

NEW WRITING NORTH

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose and scope

This policy applies to:

- All children, young people and adults at risk of harm (“Relevant Individuals”) involved in NWN’s activities whether in or outside of school, in community groups or as a member of an audience.
N.B. An adult at risk of harm is defined as an adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.
- All employees, trustees, creative practitioners, artists, volunteers, interns, and any other individual working on behalf of, or associated with NWN, (“Associated NWN Individuals”) whether they are directly or indirectly in contact with children.

The purpose of this policy is to enable NWN to:

- Ensure the safety of Relevant Individuals and Associated NWN Individuals who participate in activities and events organised by NWN. (Safety means an environment where all individuals are protected from maltreatment and the impairment of mental and/or physical health, and where all individuals are supported to have the best outcomes).
- Set out NWN’s commitment to meeting the needs of Relevant Individuals.
- Allow Associated NWN Individuals to take appropriate decisions with regard to the needs of Relevant Individuals.

NWN's Diversity and Inclusion policy pledges to eliminate discrimination and create an inclusive environment for our employees, audiences and communities. To do that we have to recognise and address structural racism and inequality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics and socio economic disadvantage and put in place a series of measures that disrupt the systems that have promoted this inequity. NWN is committed to ensuring that all Relevant Individuals have the same protection regardless of these factors. NWN will treat all Relevant Individuals equally, and with respect and dignity.

NWN recognises that some Relevant Individuals face barriers to engagement. NWN is committed to doing all that it can to reduce those barriers to ensure that everyone is afforded the same protection through NWN’s Safeguarding policy. NWN recognises that working in partnership with children, young people and adults at risk alongside their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting welfare.

Principles

Responsibilities of NWN's trustees

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- To ensure simple and appropriate procedures are in place for managing any concerns that Associated NWN Individuals have about Relevant Individuals.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To investigate all disclosures, observations and allegations of abuse.
- To understand, monitor, review and update this Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibilities of NWN's Employees

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To refer immediately any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Officer.
- To ensure that at all times, an identified Associated NWN Individual is present whilst NWN activity involving Relevant Individuals takes place.

Responsibilities of all Associated NWN Individuals

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- To undertake training as necessary to enable them to ensure this policy can be implemented.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To refer immediately any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Officer

Responsibilities of parents and consenting adults

- To be ultimately responsible for the Relevant individual's welfare at all times.

Implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is supported by other policies, procedures and processes within New Writing North including (but not limited to):

Equalities and Inclusion

Health and Safety

Employment Contracts

People and Policies Board Committee

Data Protection and Privacy

Risk Assessments

Procedure

NWN requires all Associated NWN Individuals to comply with the following Code of Conduct in order to ensure best practice.

Personal conduct and conduct in sessions

- Do not have inappropriate physical contact with any Relevant Individual.
- Do not use alcohol, drugs or any substance that may alter personality or impede judgement when working.
- Do not tolerate bullying in any shape or form, including but not limited to verbal, physical, social and cyber bullying.

- Do not give gifts or money to any Relevant Individual. If gifts are offered from a Relevant Individual to an Associated NWN Individual this must be declared immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.
- Do not meet up with any Relevant Individual outside of designated sessions, unless agreed in advance with the Safeguarding Officer who will confirm appropriate conditions. N.B. We are aware on occasion that freelancers may meet or have contact with Relevant Individuals as part of other delivery, or direct to fan marketing. This is acceptable provided the Safeguarding Officer is made aware of the interaction and it is separate to any NWN programmes. Please ask the Safeguarding Officer for further information on this if required.

Contacting Relevant Individuals and use of social media

- Do not give a personal phone number to any Relevant Individual.
- Do not give a personal email address to any Relevant Individual.
- Social media can be used to administer a project. To do this a project 'group' should be set up by the relevant programme manager and include at least two Associated NWN Individuals as administrators of the relevant platform. Associated NWN Individuals should not engage in direct personal social media contact with any Relevant Individual outside of such a group, and Associated NWN Individuals should not accept Relevant Individuals as "friends".

Use of work and images

- Do not use images of Relevant Individuals without written consent from parents/guardians.
- Any social media posts sharing work and images of Relevant Individuals should be from an official NWN account.
- Work produced by Relevant Individuals will only be used with the informed consent of its producer. Associated NWN Individuals will consider whether the Relevant Individual is capable of giving the necessary consent based on that individual's maturity, understanding, nature of consent required and content of the work and will obtain written consent from their parent/guardian where they consider the individual is not so capable.

Recording of Information

- Record any safeguarding concerns immediately using the format in the Appendix.

Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice

NWN is committed to ensuring a safeguarding culture within the organisation and the programmes that we run. In order to do this, NWN has in place the following procedures:

- NWN will publish the name of the Safeguarding Officer and the Safeguarding Policy and how to make a complaint on the NWN main and associated project websites.
- NWN will include on any consent forms how parents/guardians can access NWN's Safeguarding Policy.
- NWN will include on any consent forms how Relevant Individuals' data will be stored.

Disclosure and Barring Service

- NWN requests DBS checks for positions that bring Associated NWN Individuals into contact with Relevant Individuals.

- If it is not practical to wait for a DBS check to come through, or pay for one, an Associated NWN Individual with another organisation’s DBS will be accompanied by one who has been DBS checked by NWN
- NWN’s DBS applications are verified by a NWN programme manager, processed confidentially by North Tyneside Council’s DBS team and the information is tracked and securely stored by NWN’s Safeguarding Officer.

NWN’s main contacts for the purposes of safeguarding are:

Safeguarding Officer: Ruth Dewhirst, ruth@newwritingnorth.com, 0191 204 8850 / 07411 027 116

Trustee with lead responsibility for safeguarding: Joanna Ellis

Agreed by the Board	14 May 2021
Signed by the Chair of the Board	
Date of Review	May 2022 (to be reviewed annually)

Appendices:

- 1. Definitions of abuse (p.5-9)**
- 2. Dealing with concerns and making referrals guidance (p.10-11)**
- 3. Safeguarding concerns notification form (p.12-13)**
- 4. New starter emergency contact form (p.14-15)**
- 5. Example consent form (p.16-19)**
- 6. Flowchart of all steps taken during Safeguarding procedures**

Appendix 1: Definitions of abuse (as defined by the NSPCC, December 2017 but also applied to adults at risk of harm. Updated to include Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 recommendations).

What is child abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect can be just as damaging to a child as physical or sexual abuse.

Individuals suffering abuse usually know the person abusing them but it is also possible for strangers to abuse children, young people and adults at risk of harm. There is often more than one type of abuse experienced and the abuse usually happens over a period time, rather than being a single, isolated incident. Increasingly, abuse can happen online.

General signs of abuse

Individuals suffering abuse may be afraid to tell anybody. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend. Many of the signs of abuse are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children, young people or adults at risk of harm needs to be vigilant to:

- regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, for example someone raising a hand quickly
- showing an inexplicable fear of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- knowledge of ‘adult issues’ for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour which is inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards other people, animals or toys
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- self-harming or thoughts about suicide
- changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- risky behaviour such as substance misuse or criminal activity
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that abuse is taking place. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between family/carers/peers. In assessing whether signs are related to abuse or not, they need to be considered in the context of the child, young person or adult at risk of harm’s development and situation.

Physical abuse happens when a child, young person or adult at risk of harm is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It’s also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness. For example, they may give them medicine they don’t need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

We all trip, fall and have accidents which may cause cuts, bumps and bruises. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of the body such as elbows, knees and shins and are not usually a cause for concern.

If an individual is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation doesn't match the injury, this should be investigated. It's also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child, young person or adult at risk of harm who has been injured.

Neglect is persistently failing to meet a child, young person or adult at risk of harm's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve failure to: provide adequate food, clothing or shelter; supervise (including leaving them with unsuitable carers) or keep safe from harm or danger; make sure appropriate health and/or dental care is received; make sure a suitable education is received; meet the child, young person or adult at risk of harm's basic emotional needs – parents or carers may ignore children, young people or adults at risk of harm when they are distressed or even when they are happy or excited. This is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse. Neglect can also be present with children, young people or adults at risk of harm who have taken on the role of carer for other family members.

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child, young person or adults at risk of harm to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the individual may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact and includes: sexual touching of any part of the body whether the individual is wearing clothes or not; rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a individual's mouth, vagina or anus; forcing or encouraging an individual to take part in sexual activity; making an individual take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes: encouraging an individual to watch or hear sexual acts; not taking proper measures to prevent exposure to sexual activities by others; showing pornography to an individual; making, viewing or distributing child or adult at risk of harm abuse images; allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child or adult at risk of harm abuse images.

Online sexual abuse includes: persuading or forcing a child, young person or adult at risk of harm to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves (sometimes referred to as sexting); persuading or forcing a child, young person or adult at risk of harm to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone or having sexual conversations by text or online; meeting a child, young person or adult at risk of harm following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person or adult at risk of harm's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Changes in behaviour or mood may also cause concern, individuals may want to avoid spending time with specific people and may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age or situation.

Sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse. Young people and adults at risk of harm in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities. Individuals may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online. Some individuals are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators. It can be very difficult to identify.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) occurs when children, young people and adults at risk of harm harm themselves and others and can include: using sexually explicit words and phrases; inappropriate touching; using sexual violence or threats; full penetrative sex with other children or adults.

It's normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

Emotional abuse is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child, young person and adult at risk of harm's emotional health and development. It involves: humiliating, putting down or constantly criticising an individual; shouting at or threatening a child, young person or adult at risk of harm or calling them names; mocking an individual or making them perform degrading acts; constantly blaming or scapegoating a child, young person or adult at risk of harm for things which are not their fault; trying to control a child, young person or adult at risk of harm's life and not recognising their individuality; not allowing friendships or social development; pushing a child, young person or adult at risk of harm too hard or not recognising their limitations; manipulation; exposure to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse; persistently ignoring them; being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions; never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child, young person or adult at risk of harm and failing to praise achievements and successes.

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot signs in a child or adult at risk of harm's actions or emotions. It's important to remember that some are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate.

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or were in an intimate relationship. There are many different types of abusive behaviours that can occur within intimate relationships, including emotional, sexual, financial, psychological and physical abuse. Domestic abuse can be underpinned by an on-going pattern of

psychologically abusive behaviour (coercive control) that is used by one partner to control or intimidate the other partner. In situations of domestic abuse, both males and females can be abused or be abusers. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity.

Children's exposure to domestic abuse between parents and carers is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. The developmental and behavioural impact of witnessing domestic abuse is similar to experiencing direct abuse. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Bullying and cyberbullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. A definition of bullying can be found in NWN's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy. Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online (known as cyberbullying) it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. It can be hard to know whether or not a child is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might also think that the bullying is their fault.

Child trafficking involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another. Children are trafficked for: child sexual exploitation; benefit fraud; forced marriage; domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking; forced labour in factories or agriculture; criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft. Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect. Modern slavery is another term which may be used in relation to child trafficking.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016). Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is dangerous and a criminal offence.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity. This might be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some of the following can be indicators of CCE: children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions; children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation; children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being; children who misuse drugs and alcohol; children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas

within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children, young people and adults at risk of harm exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Appendix 2: Dealing with concerns and making referrals

NWN recognises it is not the role of any Associated NWN Individual to decide whether a Relevant Individual has been subjected to abuse or neglect. Associated NWN Individuals have an obligation to report any justified concerns regarding Relevant Individuals they are working with, especially when a disclosure has been made. The guidelines outlined below should be followed.

Dealing with Disclosures

A disclosure is when a Relevant Individual makes it known that they have been, or are currently being abused or neglected, that they are at risk of harm from others or from themselves, or that they may cause harm to another person.

A disclosure can be direct, indirect (verbal, written or graphic hints that appear to be about abuse) or third party (a Relevant Individual tells another person they are being abused).

If a Relevant Individual discloses to you, NWN requests the following procedure is followed:

Listen

- Listen and accept what is being said.
- Do not express verbally or non-verbally how it makes you feel (e.g. do not show upset or disgust). That is a separate issue for you to deal with later and NWN can provide support with this as required.
- Make notes.

Reassure

- Reassure the Relevant Individual as much as you can.
- It is important to let them know you take them seriously.
- Tell the Relevant Individual that you will help or will ensure they receive the help they need.
- Do not make false promises, such as 'I won't say anything', because you may need to pass the information on.

React

- React to the conversation only so far as is necessary for you to know whether a referral to Social Services is required.
- Do not ask leading questions such as 'Did they hit you?'. Instead, ask open-ended questions such as 'Is there anything else you would like to tell me?'
- Make it clear that it is your responsibility to pass on information.
- Make it clear what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Don't criticise the perpetrator who may be a family member or close to the child.
- Do not ask the Relevant Individual to repeat anything to other staff.

Write

- Write up notes in as full a way as possible, without throwing away any original notes.
- Use the Relevant Individual's words rather than your words for any body parts or activities described.

- Include the date, time, place, and any non-verbal behaviour the Relevant Individual displays whilst talking to you, for example moments of distress and when they occurred in the conversation.
- If there is any bruising or marks noticed, draw a diagram to show where they are.

Talk

- Report the disclosure to NWN's Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

Please also be aware that:

- It is not your responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse.
- You should not take any action beyond that identified above.
- You cannot promise a young person complete confidentiality – you must explain that you may need to pass information.

