

Equipping for Life

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Background

Equipping for Life

Equipping for Life (EFL) is the outworking of a vision given to Brother David Jardine in 2018, specifically for areas that are disadvantaged and may have suffered a great deal during the 'Troubles'. EFL encourages church people, and others, to give of their time and talents, free of charge, to serve people in these areas so that they may be equipped to live better lives. The work currently includes Volunteer Tutors who, on a weekly basis, pray and read with primary school pupils in their schools (including in the Greater Shankill and other areas of Northern Ireland) and tennis coaching in primary schools in the Shankill area. All the work is backed by faithful prayer, generous donations and many volunteers.

Equipping for Life believes that every young person and adult at risk has the right to be safe and that their welfare is paramount. This includes young people and adults at risk of any gender, ethnic background, sexuality or religion, or with any disability. It is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and adults at risk and seeks to ensure that all of its services, staff and volunteers work to achieve the best outcomes for young people and adults at risk.

As safeguarding underpins all of the work of Equipping for Life, it is essential that the work is carried out under a robust safeguarding policy framework. Equipping for Life recognises that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, and therefore seeks to make safeguarding a priority throughout the organisation. Resources are allocated to support this commitment and towards making Equipping for Life a safer organisation for all those associated with it.

Equipping for Life is committed to putting into practice Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children have the right to participate in decision-making processes that may be relevant in their lives and to influence decisions taken in their regard within the family, the school or the community. As part of this commitment, this policy seeks to ensure that any barriers to young people's participation are addressed.

To achieve success, Equipping for Life will:

- have clear lines of accountability for safeguarding throughout the organisation;
 - set up effective performance management arrangements;
 - set clear goals and monitor and review progress;
 - undertake regular annual reviews of its safeguarding processes and practices (including the Health and Safety Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Equal opportunities Policy and First Aid Policy);
 - maintain the resources necessary to support this commitment;
 - provide training to staff at all levels of the organisation in applying safeguarding principles to every aspect of their work. Internal training will be carried out for staff and Trustees, on an annual basis, on how to implement safeguarding policies and procedures. The Principal Safeguarding Officer (PSO) will also register staff for relevant external training as legislation and practice is updated; and
 - include a standing item entitled 'Child Protection Update' on each Board Meeting agenda.
- A written record will be kept by the Principal Safeguarding Officer of all Child Protection complaints against members of staff and volunteers of EFL. This record will be signed by the Chair at each meeting of the Trustees.

Legislation and Government Guidance

Over the past decade there has been a wealth of legislation and government policy relating to protection of Children, Young People and Adults at risk. This includes:

Children Act 1989

The Police Act 1997

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
Care Standards Act 2000
Safeguarding Children 2002 – Chief Inspectors Report
The Victoria Climbié Inquiry 2003 – Lord Laming
Report Keeping Children Safe 2003 – Government
response
Every Child Matters Change for Children –Green paper 2003
The Sexual Offences Act 2003
The Children Act 2004
Bichard Inquiry 2004
Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004
Safeguarding Children: Second Chief Inspectors Report 2005
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 Making
Safeguarding Everyone’s Business 2006 Government
Report Safeguarding children:
Third Chief Inspectors Report 2008

It is within this policy context that Equipping for Life operates its Safeguarding Policy and associated policies and procedures.

Equipping for Life is committed to:

- exercising proper care in the selection, appointment, and support of those working with children, young people and adults at risk whether paid or voluntary.
- working in partnership with young people and adults at risk, valuing their contributions, while ensuring they are safe and protected while partaking in Equipping for Life activities and programmes;
- working in partnership with parents and carers and offering support, encouragement and advice;
- working in partnership with other agencies who are concerned with the well-being of children, young people and adult at risk;
- working with young people and adults at risk and including them in creating a safe environment where they can take part in development activities and consequently increase in confidence; and
- implementing and maintaining a process for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.



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Policy and guidance

Definitions

A **child** in this policy is defined as *anyone under the age of 18*.

