

# CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES



**FIRST HOUSING**  
*Aid & Support Services*

|                                    |                               |
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This policy and procedural guide encompass the *Children's Services Co-Operation Act* (NI), 2015. The legislative framework for Northern Ireland's child protection system is set out in *The Children (NI) Order*, 1995, which sets out parental responsibilities, rights, duties, and powers that public authorities must support children. It also incorporates guidance from *Document Keeping Children Safe Our Duty to Care* (Volunteer Now), 2017.

This document was completed in collaboration with Simon Bayliss (Oak Foundation) using *the Social Care Institute for Excellence Guidelines* (SCIE).

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## 2.0 – Policy Statement

The purpose of this document is to inform all staff and volunteers of First Housing Aid and Support Services (FHASS)'s safeguarding policy in relation to children and young people, and to ensure our commitment to practices which protect children and young people from harm.

First Housing believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind. Every child - regardless of age, gender and gender identity, ethnicity, disability, religion, belief, or sexual orientation - always has a right to feel safe in all situations. Any staff member or

volunteer whose work may bring them into contact with children and young people has a responsibility to report concerns about their safety and well-being. Effective child protection is firmly based on co-operation and commitment between staff, volunteers, agencies, and shared decision-making. It therefore follows that safeguarding children and young people is characterised by joint working, shared decision making, and by a management overlay that ensures decisions are taken, and that plans are always fully implemented in each case. The systems for child protection are primarily to protect the interests of children and young people who are at risk. It further recognises that good child protection policies and protocols also protect staff.

To ensure good practice and multi-agency collaboration, FHASS has adopted guidance from *Document Keeping Children Safe Our Duty to Care* (Volunteer Now), 2017.

A copy can also be viewed in '*First Housing > One Drive > Organisational Policies 2023*'.

We will endeavor to safeguard children and young people by:

- Implementing regional policies and procedures throughout the organisation
- Reporting concerns to the relevant safeguarding bodies
- Following procedures carefully for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training

In addition to these policies and procedures, the framework for the sharing of information about those who pose a risk to children can be found in:

- Chapter 8 of '*Co-operating to Safeguard Children*'
- *Multi-agency Sex offender Risk Assessment and Management* (MASRAM) Practice Guide

A copy of *Preliminary Assessment UNOCINI* for the purpose of safeguarding can be found in '*Policies 2023*', held in First Housing 's One Drive, which makes the policies accessible to everyone who works for the organisation. This form can be used to make referrals.

**Website** – [www.dhsspni.gov.uk/unocini](http://www.dhsspni.gov.uk/unocini)

Following the *Criminal Justice (NI) Order*, 2008, from October 6, 2008, the MASRAM arrangements were placed on a statutory footing under a new name of the *Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland* (PPANI).

## **2.1 - Governance Arrangements**

FHASS is committed to reviewing its '*Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy*' and '*Code of Practice*.' Our senior management group, led by our safeguarding champion, will conduct reviews of policies and procedures at regular intervals (no less than 3 years) and in response to changes in legislation.

Child Protection will be reviewed annually. The chief officer and board of directors have overall responsibility for ratifying all policies within First Housing.

*The interests of children come first.*

### **3.0 – Legislation and Policy Context**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following FHASS policy and guidance:

- *Safeguarding staff/volunteer, guidance manual policy and procedure*
- *Complaints policy/procedures*
- *Protection from abuse*
- *Incident reporting policy*
- *Staff/Volunteer code of conduct / professional boundaries policy*
- *Confidentiality policy*
- *Recording of information*
- *GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) 2018*
- *Recruitment and selection policy*
- *Staff/volunteer training and development policy*
- *Lone working policy*
- *Whistleblowing policy*

This policy is in-line with the following legislation and guidance:

- *UN (United Nations) Convention on the rights of the child (1989)*
- *The Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)*
- *The Children's Services Co-Operation Act (2015)*
- *Regional standards, child protection standards and good practice guide*
- *Keeping children safe - our duty to care (volunteer now, 2017)*
- *The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.*

### **4.0 - Introduction**

If you are concerned that a child may have been abused or neglected, this policy will help you to meet your legal, professional, and ethical duties to protect the child.