Dealing with concerns or observations

If an Associated NWN Individual has a concern (where no disclosure has taken place), NWN requests the following procedure is followed:

- Discuss the matter with NWN's Safeguarding Officer.
- Complete an incident report form.

Making complaints

If a Relevant Individual has a concern about an Associated NWN Individual they should:

- Discuss the matter with NWN's Safeguarding Officer.

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form

Note: Please do not interpret what is seen or heard, simply record the facts. After completing the form please pass on immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

Name of Relevant Individual	
Name of person completing the form	
Date of disclosure	
Place of disclosure	
Please record the nature of incident, details of disclosure, safeguarding concerns and any relevant background information. Please record the Individual's words verbatim where possible. (Continue on another sheet if necessary.)	
Action taken	
Signed:	Date:
Name of NWN Safeguarding Officer	
Action taken by Safeguarding Officer	

Reason for this action
Outcome of action
Follow up and outcome

Appendix 4: New starter emergency contact form

New Writing North Young Writers' Starter Form

You are completing this form because you are attending one of our Young Writers' Groups for the first time. Please note our Young Writers' Groups are for those aged 12-19.

We will use this data to e-mail either yourself and/or your parent/guardian with full details and sign-up information.

Young Person's Name *

Groups *

+ Add

Young Person's Age *

Our young writers' groups are for young people aged 12-19.

Young Person's E-mail Address

If you are under 13 please leave this blank.

If you do not have an e-mail please use your parent/guardian's.

Emergency Contact Name *

If you are under 18 this MUST be a parent/guardian

Emergency Contact E-mail Address *

If you are under 18 this MUST be a parent/guardian

Emergency Contact Telephone *

If you are under 18 this MUST be a parent/guardian

General Data Protection Regulation *

Your contact information will be stored by New Writing North in accordance to GDPR guidelines. New Writing North will use this data to contact you in regards to our young people's programme. This data may also be used for monitoring purposes.

Should you wish for your data to be removed from our records, or to remove your permission for any of the above, you can so do by e-mailing youngwriters@newwritingnorth.com.

If you would like to learn more you can read our young people's privacy policy here:

<http://newwritingnorth.com/news/information-for-young-people-how-we-keep-your-data-safe/>

You can also read New Writing North's Safeguarding Policy here [link to be inserted following review]

Please tick to confirm you have read this.

Appendix 6: Example consent form

New Writing North Young Writers Registration (Under 16)

This form must be completed by a parent/guardian

Please note that our young writers groups are for those aged 12-19.

Young Person's Surname *

Young Person's First Name *

What group/summer school would you like to register for? *

+ Add

Young Person's Email Address *

Please enter parent/guardian's e-mail if the young person does not have an e-mail

Young Person's DOB *

Address 1

Address 2

Address 3

Postcode *

Young Person's Phone Number *

School/college

Where did you hear about New Writing North Young Writers?

Parent/Guardian Name *

Parent/Guardian E-mail Address *

Please make sure that this is entered correctly, if your e-mail changes please do let us know

Parent/Guardian Phone No *

Additional Needs

Please tell us about any additional needs, allergies or any thing else you'd like us to be made aware of.

Photo Consent *

I give New Writing North permission to take photographs, video recordings and sound recordings of my child that may be used for New Writing North's internal and external publications, newsletters, presentations, websites, social media and local/national newspaper articles.

We will always obtain consent from the Young Person in addition to this.

Work Consent *

I give New Writing North permission to publish my child's work in internal and external publications, newsletters, presentations, websites, social media and local/national newspaper articles. The work itself will always remain the intellectual property of the young person.

We will always obtain consent from the Young Person in addition to this.

Confirmation *

I give my permission as a parent/guardian of the child named above to take part in New Writing North's Young Writers' programme.

I am happy for New Writing North to contact both my child and I with information about the New Writing North's Young Writers' programme.

Confirmation Date *

Please enter today's date. We will contact you annually to ensure our records are up to date.

General Data Protection Regulation *

Your contact information will be stored by New Writing North in accordance to GDPR guidelines. New Writing North will use this data to contact you in regards to our young people's programme. This data may also be used for monitoring purposes.

Should you wish for your data to be removed from our records, or to remove your permission for any of the above, you can so do by e-mailing youngwriters@newwritingnorth.com.

If you want to know more about how and why we store data please read our young people's privacy policy.

<http://newwritingnorth.com/news/information-for-young-people-how-we-keep-your-data-safe/>

You can also read New Writing North's Safeguarding Policy here [link to be inserted following review]

Please tick to confirm you have read this.

Appendix 6: Flowchart of all steps taken during Safeguarding procedures

