



Keynsham Town Council – Youth Service Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

This policy was reviewed and approved in November 2024

Introduction

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the South West Child Protection Procedures (available at [South West Child Protection Procedures \(proceduresonline.com\)](https://proceduresonline.com) and Working Together 2023

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Keynsham Town Council believes that the abuse or neglect of Young people is a serious violation of their human rights. We aim to provide and promote a safe environment for young people and other users participating in Keynsham Town Council Youth Service activities.
- 1.2 Our safeguarding culture is founded on best practice youth work that is focused on strengths, assets and dialogue with young people as well as risk or protective management.

Keynsham Town council is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all young people who use our services. We recognise that confidentiality is crucial in building trust with young people and ensuring their wellbeing.

Principles of Confidentiality

We respect the privacy of young people and their right to confidentiality. Information shared by a young person will be treated as confidential unless there are safeguarding concerns. All staff and volunteers are bound by this confidentiality policy.

Limits to Confidentiality

Confidentiality may be breached if:

- There is a risk of serious harm to the young person or others.
- There is evidence of criminal activity.
- The law requires disclosure.

Procedure for Sharing Information

If a staff member or volunteer believes confidentiality should be breached, they must consult with the designated safeguarding lead Abi Gray or Dawn Drury.

The young person should be informed if information is to be shared, unless doing so would increase risk.

¹ HM Government (2023). Working Together to Safeguard Children. A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Only relevant information should be shared, and only with appropriate agencies or individuals.

Data Protection

All personal information will be stored securely on Upshot and in compliance with data protection regulations.

Young people have the right to access their personal information held by the youth service.

Training and Implementation

All staff and volunteers will receive training on this confidentiality policy. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and up-to-date.

By implementing this policy, we aim to create a trusting environment where young people feel safe to share their concerns while ensuring their safety and wellbeing remain our top priority. See Keynsham Town Council confidentiality and data protection policy

1.3 This document outlines;

- Keynsham Town Council's policy on identifying and responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- This policy, with the associated procedures, provides guidance for all stakeholders, Councillors, staff, volunteers and contractors/individuals who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work or participation in regulated activities under the authority of Keynsham Town Council

1.4 The policy seeks to promote effective multi-agency working in light of the Children Act 2004 and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DofE 2023)*

1.5 Keynsham Town Council wishes to ensure that it maintains the highest possible standards to meet its social, moral and legal responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults with who come into contact with the Council through its Youth Service work or other activities, whilst recognising that it cannot act 'in loco parentis'. Ultimate responsibility will continue to rest with parents and guardians.

Definitions

2.1 This Policy covers children, young people and vulnerable adults defined as follows:

- Young People is defined by Keynsham Town Council as a person between ages 11 to 19 (or up to the age of 25 if they have special needs. In this document, Young People is used generically and includes children and vulnerable adults as defined below
- 'child' or 'children' refers to a person or persons under the age of 18 years (as defined in the Children Act 2004);
- 'vulnerable adult' is a person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

- Young people in the care system may require transitional safeguarding . Transitional Safeguarding aims to work with young people/adolescents and inform multi agency safeguarding practices across both Children's and Adults' Services. See The Care Act 2014.
- Safeguarding Disabled Children 2009 details important guidance when supporting young people with disabilities .

2.2 Agents of the Town Council is used to describe Councillors, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors who may be participating in regulated activities involving Young people under the authority to the Town Council

2.3 Regulated activity is defined as:

- any activity which involves contact with Young People and is of a specified nature (eg youth work, instruction, supervision, advice, or transport), or any activity allowing contact with Young People and is in a specified place (e.g. school, youth centre, uniformed organisation, voluntary groups etc) and
- the activity is frequent, intensive or overnight and
- the activity is wholly or mainly the role, and not merely incidental.