It is written in the form of questions and answers that provide clear and simple messages to help you protect children.

First Housing Aid & Support Services have approved it for use by all First Housing staff/volunteers, including anyone whose primary work is with adults but may have contact with children.

Remember, you have a personal and professional responsibility to act if you have concerns about child abuse and neglect.

### ***Who may be the alleged Abuser?***

Children and young people may be abused by a wide range of people - including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, other vulnerable children, volunteers, other service users, neighbors, friends, associates, people who deliberately exploit children, strangers, and opportunistic people.

Staff/volunteers should be aware that by the nature of their work with children and young people they too fit into the above list of potential abusers. Working with children puts people in a position of power, and sometimes this power can be abused.

First Housing has a ***Code of Conduct and Professional and Personal Boundaries Policy*** (see Employee Handbook) to protect children, young people, staff, and volunteers. These, and other related policies outlined in this document, form part of our safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult procedures and practices.

### ***4.1 - Professional Abuse***

A professional is anyone who is in a contractual relationship with an agency which results in them being in a position of trust in relation to children and young people. Professional abuse is seen to be significant harm caused by professionals.

Examples of professional abuse:

- To take advantage of a child or young person's trust
- To exploit their vulnerability
- Failure to act in their best interests
- Failure to keep professional boundaries

### ***What are the signs of abuse and neglect?***

The following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect:

- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- Has not received help for physical or mental problems brought to the parent's attention

- Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
- Lacks adult supervision
- Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
- Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home

The Parent/Adult Caregiver:

- Shows little concerns for the child
- Denies the existence of (or blames the child for) the child's problems in school or at home
- Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
- Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
- Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
- Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of emotional needs

The Parent/Adult Caregiver & Child:

- Rarely touch or look at each other
- Consider their relationship entirely negative
- State that they do not like each other

The following are some signs often associated with types of abuse (physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse). It is important to note, however, that these types of abuse are more typically found in a combination than alone. For example, a physically abused child is often emotionally abused as well - and a sexually abused child also may be neglected.

#### ***4.2 - Signs of Physical 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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of (or deliberately induces) illness in a child.

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the **child**:

- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school
- Seems frightened of the parents, and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Reports injury by a parent or other adult caregiver

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury
- Describes the child as "evil" or in some other negative way
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abuse as a child

#### ***4.3 - Signs of Neglect***

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 because of maternal substance abuse.

Consider the possibility of neglect when the **child**:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odour
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or in a bizarre manner
- Is abusing alcohol or drugs

#### ***4.4 - Signs of Sexual Abuse***

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities - not necessarily involving a high level of violence - whether the child is aware or not of what is happening. It also includes non-contact activity such as involving children in looking at (or in the production of) sexual images and grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Consider the possibility of neglect when the child:

- Shows behaviour changes, such as starting to be aggressive, withdrawn, cling, difficulties sleeping or regular nightmares
- Avoids the abuser and seems particularly afraid or reluctant to be alone with a person
- Shows sexually inappropriate behaviour or uses sexually explicit language

- Develops physical problems such as sexually transmitted infections or soreness and injury in the genital or anal areas
- Has problems at school, including trouble concentrating and achieving

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Is unduly protective of the child or severely limits the child's contact with other children, especially of the opposite sex
- Is secretive and isolated
- Is jealous or controlling with family members

#### ***4.5 - Signs of Emotional Abuse***

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, causing severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the **child**:

- Shows extremes in behaviour, such as overly compliant or demanding, extreme passivity, or aggression
- Is either inappropriately adult (parenting other children, for example) or inappropriately infantile (frequently rocking or head-banging, for example)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Has attempted suicide
- Reports a lack of attachment to the parent

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the **parent or other adult caregiver**:

- Constantly blame, belittle, or berate the child
- Is unconcerned about the child and refuses to consider offers of help for the child's problems
- Overtly rejects the child

### **5.0 – Other Safeguarding Risks**

#### ***5.1 - Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation (CCE/CSE)***

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 usual form of criminal exploitation is when a child is forced to sell drugs for an older person.

