

# **Leeds Christian Community Trust**



## **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy**

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### **Introduction**

Leeds Christian Community Trust (LCCT) is committed to promoting the welfare and protection of children and young people throughout its work and activities in all LCCT projects, believing that children and young people have a right to be safe and protected from abuse, neglect and witnessing mistreatment of other children and adults. LCCT also has a commitment to valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people and this policy is intended to ensure the safe recruitment, supervision, practice and training of all staff, project leaders and volunteers within LCCT projects. All Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers, and volunteers are required to abide by this policy and to follow its guidance whenever their work brings them into contact with children and young people. It is the responsibility of all Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers and volunteers to familiarise themselves with this policy and procedure.

All staff and volunteers will be shown this safeguarding policy upon their induction.

Staff, volunteers and clients will be able to access this policy on our website and through the online Project Handbook.

Those projects within LCCT that have regular contact with children and young people should develop their own procedures based on this policy to reflect and to cover their work. It is the responsibility of the Management/Steering Group and project leader(s) to ensure that a project has an adequate Safeguarding Children Procedure that abides by this policy but reflects project specific procedures and working practices. A Project's Safeguarding Procedures and working practices lead by the Management/Steering Group, Project leaders and staff must not contradict this policy and projects are expected to check their policy/procedure against this one.

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To help projects develop their own procedures and working practices a set of template guidelines is available from the LCCT Charity Administrator.

A copy of the project's procedures should be uploaded to their Google Drive project folder.

## Scope

This policy covers all interactions with children and young people under the age of 18.

## Legal Framework

This policy and additional procedures are designed to ensure that LCCT is operating within the letter and spirit of The Children Act 1989 and 2004 and The Children and Social Work Act 2017. With this in mind all LCCT's activities shall be guided by the paramountcy principle that 'The Welfare of the child shall be paramount...', therefore priority will always be given to ensuring the welfare and safety of children and young people.

LCCT recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional, material, financial, psychological and discriminatory abuse, and neglect. LCCT has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document as well as the LCCT Equality and Diversity policy that all projects should follow.

LCCT also undertakes to follow the principles found within the Abuse of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office, Sexual Offences Act 2003, updated with all changes known to be in force on or before 28 February 2023, and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## Code of Behaviour

All Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers, and volunteers are required to adhere to the LCCT safeguarding code of behaviour when engaged in activities involving children and/or young people.

The code is designed to minimise situations where abuse may occur by stipulating that:

- Workers avoid situations where they are alone and unobserved with individual children and young people;
- All activity, as far as possible, is publicly observed or conducted in a group setting;
- Inappropriate touching of any form is never permitted;
- The use of inappropriate language never goes unchallenged;
- Appropriate action will be taken in all cases and instances of safeguarding concerns involving young people;

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- A “whistle-blowing” policy will be adhered to. This will ensure that staff who make bona fide complaints about colleagues’ behaviour will not be punished, even if the concerns prove unfounded.

## **Child and Young People Safeguarding Co-ordinator**

Each project that works with children and young people should have a designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator. This person has the responsibility of promoting the Safeguarding policies within the project and ensuring that all of the Management/Steering Group, relevant staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers are DBS checked and regularly trained in Safeguarding issues and procedures and refresher courses, where appropriate. All Management/Steering Group, staff, project leaders/workers, volunteers and service users should know who this person is and their contact details. DBS checks should be done on recruitment and renewed every three years.

In addition, the LCCT Charity Administrator will act as Safeguarding Officer for LCCT as a whole. This role is meant to be complementary to and not a replacement of the role of a Project’s Safeguarding Coordinator. The role of the LCCT Safeguarding Officer is to ensure good practice is put in place across the Trust as above through liaising with Project Safeguarding Coordinators and assisting less experienced projects.

## **Recruitment**

LCCT will ensure that those Management/Steering Group members, staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers who work within regulated activities which involve contact with children and young people as part of their job description, or those who have access to information about children and young people, will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check whether they currently hold an enhanced DBS check or not. This is to ensure that they do not have convictions that would mean they would be unsuitable for the work. The update service can be used if the individual is registered and it is for exactly the same level or type of work. The same level of scrutiny will apply to volunteers assisting in regulated activities who have responsibility for children. This will be made clear on any application form for employment. It will also be stated as part of any interview process and will be a condition before any offer of employment, or voluntary position can be confirmed. Please refer to LCCT Recruitment policy.