2.3.1. Frequent is defined as regular, repetitive activity once a week or more

2.3.2. Intensive means four or more days in any one 30-day period (e.g. field trips, summer schools)

2.4. Definitions of Abuse and Neglect can be found in Appendix 1.

3.0 Principles and Responsibilities

3.1 As part of our commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, Keynsham Town Council expects all stakeholders, officers, employees and volunteers who come into contact with children and young people under the authority of the Town Council, to comply with the policy and procedures.

3.2 We believe that all children have the right to be protected from harm and abuse and we will help children understand that it is their right to feel safe at all times.

3.3 We recognise that abuse occurs in all cultures, religion and social classes and that staff need to be sensitive to the many differing factors that need to be taken into account depending on the child's cultural and social background when dealing with child protection issues. However we also recognise that the needs of the child are paramount and any concerns will be referred on appropriately whatever the background of the child concerned.

- We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children and young people staff within the youth service are well placed to observe signs of abuse
- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses abuse may find it difficult to develop or maintain a sense of self worth, they may feel helpless and humiliated and feel self blame
- We recognise the youth service may be the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or are at risk of harm.

- We recognise that research shows behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived as normal to that which is overly aggressive, disturbed or withdrawn.
- We know that it is important that children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are sensitively listened to and they know that there are adults within the youth service they can talk to if they are worried or unhappy.
- We acknowledge that although all designated key staff have the skills and experience to respond to a variety of situations and issues there may be occasions where it will be appropriate to consider whether specific or additional arrangements need to be put in place where there is an issue that is particularly sensitive due to gender issues or cultural or faith issues. This ensures that in cases of sexual abuse in particular, young people can be spoken to by a same sex member of staff (who has received enhanced training) if this is felt to be appropriate.
- Protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation requires multi-agency join up and cooperation at all levels. Local organisations and agencies that work with children and families play a significant and often statutory role when it comes to safeguarding children.
- This guidance should be read in conjunction with Organisational Responsibilities which sets out the statutory duties as applied to individual organisations and agencies to promote the welfare of children and ensure they are protected from harm. [Organisational Responsibilities \(trixonline.co.uk\)](http://trixonline.co.uk)
- Keynsham Town Council will provide relevant training for all staff, Councillors and volunteers who work with young people including mandatory attendance at Safeguarding training courses offered at regular intervals by B&NES. Basic safeguarding training will be updated every 3 years & as and when necessary.
- The council will ensure that all Young People participating in Town activities are aware of a Code of Conduct towards each other and Agents of the Town Council, and will action under the Managing Challenging Behaviour & Sanctions policy if there is a breach of the Code.

3.4 Safer Recruitment

- Ensuring Safe recruitment
- Please also read the Safer Recruitment Policy
- Keynsham Town Council will ensure it operates a safe recruitment policy to ensure that all those working in the youth service are suitable to do so as far as can reasonably be ascertained.
- Senior leaders and any staff involved in selection procedures will attend safer recruitment training.
- Appropriate checks including checks against the barred list will be carried out on all employees and volunteers and all references will be taken up a verified.
- Keynsham Town Council will ensure it is following the most recent guidance in respect of these issues including taking into account the definition of regulated activity
- At interview, candidates will be asked of any gaps in their employment history