Signs of child exploitation include:

- Receiving unexpected gifts or money
- Using their phone secretly
- Having significantly older friends
- Being picked up from school by strangers
- Showing signs of self-harm
- Regularly going missing from school and home

‘Cuckooing’ is a term used for the practice of taking over somebody’s home for the purpose of exploitation. It may be for the storage, dealing or taking of drugs or for using the property for sex work. People who are vulnerable, have mental health issues or substance abuse issues, may be targeted, but will have negative consequences for both the adult involved and any children in the home. All FHASS staff and volunteers should consider the possibility of cuckooing.

## ***5.2 - Risks Posed by Communications Technology***

Staff/volunteers also need to be aware of the significant role that social networking plays in how children and young people communicate today. First Housing recognises the potential safeguarding issues that social networking brings; therefore, First Housing recommends that it is good practice for all staff/volunteers to follow the guidelines outlined in this guidance document.

### ***What is social media?***

Social media refers to the latest generation of interactive online services such as blogs, discussion forums, podcasts, and instant messages. Examples of these are as follows:

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)
- Micro- blogging services (e.g., Twitter)
- Video –sharing services (e.g., Youtube, Omegle, Snapchat)
- Photo-sharing services (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat)
- Online games and virtual reality (e.g., Xbox streaming, Twitch)

Most children and young people use the Internet positively but sometimes behave in ways that may put themselves at risk. Some risks do not necessarily arise from the technology itself but result from offline behaviors that are extended into the online world, and vice versa. Potential risks can include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying by peers and people they consider ‘friends’
- Posting personal information that can identify and locate a child offline
- Sexual grooming, luring, exploitation, and abuse contact with strangers
- Exposure to inappropriate content
- Involvement in making or distributing illegal or inappropriate content

- Theft of personal information
- Exposure to information and interaction with others encourage self-harm
- Exposure to racist or hate material
- Encouragement of violent behavior, such as 'happy slapping'
- Glorifying activities such as drug taking or excessive drinking
- Physical harm to young people in making video content, such as enacting and imitating stunts and risk-taking activities
- Leaving and running away from home because of contacts made online

First Housing will ensure that social media safeguarding issues are fully integrated into our existing safeguarding policies and procedures.

We will adhere to existing good practice policies including safeguarding and child protection, privacy of personal information, the use of photographs and acceptable behavior.

Informed consent (whether written or verbal) must be obtained from caregivers and the child before any photographs are taken, and how any images will be used is clearly explained. Images taken must preserve the child's dignity and respect their privacy.

Where photographs of children are used, they should not be accompanied by any identifiable information, such as their full name or address.

We will continue to review our existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they address online safeguarding issues - including the potential risks to children and young people online, sexual exploitation, online grooming, and cyber bullying.

Staff/volunteers should always ensure that children and young people within all First Housing projects are appropriately always supervised in the use of social media.

### ***5.3 - Children with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs***

At FHASS, we are aware that some children and young people have additional vulnerabilities due to the impact of their illness. Safeguarding disabled or sick children requires robust levels of awareness and high standards in our practice, and we are committed to upholding these standards and ensuring that our families expect this of us. These factors may include:

- Not outwardly showing signs of abuse and neglect, or the assumption that indicators of abuse such as behaviour or mood changes, and/or injury, are due to the child's disability without further exploration
- An increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children

- Their dependency on parents and often multiple carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour
- An impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation

If you are worried about something that does not fit neatly into any of the above categories - get help. A more complete statement of signs and symptoms can be found in the document '*Keeping Children Safe; Our Duty to Care*' section 4, located in '*Policies 2023*' on One Drive within your Project.

## 6.0 – What To Do If You Are Concerned About a Child

All members of First Housing staff and volunteers are required by the *Children (NI) Order*, 1995, to protect children. If you work for First Housing, then child protection is your business.