An **Adult at risk** is defined in accordance with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 as *a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:*

- I. *a substantial learning or physical disability.*
- II. *a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or*
- III. *a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.*

Safeguarding: There is no legal definition of safeguarding. However, in this policy, any references to safeguarding are in keeping with the Government report in 2006, *Making Safeguarding Everyone's Business*, in which there was a shift in emphasis from protecting children and adults at risk from harm, to preventing abuse and neglect in the first instance. Therefore safeguarding is defined here as *both safeguarding and promoting welfare together, through:*

- (i) *protecting children, young people and adults at risk from maltreatment*
- (ii) *preventing impairment of children, young people and adults at risk' health and/or development; and*
- (iii) *ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care to enable them to have optimum life chances such that they enter adulthood successfully.*

The following **acronyms** are used throughout the document:

PSO – Principal Safeguarding Officer

SO – Safeguarding Officer

SS -Social Services

Policy and Guidance Document Content

The Policy sets out agreed processes in relation to the following areas:

- i. The Roles and Appointment of Staff and Volunteers.
- ii. Codes of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- iii. Staff Supervision
- iv. Appointment of a Safeguarding Officer
- v. Responding to possible abuse
- vi. Abuse of Trust Guidelines
- vii. Whistleblowing Procedure
- viii. Appendices:
 - Appendix A: Recognising signs of abuse.
 - Appendix B: The role of the Principal Safeguarding Officer.
 - Appendix C: Responding to abuse and Incident Form.
 - Appendix D: Contact details.

The Roles and Appointment of Staff and Volunteers

1.1 The authority to appoint staff and volunteers to organisation

The ultimate responsibility for the appointment of staff is held by the Trustees of Equipping for Life. For the purpose of administrating the policy, the process of appointment may be delegated to a member of Senior Staff, and it is their duty to report on any appointments to the Trustees. The ultimate responsibility for the appointment of volunteers is held by the Trustees. The placement and supervision of volunteers and need to be agreed by the PSO and they are placed in and reviewed by the team on a regular basis. Equipping for Life confirms its commitment to recruit all staff and volunteers in accordance with the Access NI Code of Practice and legislative requirements.

1.2 Appointment procedures

All paid positions should have a job description and a person specification. Voluntary jobs should have a volunteer's agreement.

- All prospective staff and volunteers (hereafter referred to as the ‘applicant’) are required:
- to provide details of 2 referees; and
- to agree that they will co-operate with an enhanced ACCESSNI disclosure and will be requested to complete an application form at this stage so that the procedure can be completed as soon as possible if appointed.

Reluctance to do this will not prejudice the selection panel’s decision.

- i. The procedure for the appointment of staff will involve:
- An informal meeting with a selection of staff members and volunteers working on existing projects with opportunities for all parties to feed back to the Director or allocated member of senior staff. All conversations are to be treated as confidential and exist to provide a forum for young people and workers to comment on the applicant’s suitability to work with young people, and enable applicants to gain an understanding of how the projects function; and
 - an interview involving at least two from: the Director, the Trustees, the Principle Safeguarding Officer, and the post line manager or supervisor.

The Director in consultation with the trustees makes the final decision for appointment.

- ii. The procedure for the appointment of volunteers will involve:
- an interview with the relevant line manager.
 - each volunteer signing a Volunteer Agreement with their supervisor that makes reference to their roles and responsibilities. A signed copy of which must be returned to Human Resources; and
 - volunteer being required to read and sign a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and return this to their supervisor and will receive a hard copy of the EfL Safeguarding and Child Protection Volunteer Information, Appendix E (on an annual basis); and
 - on the return of the ACCESSNI certificate, should an offence against a child or children be revealed then the applicant would be informed they are unsuitable for the post after the Safeguarding Officer has sought advice from a nominated member of the Trustee Board ensuring best practice in responding to the situation.

2. Codes of Conduct for Staff, Apprentices and Volunteers

The following code of conduct applies to all Equipping for Life staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk whether acting in a paid or unpaid capacity.