- Keynsham Town Council will implement appropriate action, including via disciplinary procedures, the Members & Officers Protocol or the Unacceptable Actions policy when in receipt of allegations of breaches of this policy by Agents of the Town Council.
 - Keynsham Town Council will ensure that the appropriate referral procedures are in place (to BANES children's social care services and/or the police or a vulnerable adult concern to BANES Adult Social Care Services and/or the Police) and that these are followed by Town Council staff when in receipt of concerns that a Young Person might be at risk of significant harm
- 3.5 All personal data will be processed by the Town Council in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 to be succeeded by the General Data Protection Regulations
- 3.5 The Youth Team Leader Abi Gray is the designated lead for Safeguarding on behalf of Keynsham Town Council and will work closely with the Town Clerk as the second designated Safeguarding professional of the Town Council
- 3.6 Photography - Young people may be photographed while participating in club events and activities. This will not be used in the public domain unless written permission from parents/guardians has been obtained via the member registration form
- 3.7 Protecting Agents of the Town Council
Keynsham Town Council recognises the importance of protecting its Councillors, staff and volunteers from possible allegations of abuse and recommends the following guidelines:
- Agents should not:
- Be alone with young people
 - Lock and unlock premises without another adult present
 - Transport young people in a car or mini bus without another adult being present
 - Take young people to their homes
 - Make inappropriate contact with young people i.e. develop relationships outside the club setting
 - Leave young people unattended
 - Leave young people in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained
 - Leave young people in the presence of adults not known to leaders
 - Leave young people in the presence of adults who have not had relevant DBS checks
 - Show favouritism to young people within the club.
- 3.8 Code of Conduct
Keynsham Town Council Youth Service adheres to the following guidelines as to how young people and adults interact with each other.
- Abusive behaviour and language, violence, aggression, bullying or discrimination will not be tolerated. Youth workers will respond quickly and effectively to any such reports which may result in the offender(s) being suspended from the provision.
 - No alcohol or other intoxicating substances will be consumed on the premises. Youth workers will refrain from consuming such substances prior to assuming responsibility for young people.
- **Supervision ratios**

There are no statutory defined staffing/supervision ratios for youth work and it is not possible or appropriate to provide definitive ratios for particular groups or activities. Many influencing factors relating to the specifics of the group and programme will affect what is appropriate in each case.

When making decisions about staffing requirements, all influencing factors should be taken into account, including the following:

- Staff/worker competence and familiarity with the proposed activities
 - The location and nature of the environment in which the programme or activity is planned
 - The specifics of the group including the size of the group and the age, gender, ability and needs (behavioural, medical, emotional and educational) of the young people
 - The nature of the planned activities and duration of the programme
 - The impact and consequences of a worker being unavailable at short notice or indisposed during the programme, and the feasibility of any contingency plans
- Young people are free to leave the centre activity when they wish
- Whilst youth centre members are encouraged to stay until the end of the sessions, staff are not able to detain members should they wish to leave earlier. This will be made clear to parents through the parental consent statement.

How to Report Concerns ;

Safeguarding Procedures

When taking and considering any action, the welfare of the young person is paramount.

If abuse is suspected:

Observations, conversations or concerns will be recorded, signed and dated.

The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Youth Team Leader Abi Gray or Town Clerk Dawn Drury.

The Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk will assess the information and contact the appropriate local statutory services e.g. schools/social services.

The local Threshold Protocol provides guidance about the criteria for making and receiving referrals. However, Working Together to Safeguard Children highlights that practitioners should be aware to the potential need for Early Help.

BANES Children's Social Care are always available for advice and guidance.

If abuse is reported/alleged:

If a child or young person discloses abuse or neglect to a member of staff or volunteer they must work to the Guidance in Appendix 2.

Briefly: The young person will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgment.

It will be explained that information may need to be shared in certain circumstances.

The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk.

A written account of the report or allegation will be made, signed and dated by two people and the information passed to the Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk.

The Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk will inform the appropriate statutory services.

If the matter is regarded as critical it should be referred immediately and directly to the Police and or BANES Children's Social Care and details of the referral passed to the Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk within 24 hours.

Allegations about Town Council Agents

If any allegation is made or suspicions emerge regarding any youth worker or volunteer, it should be reported to the Youth Team Leader or Town Clerk.

If an allegation concerns either of these officers, the report should be made to BANES Youth Connect or the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Bath & North East Somerset Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tel: 01225 396810. Information may then be requested to be sent to LADO@bathnes.gov.uk

If further action is required, the following procedure will apply during which all information relating to the allegation will remain confidential:

A detailed factual record of the allegation and action taken will be made

Information will be passed to the Chair of the Town Council who may contact LADO for advice Consideration will be given to the suspension of the person involved taking account of the risks to other young people and the leader concerned

If the allegation involves a youth service member, contact will be made with the young person's parents to advise them of the process

Relevant external bodies will be advised and may involve the LADO, Local Authority Designated Officer.