The principles that must govern work with children and their families are set in **Appendix 1**. Parents and children should be treated with respect, but the interests of the child must always come first.

*It is not your job to conduct your own investigation, neither should you accuse parents.*

You have a clear duty, however, to notify the appropriate person in First Housing, using the flow chart in section 4, of any concerns that you have and give them any assistance they ask for.

You should then co-operate fully with any investigating agency representative - e.g., Social Services or PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland).

### **What to do if a child/young person discloses to you their suspicions or evidence of abuse:**

- Be clear that you cannot guarantee confidentiality, where information may need to be shared to protect the child/young person
- Stay calm, listen carefully
- Take all concerns and disclosures seriously – put the interests of the child first
- Give the person time to say what they want to say
- Do not probe for further information

- Reassure the person by telling them they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Avoid comments about the alleged abuser, negative or otherwise
- Explain that you will have to talk to other people and tell them who you will notify
- Record the conversation in writing as soon as possible and as near verbatim as possible
- Do not conduct your own investigation
- Get help immediately (see the flowchart below)

## **Remember that good child protection practices protect everyone.**

### ***What is good recording practice?***

- Recording is an essential part of child protection
- Remember that in the event of legal action “no records mean no offence”
- Staff should accurately record all concerns using the *Concern Report Form*
- Note the nature of your concerns and any explanation given by the child or parents clearly in the report form
- Notes should be at the same time or at least as close as possible to any event but no later than within 24 hours
- Notes should be factual, consistent, and accurate
- They should be signed (full signature) and dated

### ***What happens next?***

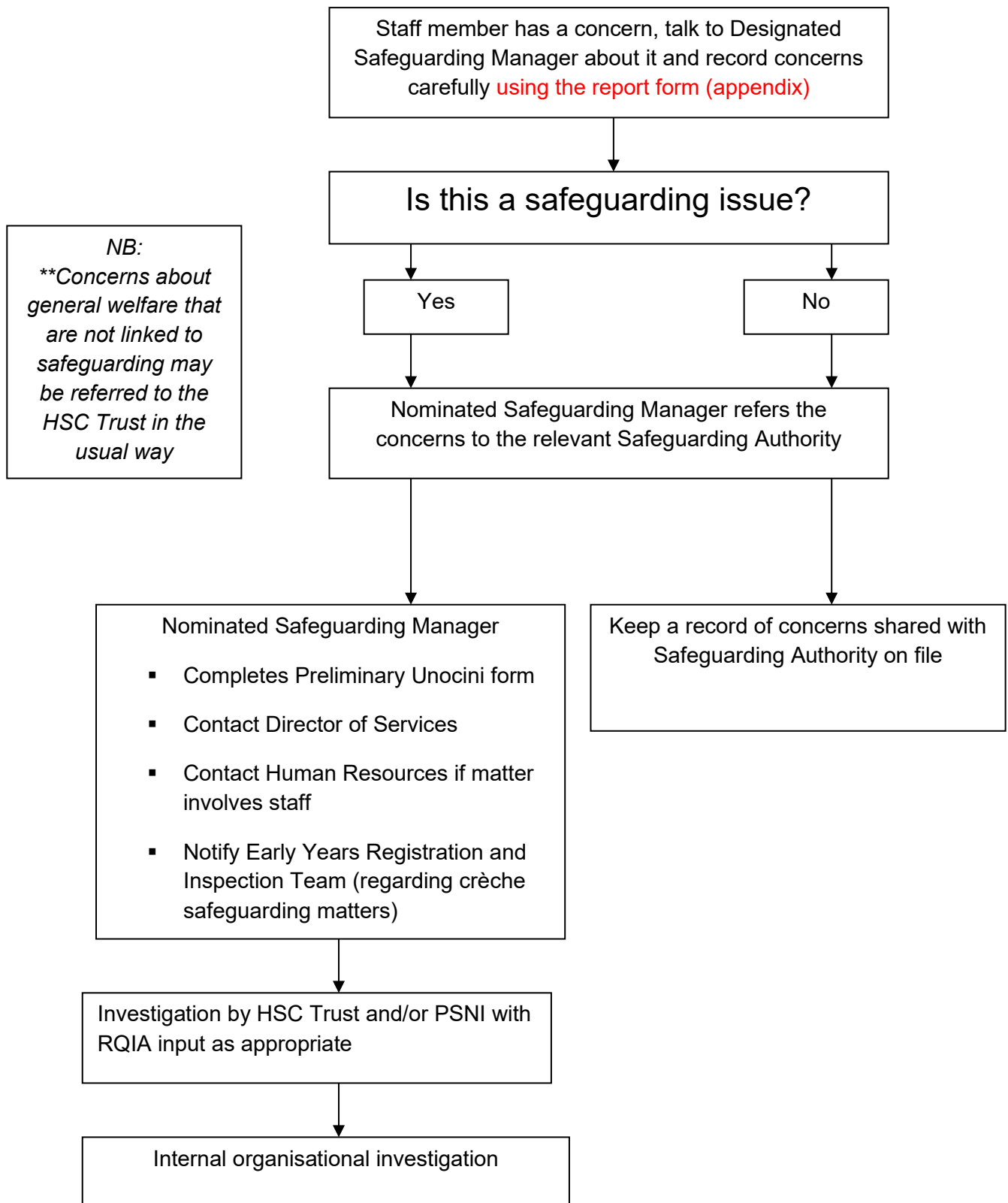
- Social Services have a legal duty to investigate concerns about children to ensure their protection
- The police (PSNI) may also investigate to determine if a crime has occurred
- These separate investigations are carefully coordinated to minimise inconvenience to the child
- You must provide any assistance you can to social workers or police officers carrying out this task
- You may be invited to attend a meeting called a case- conference (see Glossary in **Appendix 1**) or, very unusually, to court

