families reaching crisis point by working with those that are struggling with homelessness at an early stage.

5.23 Invisible children

Children's University Trust staff need to be aware of children who may not be known to services. There are children who may be 'trafficked' and many cases of neglect and abuse involve children from other countries. Children who are invisible to services are extremely vulnerable. Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.24 Medical Conditions

Children's University Trust encourages our member organisations to make themselves aware of any medical conditions affecting the children in their care and work with parents to ensure that children's needs are addressed appropriately.

5.25 Mental health and resilience

To help children to succeed, Children's University Trust has a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. We encourage our member organisations to intervene early to support children experiencing difficulties in mental health.

5.26 Neglect

Neglect is defined as 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

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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.

Signs and symptoms of neglect include:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care; and
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

Neglect is a form of abuse and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.27 Online Abuse

Children's University Trust recognises Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is now an integral part of children's lives and provides them with access to a wide range of information and increased opportunities for instant communication and social networking. Using ICT can benefit children's education and social development, but it can also present several risks. Children are often unaware that they are as much at risk online as they are in the real world, and professionals may not be aware of the actions they can take to protect them. Children's University Trust is committed to developing an effective approach to online safety to empower staff and our member organisations to protect and educate children in their use of IT and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate. More information is available in our Online Safety Policy.

5.28 Peer Abuse

Children's University Trusts recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, and can manifest itself in many ways, including sexting, online abuse, bullying and cyber bullying and sexual abuse. We recognise that peer abuse is frequently gendered. Girls are more likely to be sexually touched or assaulted and boys are more likely to be subject to initiation/hazing type violence. Accordingly concerns of peer-on-peer abuse will be taken extremely seriously and investigated and dealt with. Peer abuse is extremely serious and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.29 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is 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. Signs and symptoms of physical abuse include:

- children with frequent injuries
- children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- children with unexplained bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; or bite marks.

Physical abuse is extremely serious and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.30 Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made without the involvement of a local authority for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close

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relative, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child. Private fostering arrangements can be a positive response from within the community to difficulties experienced by families but nevertheless privately fostered children can be very vulnerable. Overarching responsibility for the welfare of the privately fostered child remains with the parent but it is the duty of local authorities to satisfy themselves that children who are privately fostered within their area are satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted. Trust staff should report to the DSL if they become aware of a private fostering arrangement.

5.31 Race and Racism

Children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (and their parents) are likely to have experienced harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism. Although racism causes significant harm it is not, in itself, a category of abuse. However, this may be categorised as emotional abuse under child protection procedures. Racism is extremely serious and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.32 Radicalisation

Children's University Trust complies with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism", known as the Prevent duty. The Prevent Duties for registered settings include:

1. Identifying children who may be vulnerable to radicalization
2. Aware of what to do when vulnerable children are identified
3. Promoting fundamental British values and challenging extremist views
4. Offering appropriate training and development.

Extremism is defined in the 2015 Prevent Duty Guidance as:

'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.'

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Children's University Trust has a clear approach to implementing the Prevent duty and keeping children and staff safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. We tackle any instances of discrimination and aim to be alert to potential risks from radicalisation and extremism. The promotion of equality, diversity and fundamental British values is at the heart of our work and they are demonstrated through all our practice. Fostering fundamental British values means actively promoting democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values are embedded in our day-to-day work. We will aim to build children's resilience by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and take part in decision-making. We will challenge extremism in our work with children. The Children's University Network undertakes due diligence to ensure that visiting speakers are appropriate, supervised at all times and not allowed to speak to children without a member of staff being present. Staff must not invite speakers into sessions without first obtaining permission from the DSL. We ensure that our member organisations are clear about their Prevent duties.

Children's University Trust is aware of the increased risk of the radicalisation of people through the use of social media and the internet. Those at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children and adults who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation

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by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that children can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising racist, anti-Western or anti-British views; and
- advocating violence towards others.

Children's University Trust staff with concerns of radicalisation should contact the DSL the same day the concern is noted. The DSL should contact the local referral agency and the police to find out whether a Channel referral may be appropriate. The Channel programme is part of Prevent - early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. If there is a terrorist related emergency, Trust staff should contact the police immediately.

5.33 Sexting

'Sexting' is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. There are many reasons why a child may want to send a naked or semi-naked picture, video or message to someone else. These reasons include:

- joining in because they think that 'everyone is doing it'
- boosting their self-esteem
- flirting with others and testing their sexual identity
- exploring their sexual feelings
- to get attention and connect with new people on social media; and/or
- they may find it difficult to say no if somebody asks them for an explicit image, especially if the person asking is persistent.

Sexting is often seen as flirting by children who feel that it is a part of normal life, but in fact it is a crime. The law in the UK currently states that the creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. As of January 2016, if a child is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action is not in the public interest. In addition, crimes recorded this way are unlikely to appear on future records or checks, unless the child has been involved in other similar activities which may indicate that they are a risk. Sexting is extremely serious and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.34 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child 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

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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. Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Sexual abuse is extremely serious and Children's University Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.35 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and children at risk. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Children's University Trust staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. As is always the case, if Trust staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the DSL.