## **Responsibilities**

The LCCT Safeguarding Officer and the LCCT Manager, Catherine Beaumont, will act as recruiters for the Trust.

Again, the role of the LCCT Safeguarding Officer is not to duplicate the role of individual Project recruiters. The LCCT Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring correct checks are made on Project staff and volunteers and to assist projects in making proper checks and ensuring good practice in the recruitment procedure. In addition, a named member of the trustees, Theo Sheridan-Watts, Safeguarding Trustee, will act as an advisor who has permission to view any relevant recruitment information (such as police checks) should the need arise.

Project leaders and Management/Steering Groups will be responsible for recruitment in their project and must ensure that all relevant checks are made in line with the guidance below.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers working with children and young people will need to have an appropriate DBS check performed on them (under the definition of regulated activity).

## **Secure Storage**

All recruitment information will be dealt with in a confidential manner and stored securely in line with the LCCT Data Protection Policy including General Data Protection Regulation.

## **Training**

All Management/ Steering Groups, staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers whose role involves contact with children and young people will be trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in the government guidelines. All projects that involve working with children and young people must have their own local induction and procedures which will detail the training, support, supervision and practice of workers and volunteers within those projects. Staff are expected to engage with the training, on recruitment and then update every two years.

## **Management and Supervision of Staff/Volunteers**

All staff have an opportunity to discuss with their line manager or Trustee any safeguarding matter giving them concern and this is best done through regular supervision. The supervision arrangements are in place for staff from the commencement of employment and reviewed as required. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda on all supervision/support meetings.

## **Suspicion of abuse**

All LCCT Trustees, Management/Steering Groups, staff, project leaders/workers, and volunteers, have a duty to identify and report any concerns and/or abuse against children or young people. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, can be

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perpetuated by anyone, and can include physical; financial; material; sexual; psychological; discriminatory; emotional abuse and neglect.

If you have a concern about a safeguarding issue you should follow the guidance below:

- Do not excessively question the child or young person, simply listen to what s/he has to say and make notes of what is said.
- Do not promise that you will keep the information secret.
- If you see behaviour or a possible injury which is of concern, make a detailed note of what you have seen. Do not speculate about what may be happening or what has happened – simply be factual.
- Report the incident/concern to your line manager.
- Make a record of the incident /concern on an incident report.(appendix 1)
- Do not talk to the parent/carer before reporting or before getting advice from the Safeguarding Officer/co-ordinator.

The project Safeguarding Coordinator should then follow the following guidance as soon as possible:

- If a Safeguarding concern is raised with you it would almost always be appropriate to discuss this with your local Social Service Department, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- You should take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation you should contact the police and/or the Duty and Advice Team. If a referral is made direct to the Duty and Advice team this should be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.
- You should also inform the LCCT Safeguarding Officer, who will in turn inform the Safeguarding Trustee and keep them updated but at this stage discuss the concern with no-one further.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that notes of any incident are clearly and accurately recorded and filed securely
- In emergency situations (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence of severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted.
- Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

NB Parents / carers will need to be informed about any referral to Children & Young people's Social Care unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

## **Documentation:**

Any incident, disclosure, cause for concern or action taken as a result of child abuse or suspected child abuse must be documented immediately stating:

- Date and time of the disclosure/incident/area of concern
- Date and Time of Report

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- Child or young person's name
- Actual details of the disclosure/incident/area of concern;
- The full name and age of the child(ren) concerned;
- An outline of the circumstances that led to the disclosure/incident/area of concern;
- An accurate record of what was said, and by whom;
- Actions to be taken (both internal and external actions - based on the issues raised in the allegation. Eg; Notify Manager/ Duty and Advice/ LADO)
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;
- Designation and signature of person reporting the incident.

Once this information is documented, this record must be maintained in the child or young person's file and an Action Plan must be implemented immediately.