### ***What about me?***

- Remember that you are not alone. Your line manager and the designated child protection officer will support you before, during and after you have concerns
- Children are alive and well today because people like you spoke out

## 7.0 – Reporting Procedures

### 7.1 – Child Protection Flow Chart



## 7.2 – Designated Safeguarding Persons

FHASS has appointed project managers as the ‘Designated Safeguarding Persons’ (DSP) who are responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children and young people.

The role of the designated safeguarding person is to:

- Know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern coming to the notice of FHASS
- Provide information and advice on child protection within FHASS
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover
- Liaise with local children’s social care services and other agencies, as appropriate
- Keep relevant people within FHASS informed about any action taken and any further action required - for example, disciplinary action against a member of staff
- Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence
- Advise FHASS of safeguarding and child protection training needs

The designated safeguarding person in conjunction with the director of operations will liaise with the relevant child protection teams to review the operation of the *Safeguarding & Child Protection* policy on a regular basis, to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice. Please note, First Housing has a safeguarding Champion (Eileen Best).

### *FHASS Contact Information*

|                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mrs. Phil Mahon</b><br>Chairperson First Housing Aid<br>& Support Services<br><br>23 Bishop Street,<br>Derry,<br>BT48 6PR<br><br><b>Telephone:</b><br>02871 266115 | <b>Eileen Best</b><br>Director Of Operations<br><br>23 Bishop Street,<br>Derry,<br>BT48 6PR<br><br><b>Telephone:</b><br>02871 266115 (Ex) 225<br><br><b>Mobile:</b><br>07793654667 | <b>Sinead Mc Fadden</b><br>Head Of HR<br><br>23 Bishop Street,<br>Derry,<br>BT48 6PR<br><br><b>Telephone:</b><br>02871 266115, (Ex) 223<br><br><b>Mobile:</b><br>07759446413 |
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### **7.3 - Regional Emergency Social Work Service**

Provide an emergency out-of-hours social work service for the population of Northern Ireland.

Tel: 0800 1979 995

The aim of RESWS is to provide an emergency social work service outside normal office hours, which responds to a wide range of people in crisis, and which **cannot be left until the next day**.

### **7.4 – Management of Allegations against Staff**

If the allegation of abuse relates to a staff member or a volunteer, the manager should only clarify the basic facts of the suspected abuse on the grounds of suspicion. The manager should understand that their role is supportive rather than investigative. At this stage they should not ask leading questions.