4.4. All completed Safeguarding reports are kept in a confidential folder. Only the Town Clerk, Youth Team Leader have access to this information.

Appendix 1: Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

1.1. Abuse & neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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

b) Emotional Abuse "Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone."

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

In addition; Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex (it is statutory rape) or any other type of sexual touching;

Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence;

It is an offence for a person to have a sexual relationship with a 16 or 17 year old if they hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them;

Where sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old does not result in an offence being committed, it may still result in harm, or the likelihood of harm being suffered;

Non-consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim; and

If the victim is incapacitated through drink or drugs, or the victim or their family has been subject to violence or the threat of it, they cannot be considered to have given true consent; therefore offences may have been committed;

Child sexual exploitation is therefore potentially a child protection issue for all children under the age of 18 years and not just those in a specific age group.

d) Neglect is 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 misuse, maternal mental ill health or learning difficulties or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent 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);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social and educational needs.

Childhood obesity alone is a concern but not usually a child protection concern. This can change in the context of escalating health concerns when the parents are not engaging with or seek to undermine the support being offered to them. Obesity usually exists in a wider context of concerns about neglect or emotional abuse so practitioners should consider what else is going on in the child's life.

These definitions are used when determining significant harm and children can be affected by combinations of maltreatment and abuse, which can be impacted on by for example domestic a abuse in the household or a cluster of problems faced by the adults.

- 1.2 Abuse affects children in many ways and the effects can emerge some considerable time after the actual event. These may be triggered by apparently unrelated incidents. Children may suffer from depression, post-traumatic stress, self-harming behaviour (more prevalent in adolescent females) and eating disorders. Behavioural difficulties may mask depression caused by abuse, particularly in boys. Workers working with children who self-harm should always bear in mind that they may have suffered from abuse.
- 1.3 It is accepted that, in all forms of abuse, there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children and young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.
- 1.4 Domestic Abuse It is widely acknowledged that domestic abuse within families can have a detrimental effect on the safety and well-being of children. An estimated third of domestic abuse starts or escalates during pregnancy. Children are affected not only in relation to witnessing domestic abuse but also by living in an environment where their parent and caregiver is repeatedly victimised. Children who are subjected to domestic abuse are at greater risk of being abused themselves. As well as the possibility of physical violence the children will almost certainly be subjected to emotional abuse. Referrals that involve incidents of domestic abuse need to be assessed in respect of the needs and safety of children. Consideration should be given to the need for joint interview and/or proceeding to child protection conference under the interagency child protection guidelines.
- 1.5 'Adults at risk of harm' If a young person is over 18 KTC will work to the definition of a 'adult at risk of harm' (see below) and will refer safeguarding concerns to Adult Social Care Services. A adult at risk of harm is someone who: • May be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and • Is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm. BANES Local Safeguarding Adults Board policy and competency framework will be followed and as required staff and volunteers will have level one training (awareness). If you suspect a adult is being abused or neglected the number to ring is; 01225 394200. You can report a concern via email; SafeguardingAdults@bathnes.gov.uk
- 1.6 Contextual Safeguarding; Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding young people from risks they might encounter beyond their families, i.e. in their schools, peer groups and neighbourhoods and is now noted in section 40-41 of Working Together to Safeguard Children. Keynsham Town Council Youth Service will follow BANES policies when responding to contextual safeguarding including all forms of exploitation outside of the home environment.
- See here for further details- <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures>
- 1.7 Children who go missing from home or care are particularly vulnerable and may be at risk at times. The immediate risks or associated risks associated with going missing include;
- * No means of support or legitimate income – leading to high risk activities
 - * Involvement in criminal activities
 - * Victim of Abuse
 - * Victim of crime for example sexual assault or exploitation
 - * Alcohol or substance misuse
 - * Deterioration of physical and mental health
 - * Missing out on schooling and education
 - * Increased vulnerability
 - * Knife Crime