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoid taking a young person alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short.
- Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, avoid taking a child or adult at risk to the toilet unless either (a) another adult is present or (b) another adult is aware (this may include a parent or group leader).
- If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult, wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Avoid close personal relationships with a child, young person or adult at risk in relation to whom they are in a position of trust
- Never make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, young person or adult at risk, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
- If a child, young person or adult at risk accuses a student or member of staff of abuse or inappropriate behaviour this should be reported immediately to the relevant person.
- The duty to report applies equally to complaints or accusations of historic, and not just recent, abuse/inappropriate behaviour.
- Recipients of any complaint or accusation from a child, young person or adult at risk, must listen without making or implying any judgement as to the truth of the complaint or accusation.
- If a child, young person or adult at risk makes a complaint, or if there are other reasons for suspecting abuse, this should be reported immediately to the designated staff member responsible for the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk named in section 4 of this policy.
- All staff and volunteers should participate in the training available to support them in their work with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Staff and volunteers should remember that those who abuse children, young people and adults at risk can be of any age (even other children and adults at risk), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.

- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children, young people and adults at risk as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct, which would exclude bullying, aggressive behaviour and discrimination in any form.
- Those dealing with any allegations of abuse or misconduct should adhere to the principles set out in the policy. Any information received should be acted upon sensitively, effectively and efficiently. Wherever possible, those making allegations should be given information about the outcome.
- Although allegations should be reported only on a “need to know” basis, staff and students making allegations need not be concerned that they will be breaching confidentiality or the Data Protection Act, as complying with the policy overrides such obligations. If the person making the allegation feels they need counselling or other appropriate support from Equipping for Life, they are encouraged to seek it; and

3. Staff supervision

On appointment all staff and volunteers will be provided with a timetable of provision for supervision, monitoring and support and are expected to comply with these expectations.

All staff and volunteers are expected to become familiar with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. It is the responsibility of the SO to identify or provide suitable training opportunities for staff and volunteers and ensure ‘all volunteers’ know how to identify and address child protection and adult at risk issues within Equipping for Life projects.

4. The appointment of the Safeguarding Officer

Equipping for Life recognises the importance of appointing a named member of staff to handle any concerns regarding the safety of children, young people, and adults at risk (hereafter referred to as Principal Safeguarding Officer).

The position of Principal Safeguarding Officer (PSO) is held by: Dr **Darrin Barr**

In order to provide an effective and accessible service, there are identified Safeguarding Officers (SO) as part of the safeguarding team. The Safeguarding Officers are: **Ms Audrey Curry and Mrs Pat Hutchinson. The Safeguarding Officer for the Board of Trustees is Mr Gordon Bell.**

Significant safeguarding issues that arise should be made known to Mr Gordon Bell Chairperson of the board of trustees.

The responsibilities of the PSO are detailed in ‘The Role of the Principal Safeguarding Officer’ in Appendix B and the contact details are given in Appendix D.

5. Responding to possible abuse

The guidelines in this section are for all staff and volunteers responding to incidences of or concerns regarding abuse. Official definitions of abuse and advice on recognising signs of abuse can be found in Appendix A.

5.1 What to do if abuse is suspected to have occurred

- If in a school setting, report the concerns using the Safeguarding and Child Protection Record Sheet (Appendix C) to the School’s Designated Teacher for Child Protection before leaving the school and inform the PSO (or SO) as soon as possible that a report has been made. If not in a school setting, report concerns as soon as possible to the PSO, who will refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. Reports should be made using the designated incident form that is located at Appendix C Safeguarding and Child Protection Record Sheet. In the absence of the PSO, all concerns should be referred to the Safeguarding Officers.
- If the suspicions in any way implicate the PSO the report should be made directly to a SO. If all the SOs and PSO are implicated in the suspicions, contact the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mr Gordon Bell, alternatively the report should be made to Social Services who will be able to provide independent advice to the person making the report. Contact information will vary due to project location, it is best to contact the Social Services that cover the young person’s or adult at risk’s home address or school, as they will hold any previous records.
- Suspicions should not be discussed with anyone other than those named on this document unless specifically requested by the child, young person or adult at risk involved. It is good practice to ensure young people and adults at risk feel supported through any safeguarding process; confidentiality should work to protect young people and adults at risk, not to deny them support from wider members of staff, volunteers. It is the role of the

PSO to ensure that any wider staff do not take on direct responsibility of dealing with an allegation and only take on a supporting role.