Details should also be included in the file of decisions made, actions taken, and reasons for that action, referrals made, persons and agencies involved together with evidence of future plans.

A safeguarding incident report form can be found in the Project Handbook or obtained from the LCCT Safeguarding Officer.

## Recognising The Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse:** 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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **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 in so far 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 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, (including cyber-bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in

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looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect:** 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 abuse. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Financial Abuse:** Financial or material abuse can take the form of defrauding, stealing or using of the children's or young people's money, goods and/or property without their permission. Or to coerce children and young people to part with money, goods and/or property. This can be once or over a period of months or years that could involve large or small sums of money. Financial abuse also includes:
  - Theft of money or possessions
  - Missing personal possessions
  - Personal items going missing
  - Unreasonable or inappropriate gifts
  - 'Mate' Crime: this is defined as the exploitation, abuse or theft from any person at risk from those they consider to be their friends.
- **Radicalisation:** Children and young people can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.
- **Other forms of abuse:** This category has been added to cover additional types of abuse not mentioned above but may be relevant including FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), forced marriage, so called 'honour' based violence, black magic or witchcraft abuse and the risk that some young people may have been forced to act as child soldiers in their country of origin. Modern slavery and child trafficking is also child abuse.

Possible signs of abuse include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries or the explanation of the cause of the injury does not seem right.
- The child discloses abuse, or describes what appears to be an abusive act.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained change in behaviour such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.

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- Difficulty in making friends.
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm or suicide attempts.
- Truancy or child or young person frequently 'going missing'

## Becoming aware of a safeguarding issue

There are different ways in which we may become aware of issues relating to a child or young person's safety:

- A third party or anonymous allegation may be received
- A child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect
- A child or young person reports an incident (s) or alleged abuse which occurred some time ago
- A written report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person
- A child or young person makes a disclosure to a member of staff or a volunteer
- A parent may disclose information about issues within the family home, including domestic abuse

## Allegations against staff members

Any allegation against a staff member must be reported immediately to the LCCT Safeguarding Officer.

In the event of an allegation being made against an LCCT worker, Management/Steering Group member, project leader/worker, volunteer or Trustee, whilst following the procedure outlined above, the LCCT Safeguarding Officer should also follow the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership's procedures and will need to liaise with Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker and making a referral to an Allegations Management Adviser (AMA).

## Useful Contacts

If you have a concern about a Child or Young person

- LCCT Safeguarding co-ordinator: Janice Brown  
Email: [info@lcct.org.uk](mailto:info@lcct.org.uk) Tel: 0113 3508622
- Trustee Safeguarding advisor: Theo Sheridan-Watts  
Email: [theo.sheridan-watts@wellspringstogether.org.uk](mailto:theo.sheridan-watts@wellspringstogether.org.uk) Tel: 0113 3508622/  
Emergency Contact No: 07557023789
- Leeds Social Care. For an issue about a **child** call 0113 222 4403, or 0113 3760336 During Office hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) and provide them with as much information as possible

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- If you need to call Leeds Social Care outside of normal office hours call the emergency team on (out of hours) 0113 5350600 or email [childrensedt@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:childrensedt@leeds.gov.uk)
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- Childline: 0800 1111 or 1-2-1 counsellor chat.
- British Sign Language: [www.leeds.gov.uk/accessibility](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/accessibility)
- If **urgent action** is needed because you suspect an immediate risk of harm call the police on 999

### **General**

- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)
- Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership - [www.leedsscp.org.uk](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk)
- Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as CCPAS) [thirtyoneeight.org](http://thirtyoneeight.org) 03 03 003 11 11

This policy will be reviewed annually and signed by the Chair of Trustees, it will then be made available to staff and volunteers.

**Date of last review:** 27/04/2023

**Date of next review:** April 2024

Signed....



Date..... 27/04/2023

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## Appendix

### Safeguarding incident report form

The person who receives the allegation or has the concern, should complete this incident report form and ensure it is signed and dated.

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Briefly describe what happened (include times and dates):	
Names and contacts of witnesses:	
Name of person completing form:	
Date:	

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Name of Manager responsible for investigation:	
Date:	
Action taken:	
Signatures:	