- * Radicalisation
- * Longer Term Risks include;
- * Long term drug dependency
- * Crime
- * Homelessness
- * Disengagement from Education
- * Child sexual exploitation
- * Poor physical and or mental health

1.8 Child Sexual Exploitation; Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts and money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child Sexual Exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phone without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person will have power over them by virtue of age, gender. Not all victims are girls and not all perpetrators are men, intellect, physical strength and/or economic differences might all contribute to power imbalances within relationships which are felt to be indicative Child Sexual Exploitation. Abuse, coercion and intimidation are common; involvement in the exploitative relationships being characterized in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

1.9 The Home Office defines **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** as:

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.

Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation often happens alongside sexual or other forms of exploitation.

Child Criminal exploitation is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms, to commit theft, shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

1.10 Serious Youth Violence ; There is no national definition of serious violence. The national Serious Violence Strategy (April 2018), developed to address concerning rises in knife crime and homicide in inner-city areas, focuses on crimes related to the spread of exploitation by so-called 'county lines.' The Youth Justice Board has suggested that serious youth violence includes violent offences with high gravity score, including homicide, robbery, violence against the person and possession of drugs and/or weapons. The Early Intervention Foundation defines it as "community/public space violence committed by young people under the age of 25", while the World Report on Violence and Health defines it as "violence that occurs among individuals aged 10-29 years who may or may not know each other, and generally takes place outside of the home". Please read Knife Protocols guidance.

2; Childrens harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) Definition Sexual Behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally

inappropriate may be harmful towards themselves or others, and/or be abusive towards another child, young person or adult.

2.1 Radicalisation; The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Radicalisation can lead to development of extreme views including justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to being steered into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves people vulnerable to future radicalisation. It is not generally a single event, instead happening over a period of time during which a young person may be groomed and exploited into a new way of looking at the world. Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue.

Internet Abuse' relates to four primary areas of abuse to children:

- Sharing and production of abusive images of children (although these are not confined to the internet);
- A child or young person being groomed online for the purpose of Sexual Abuse;
- Exposure to pornographic images and other offensive material via the internet ; and
- The use of the internet, and in particular social media sites, to engage children in extremist ideologies or to promote gang related violence.

Social networking sites are often used by perpetrators as an easy way to access children and young people for sexual abuse. In addition radical and extremist groups may use social networking to attract children and young people into rigid and narrow ideologies that are intolerant of diversity: this is similar to the grooming process and exploits the same vulnerabilities.

Internet abuse may also include cyber-bullying or online bullying (see Bullying). This is when a child is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child using the internet and/or mobile devices. In the case of online bullying it is possible for one victim to be bullied by many perpetrators. In any case of severe bullying it may be appropriate to consider the behaviour as child abuse by another young person.

Sexting is a term which many young people do not recognise or use, therefore it is important that when discussing the risks of this type of behaviour with children and young people the behaviour is accurately explained.

Sexting (some children and young people consider this to mean 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know' rather than sharing youth-produced sexual images) or sharing nudes and semi-nudes are terms used when a person under the age of 18 shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows images and messages to be shared.

Sexting may not be criminally motivated and can be consensual, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend;

Share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age;

Possess, download or store an explicit image or video of a child, even if the child gave their permission for it to be created.

However, if a young person 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.