- All reports, including electronic reports, should be kept in a locked or secure place. Reports should be kept for a minimum of 7 years although requirements may vary under contracts from different partners.
- It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection or adult at risk agencies, or to seek advice from Social Services, it is hoped that all members of staff and volunteers will follow this procedure. If however, they feel that the response of the Principal Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Officers has not been appropriate it open to staff to contact the relevant agencies directly.

5.2 What to do when a child, young person or adult at risk talks about abuse

The following guidelines are not designed to be a step by step process, but rather an indication of helpful ways to respond to a young person or adult at risk who talks about abuse:

- Show acceptance of what you are being told, even when the story seems to be unlikely
- Keep calm, and ensure your body language remains reassuring
- Tell the young person or adult at risk that the best way you can help them is to tell someone else, but you will only tell other people who can help them like yourself
- Assure the young person or adult at risk they are not to blame
- Be aware that the young person or vulnerable adult may have been threatened or bribed not to tell, this is especially relevant where grooming has taken place
- Never push for information, if you feel a young person or vulnerable adult was about to tell you something and then changes their minds, it is important to accept that they have decided not to tell you at this time, however it is important that the child is left knowing that you are always ready to listen.
- Helpful things to say: “Thank you for telling me.” “It’s not your fault.” “I will help you and only tell other people who can help you like me.”
- Let the child know everything you are doing step by step. This allows the child to feel that they still have some control over what is happening to them, e.g. “I am going to leave the room now and call someone who can come and help us, when I come back I am going to tell you what was said.”
- Things NOT to say:
 - “I am shocked!”
 - “Why did you not tell anyone before?”
 - “I can’t believe it!” or “Are you sure this is true?”
 - WHY? HOW? WHEN? WHO? WHERE?
 - Never make a promise that you cannot keep.

5.3 What to do following a child or adult at risk talking about abuse

- Make notes as soon as being told, preferably within an hour of the incident form referenced in 5.1. When making a recording, it is important to write down exactly what the child/adult at risk has said what you said in reply, when it was said, and what had happened immediately before hand (a description of the activity). Record dates and times of the events and when you made the report. Keep all hand written notes even if these have been typed at a later time.
- Follow the guidance given in 5.1 with regards to informing the PSO.
- Ensure appropriate follow up has been arranged for the child/adult at risk, taking into consideration whether it is safe for the child to return home. This is part of the responsibility of the PSO, unless the PSO is implicated, (see Appendix B, for the process the PSO will follow).

6. 'Abuse of trust' guidelines

Young people and adults at risk who are over the age of consent are still in need of protection. The home office has produced guidelines that, although hold no statutory force, contain the principles of good practice in protecting vulnerable young adults or adults where a relationship of trust has been built up with an adult looking after them. Equipping for Life is committed to protecting all those that they work with. It will therefore be unacceptable for any member of staff or volunteer to engage in behaviour that might allow a sexual or an 'inappropriate' relationship to develop while the relationship of trust continues.

7. Whistleblowing Procedures

This section outlines guidance and recommendations regarding whistle blowing and raising concerns regarding Equipping for Life staff.

7.1 Staff responsibilities

- Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult, this is particularly important where the welfare of young people or adults at risk may be at risk.
- Even where staff do not feel able to express their concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or fear harassment or victimisation, this must never result in a child, young person or adult at risk continuing to be unnecessarily at risk and concerns should always be reported.

7.2 Reasons for whistleblowing

Each individual involved in Equipping for Life has responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour for the following reasons:

- to prevent the problem worsening or widening;
- to protect or reduce risks to others; and
- to prevent themselves from becoming implicated.

7.3 Challenges in whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers may experience the following concerns when contemplating whistleblowing, which will need to be overcome:

- starting a chain of events which spirals;
- disrupting the work or project;
- fear of getting it wrong;
- fear of repercussions or damaging careers; or
- fear of not being believed.