5.36 Trafficking and modern slavery

Modern slavery is a serious crime. It encompasses slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery victims can often face more than one type of abuse and slavery, for example if they are sold to another trafficker and then forced into another form of exploitation. A person is trafficked if they are brought to (or moved around) a country by others who threaten, frighten, hurt and force them to do work or other things they don't want to do. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1958, states that: "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

Signs of trafficking include people who are:

- not in possession of a passport, identification or travel documents
- acts as if instructed or coached by someone else or allows others to speak for them when spoken to directly
- recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job
- transport paid for by facilitators, whom they must pay back through providing services
- receives little or no payment for their work - someone else was in control of their earnings
- forced to perform sexual acts
- does not have freedom of movement
- threatened with harm if escapes
- under the impression they are bonded by debt, or in a situation of dependence

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- harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities
- cannot freely contact friends or family; and
- limited social interaction or contact with people outside their immediate environment.

There is no typical victim of slavery. Victims can be men, women and children of all ages and cut across the population, but it is normally more prevalent amongst the most vulnerable, minority or socially excluded groups. The Home Office predicts that there may be as many as 13,000 victims in the UK alone. Trafficking and modern slavery is extremely serious and Trust staff who have a concern should contact the DSL the same day they become aware of it.

5.37 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

VAWG covers a range of unacceptable and deeply distressing crimes, including domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence and child sexual abuse, stalking, so called 'honour-based' violence - including forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), gang related violence, and human trafficking. Children's University Trust recognises that these crimes are disproportionately gendered. Violence can affect women and girls regardless of their age, race or religion, their socioeconomic background, sexual orientation or marital status. Violence takes place in every locality across the UK and can happen in relationships, in families, and in communities. Children's University Trust will work to ensure that awareness of VAWG is raised within our charity where possible.

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6. Useful contacts

In the event of an emergency call **999**.

If children may be at risk; including unborn children: contact the local referral agency – the contact details should be available online on the safeguarding partnership website where the child lives. If out of hours, and the situation is an emergency, consult the Emergency Duty Team of that area.

National Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) for adults concerned about a child
24 hour Helpline: 0800 800 5000 (free from a landline)
NSPCC Asian Languages Helpline: 0808 800 5000 (free from a landline)
NSPCC Text helpline: 88858 (service is free and anonymous)
Police: 101 (non-emergency calls)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP): www.ceop.police.uk

Childline, helpline for children who are being abused: 0800 1111 (open 24 hours)

7. Useful Documents and Links:

Charity Commission:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Charity Commission 'Automatic disqualification: Guidance for charities' (Aug 2018):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/automatic-disqualification-rule-changes-guidance-for-charities>

Charity Commission 'Charities: how to protect children and adults at risk' (Mar 18):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charities-how-to-protect-vulnerable-groups-including-children>

Charity Commission 'Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and Trustees' (Oct 18):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-Trustees>

Charity Commission 'Protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes' (Nov 18):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-charities-from-abuse-for-extremist-purposes/chapter-5-protecting-charities-from-abuse-for-extremist-purposes>

Charity Commission 'Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities' (Dec 2017):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>

DBS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Forward (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development), fighting FGM: 0208 960 4000

<http://www.forwarduk.org.uk>

'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children in education settings' (2019):

<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20May%202019%20final.pdf>

Information Sharing Guidance: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children and parents:

Children's University Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) statutory guidance for schools and colleges

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015) Easy to read summary of key safeguarding procedures:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), Department of Education:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e7501ab418ab055592a7b/Working_together_to_safe_guard_children_2023.pdf

Children's University Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

8. Appendices

Children's University Trust Member Organisation Minimum Safeguarding Standards

Safeguarding	Disseminate clear safeguarding policy and procedure standards.
	Ensure up to date and appropriate child protection/safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers and that they are confident to recognise abuse and other welfare concerns, record, report and, if necessary, refer to safeguarding agencies.
	Ensure a clear Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers is in place, together with clear procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns and allegations.
	Provide a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy to lead on safeguarding.
	Ensure that through positive interactions, all children can learn respect for themselves and for each other in a creative, safe and tolerant environment.
	Ensure that staff are aware of their statutory Prevent duties, including their duty to promote fundamental British values, challenge extremism and identify children and families who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
	Ensure that Safer Recruitment policies, checks and systems are in place, including maintenance of a Single Central Record for all staff and regulated volunteers.
	Ensure that there is a clear and agreed behaviour management policy in place, all staff and volunteers use appropriate behaviour management strategies, and that bullying and disrespectful behaviour between children and children are always appropriately challenged.
	Ensure that all premises used are safe and secure, with clear evacuation and lockdown procedures in place which are communicated to all.
	Ensure that the organisation works in partnership with relevant safeguarding organisations and fully understands its duty to cooperate to safeguard children.
	Ensure that there are robust internal recording and reporting arrangements in place in response to any welfare concerns.
	Ensure that the organisation has robust online safety systems in place to address online risks.