Appendix 2: Guidance for working with a child or young person that has disclosed abuse or neglect

2.1. Initial conversation

- Stay calm and approachable. Do not let your shock show.
- Listen very carefully to what is being said without interrupting.
- Explain that the information being given by the child or young person may need to be shared and passed on to others. Seek their permission. Do not in any circumstances agree to keep it a secret.
- Make it clear that you are taking them seriously and acknowledge how difficult this must be.
 - Allow the child or young person to speak at their own pace.
 - Reassure the child or young person that they are doing the right thing in telling you.
 - If you need to ask questions, then only ask questions for clarification. Avoid asking questions that suggest particular answers or are probing questions – you do not need to know all the details that is a job for the experts.
 - Let the child or young person know what will happen next, who you will report the information to, what will happen once it has been recorded.
 - Ask the young person what they want to happen as a result of sharing this information with you?
 - Record all the details of what was said using the exact wording of the child or young person on the Safeguarding Concern Form. Do not try to interpret any of the information yourself. Record details such as names mentioned, dates, times, who the information went to, what action was taken next on the incident/disclosure form. Don't

forget to sign it and if appropriate, ask the young person to read it, record any amendments/disagreements and sign it

- 2.2. If, after consultation, it is decided that the child or young person is not at immediate risk – (see Risk Factors to consider below), then confidentiality will be maintained and on-going support from KTC Youth Service offered, until the Young person feels empowered to take action themselves or gives KTC Youth Service permission to disclose.

2.3 Risk Factors to consider

- The severity of the neglect/abuse
- Category of concern: Physical; Sexual; Emotional; Neglect
- The duration & frequency of neglect/abuse
- The age/vulnerability of the child • The family context and previous history
- Siblings – Are there any other children in the family that may be at risk
- Child's development within the context of family, wider social and cultural environment.
- The adequacy of parental care
- The child's views, wishes, feelings and reactions
- Any special needs such as medical condition, communication difficulty or disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family
- The nature of the harm, in terms of ill-treatment or failure to provide adequate care
- The impact upon the child's health and development
- Associated physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- Reliability of concerns
- Other risk factors: mental health; substance misuse; social isolation.

2.4 If, after consultation, it is decided to break confidentiality without permission of the client, this will be done by the Youth Team Leader of the Town Clerk– see guidance below:

2.5 Breaching Confidentiality Guidance

In exceptional circumstances, the Youth Team Leader and/or Town Clerk may decide to break confidentiality. It is not Keynsham Town Council's role to investigate the concerns or to assess whether a child/young person has suffered abuse or significant harm.

In making this decision, it will be necessary to consider the following guidance questions (this is not exhaustive):

- Does the child/young person/someone else require immediate protection or medical treatment?
- Is the child/young person at immediate risk of harm?
- Is another child/young person at immediate or potential risk of harm?
- Are there younger siblings in the home that are, or may be, at risk?
- Are there other children/young people that visit the home? [or setting where the alleged abuse is/has occurred]
 - Have there been any previous concerns identified by staff/volunteers? [these should be recorded on previously completed childcare concern forms]
- Is this historic abuse? [i.e. how long ago did it happen? Are there any concerns that it could still be continuing with other children?]
- How have these concerns arisen? [e.g. disclosure by young person; observation from staff/volunteer; indirectly]
- Has the young person told anyone else about the concerns? If so, what has happened as a result of them sharing the concerns?
- Are there any other professionals involved in working with this young person/their family/others? If so, are they aware of the concerns?
- What support network does the young person have?
- What would the young person like to happen next?

Notes: (i). It is vital to take account of possible consequences of inappropriate or premature breach of confidentiality, which may result in the young person denying abuse, refusing to co-operate with Social Services or with Keynsham Town Council, or putting themselves at further risk (running away, attempting suicide).

(ii). If a Young Person discloses perpetrating sexual abuse or displays problematic and harmful sexual behaviours staff should immediately consult with the Youth team Leader and/or Town Clerk and agree next steps

(iii). All completed Safeguarding forms are kept in confidential file. Only the Town Clerk, Youth Team Leader and the Chairman of Personnel Committee have access to this information.

Signed (Chairman) 

Date 17th November 2024

Signed (Town Clerk) 

Date 19th November 2024