7.4 How to raise a concern

- You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken. Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Approach your immediate manager or Equipping for Life's PSO.
- If your concern is about your immediate manager or a Safeguarding Officer at Equipping for Life contact Social Services Duty team on the contact details at the back of this policy.
- Make sure you get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest.
- Ideally you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, but you will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

7.5 What happens next

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.



7.6 Self-reporting

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children, young people or adults at risk.

7.7 Further advice and support

It is recognised that whistle blowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from your line manager.

7.8 Parental Consent

- No children will be allowed to participate in any activity without the written consent of parent or carer.
- Consent forms should provide parents / carers with a rundown of all events that will take place within a program, evening session or on a day trip or residential. Parents or carers should be given the opportunity to opt out of any activity that they do not wish their child to partake in.
- Equipping for Life understands it has a duty to support parents and carers in completing parental consent forms (Appendix E) and communicating information to parents and carers in a way that allows them to make an informed decision on their child's care. Consent forms should be written by the PSO.
- Consent forms are confidential, and any information provided on them may not be shared with any other party unless consent has been sought from the parent or carer, the information provided on the consent forms will be stored in accordance with the data protection act 1998. When consent forms are disposed of it, is the duty of Equipping for Life to ensure that all information is removed from the computer network as well as paper files being destroyed?

7.9 Consent for the use of Image

Parental consent will be sought for the use of images of young people under the age of 16. Young people 16 years and over are able to give their own consent for their use of their images. Any photographic or video images will only be used for purposes stated on the consent form, and will only be shared with partners and external organisations if given express permission to do so.

7.10 Health and Safety

Personal Safety: It is the responsibility of all workers to know the whereabouts of all children and young people involved in the activity. Children and young people will be given full guidance of permitted areas of access.

7.11 Insurance

Equipping for Life holds appropriate insurance for public liability and will ensure appropriate insurance policies are in place in any school.

Policy Review	
Date & Type of Review	Date Approved by Board
March 2022, minor changes to include Volunteer Booklet	15 March 2022
March 2023, minor changes	21 February 2023



Appendix A: Definitions and signs of abuse

Definitions of abuse

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Emotional

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category is used where it is the main or sole use of abuse.

Physical

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

Sexual

Actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature (Sexual exploitation represents the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or violate social taboos or family roles).

Exploitation

Child exploitation is **when an abuser takes advantage of a young person for their own personal gain**. This can take many forms, including sexual exploitation or forcing the child to commit crime. The most common form of criminal exploitation is when a child is forced to sell drugs for an older person. Abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in cohort to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Recognising signs of abuse

The following signs may or may not indicate abuse, in the event that one or more of the signs is present the possibility of abuse should be considered (the list is not exhaustive, see the EFL Safeguarding & Child Protection Volunteer Information, Appendix E, for further indicators):

Neglect

- Under-nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

Physical

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which have to receive medical attention.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained abdominal, 'tummy' pains.
- Bruises, bites, burn, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation.

Emotional

- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness, persistent tiredness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers or adults.
- Attention seeking behaviour; or running away, stealing, and lying or changes in regression in mood or behaviour.



Sexual

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually proactive or seductive with adult.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and or adults.
- Evidence of grooming by individuals or groups of adult.

Exploitation

- Sexual knowledge that is beyond their age or developmental age.
- Acting in sexually explicit ways towards adults
- Going missing from school, home, care
- Extreme relationship difficulties with parents / carers / school staff
- Substance or drug misuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Self-harm
- Isolation
- Urinary tract Infections / sexually transmitted infections
- Stomach pains or headaches
- Bruising or other marks on the body
- Pregnancy
- Not in class / frequently going AWOL

Appendix B: The Role of the Principal Safeguarding Officer

The Principal Safeguarding Officer (PSO) acts as person responsible for child protection and adult at risk issues reported by staff, volunteers and members of the public. The PSO will follow set procedures in responding to a report. In the absence of the PSO, the SOs will follow the same procedures. The PSO is responsible for assisting staff in the follow up of allegations and ensuring best practice is maintained across Equipping for Life as a whole.

Allegations of Physical Injury or Neglect

If the young person or adult at risk has a physical injury or symptom of neglect the PSO will:

- i. Contact the School Principal and/or Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury or where there are concerns about the young person or adult at risk's safety. The parents should not be informed by the PSO in circumstances where a parent/carer or close family member is suspected.
- ii. Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately. The PSO will inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
- iii. In other circumstances the PSO will speak with the parent/carer and suggest medical help/attention is sought for the young person or adult at risk. The doctor or health visitor will then initiate further action, if deemed necessary
- iv. If appropriate the parent/carer will be encouraged to seek help from ~~the~~ Social Services.
- v. Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, the PSO will offer to go with them. If they still fail to act the PSO should, in case of real concern, contact Social Services for advice.
- vi. The PSO will follow up any referral made to ~~the~~ Social Services ~~Department~~ so best practice can be maintained with any on-going work with that young person or adult at risk. Any workers working alongside that child will only be given the information that they need to ensure the physical and emotional wellbeing of young person or adult at risk is being met.



Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of current sexual abuse the PSO will:

- Contact the School Principal and/or Social Services duty social worker or Police Child Protection team directly. The PSO will not speak to the parent or carer or anyone else about the suspicion. The PSO may inform the Chair of the Trustees of events to ensure best practice is met.
- If for any reason the PSO is unsure whether to follow the above advice, Social Services will be contacted for advice and the advice followed. Social Services will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference reasons in the future.
- Under no circumstances will the PSO try and carry out an investigation into the allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse while allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the PSO, the absence of the PSO and SO should in no way delay the referral to Social Services.
- Equipping for Life supports the role of the PSO and SOs and accepts that any information that they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- The PSO will follow up any referral made to Social Services, so best practice can be maintained with any on-going work with that child. Any workers working alongside that child will only be given the information that they need to ensure the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child is being met.



Appendix C: Safeguarding and Child Protection Record Sheet

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____ Class Teacher: _____

N.B. It is imperative that only factual information is recorded.

Details:

Concern/incident/disclosure – day, time, place, members of staff/other children involved, conversations, action taken (if appropriate).

Name:

Signature:

This form should be delivered to the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher or EFL Team Leader before leaving the school building. Inform EFL's Principal Safeguarding Officer (or Safeguarding Officers) that a report has been forwarded to the Designated Teacher on the same day.

Appendix D: Key Contacts and References

Principal Safeguarding Officer:

Darrin Barr 07587883057

Safeguarding Officer:

Audrey Curry 07801389959

Pat Hutchinson MBE: 07889572800

Social Services

Children and Family Support Teams - Tel: 028 9504 0300

Police

In emergency call 999

NSPCC

Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Equipping for Life

Safeguarding & Child Protection

Volunteer Information

Safeguarding

Every child can potentially be hurt, put at risk from harm or abused regardless of their age, gender, religion or ethnicity.

Safeguarding means that:

- children are protected from mistreatment
- a child's health, or development, is protected
- children grow up with safe and effective care
- action is taken to ensure the best outcomes for all children

Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Every adult working or volunteering in a school has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed. These procedures are both straightforward and easily understood.

Child Protection:

This is the process of protecting children who may be suffering from, or at risk of, significant harm. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation and emotional harm.

Child protection promotes the rights and welfare of all children. Each school we work in will have a Designated Teacher(s) for Child Protection and a Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection who are responsible for speaking to parents if concerns arise, and making referrals to Children's Social Services with, or without, parental permission.

Responding to a Disclosure - The 5 Rs

- **RECEIVE** – listen to what the child says but do not ask leading questions except to show you have understood;
- **REASSURE** – ensure the child is reassured that he/she will be safe and that their interests come first, do not promise confidentiality as the report must be given to the Designated Teacher;
- **RESPOND** – only to ensure that the child is safe and secure;
- **RECORD** – make note of what you have seen or heard and the date and time; and
- **REPORT** – report to the Designated Teacher (or Deputy) as soon as you have any concern for a child and before you leave the school building. Inform EFL's Principal Safeguarding Officer (or Safeguarding Officers) that a report has been forwarded to the Designated Teacher on the same day.

Procedure when an Equipping for Life Volunteer has a concern about the possible abuse of children:

(See Appendix 1 for definitions of abuse)

Make a hand-written record of what you have observed/been told



Immediately Inform Designated Teacher
or
Deputy Designated Teacher
or
EFL Team Leader

Give hand-written record to the above person as soon as possible in an envelope marked 'highly confidential'

NB: If a case goes to court your notes/diary may be required as evidence. Keep report factual – **NO** opinion and **NO** leading question.

Procedures for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse

1. Where there is cause for concern about a child, the volunteer will notify the Designated Teacher **on the same day** (no delay principle). They will record their concern/incident/disclosure using the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Record Sheet** (appendix 1) or the School's relevant proforma and pass this to the Designated Teacher.

It is imperative that only factual information is recorded, i.e. the date, time, place, members of staff/other children involved, conversations and any action taken (if appropriate). Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but *under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed*. If necessary, physical injury could be represented on a drawing to indicate the location and shape of the injury.

2. If a complaint is made against a volunteer working in a school, it will be treated in the same manner as complaints against a person who is not on the school's staff, and the same procedures followed. If the Principal has any concern that a child may be at risk, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately. If a complaint is made against a volunteer the school will inform EFL's Principal Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Appendix 1

Types of Abuse

Emotional Abuse

Possible Indicators:

- Sudden speech disorder
- Signs of self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Signs of drug or solvent abuse
- Eating problems
- Wetting and/or soiling
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Poor peer relationships
- Continual self-deprecation
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Reluctance for parent liaison
- Fear of new situations
- Chronic runaway
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations

Sexual Abuse

Possible Indicators:

- Chronic ailments such as stomach pains or headaches
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Be chronically depressed or suicidal
- Inappropriately seductive or precocious behaviour

- Use of sexually explicit language
- Low self-esteem, self-devaluation, lack of confidence
- Recurring nightmares/fear of the dark
- Outbursts of anger or hysteria

Physical Abuse

Possible Indicators:

- Unexplained bruises or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Chronic runaway
- Aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of returning home
- Reluctant to have physical contact
- Clothing inappropriate to weather – worn to hide parts of the body

Neglect

Possible Indicators:

- Constant hunger
- Poor state of clothing and/or personal hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Emaciation/distended stomach
- Constant tiredness
- Lack of social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Frequently absent or late
- Low self-esteem

Exploitation

Possible Indicators:

- Sexual knowledge that is beyond their age or developmental age
- Acting in sexually explicit ways towards adults
- Going missing from school, home, care
- Extreme relationship difficulties with parents / carers / school staff
- Substance or drug misuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Association with older people, particularly men, outside the usual range of Contacts
- Phone calls/messages from adults outside the normal range of Contacts
- Self-harm
- Isolation
- Urinary tract Infections / sexually transmitted infections
- Stomach pains or headaches
- Bruising or other marks on the body
- Pregnancy
- Not in class / frequently going AWOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Record Sheet

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____ Class Teacher: _____

N.B. It is imperative that only factual information is recorded.

Details: Concern/incident/disclosure – day, time, place, members of staff/other children involved, conversations, action taken (if appropriate).	
Name: _____	Signature: _____

This form should be delivered to the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher or EFL Team Leader before leaving the school building. Inform EFL's Principal Safeguarding Officer (or Safeguarding Officers) that a report has been forwarded to the Designated Teacher on the same day.

Appendix 3

Protect Yourself

Reduce the Risk of False Accusation

A Do Not:

1. Be alone with a child.
2. Take children alone in a car, even for short journey.
3. Take a child/children to your house.
4. Keep your mobile telephone out of sight at all times.
5. Do not take photographs or videos of the children.

B Never:

1. Engage in horseplay, only structured sports activities.
2. Allow or engage in inappropriate touching.
3. Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
4. Let allegations made by children go unchallenged or unrecorded.
5. Do things of a personal nature for children.