In cases of suspected abuse of children against a staff member or volunteer, nominated officers will carry out investigations in conjunction with human resources. This enquiry will be conducted separately from the enquiry or investigation under *Protection of Adult at Risk* policy although there may be a need for simultaneous action and for the co-ordination and sharing of information. Where a criminal investigation is taking place, the internal investigation may not be carried out/completed, or any potential disciplinary procedures initiated until the outcome of the case is known.

First Housing will report concerns about the suspected abuse by staff to the relevant statutory agency – *Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority* (RQIA) and the *Northern Ireland Social Care Council* (NISCC) where appropriate.

## **8.0 – Information Sharing and Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an important principle that enables people to feel safe sharing their concerns, and to ask for help. However, the right to confidentiality is not absolute, and the public interest in preventing abuse and neglect of children outweighs the public interest in confidentiality.

Sharing relevant information with the right people at the right time is vital to good safeguarding practice. Whilst notifying or seeking consent from parents or carers of a concern and referral is good practice, where there is a concern that this may either delay reporting and protection or increase the risk to the child or young person, it should not be sought.

All records regarding children and young people and any safeguarding concerns will be stored confidentially and securely, in line with FHASS's responsibilities under the *Data GDPR UK and Data Protection Act* (2018).

### ***What should I tell parents?***

Child protection concerns will only be withheld from parents when directed by investigating authorities (e.g., Public Protection Unit, PSNI, Gateway Team, or where staff/volunteers feel the sharing of information would place a child at further risk).

Tell parents that:

- That you have concerns
- That you have no choice but to speak to the designated child protection person
- Confidentiality is respected and information shared will be done only on a need-to-know basis
- Wherever possible, the parents' agreement should be obtained before making a referral to another agency. In some circumstances, however, agreement may not be given but the protection of the child will require the referral to be made immediately
- They should be advised of the intention to refer concerns to social services
- There may be situations whereby consent will not be sought. The welfare of the child will be paramount
- Safeguarding concerns will be brought to the attention of the chair of first housing, Mrs. Phil Mahon. The director of operations will be responsible for communicating these concerns

## **9.0 – Recruitment and Training**

First Housing will ensure that all staff/volunteers, whose roles include working with children, are carefully selected, screened, and supervised. Staff are also responsible for ensuring that they undertake the relevant training identified for their post. It is important for staff/volunteers to know that they are not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred or not - nor are they responsible for conducting any investigations. This is the role of the Health & Social Care Trusts and the PSNI.

As part of the recruitment procedure, all newly appointed staff/volunteers receive an enhanced Access NI Check.

## **10.0 - Whistleblowing**

All staff, volunteers and others with serious concerns about any aspect of their work - and anything that they see is unethical or illegal - are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns. Whistleblowing is designed to assist, encourage, and enable employees and volunteers to make serious concerns known within the organisation, without fear of being penalised or treated unfairly because of it, when made in good faith.

In the first instance, you should talk to your line manager to share your concerns. However, if you are not satisfied with the response, you can make a whistleblowing disclosure.

You can seek independent and confidential advice on whistle blowing at [www.pcaw.org.uk](http://www.pcaw.org.uk).

## APPENDIX 1 – Glossary of Terms

(BASED, AS APPORRIATE, ON THE *CHILDREN (NI) ORDER 1995* OR “*CO-OPERATING TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN*” 2003)

“**Assessment Framework**” is short for the “Multi-disciplinary Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families.” It records the combined views of nursing, medical, social work and other disciplines about risks and need in relation to a child who is the subject of a “comprehensive assessment.”

“**Care Order**” is an order under the Children Order that authorises the applicant to place a child in the care of Social Services.

“**C.A.R.E. Unit**” Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry (C.A.R.E.) Units are comprised of specially trained police officers dedicated to investigating child abuse and sexual offences against adults.

The “**Case Conference**” is a special meeting chaired by Social Services to share and evaluate information gathered during a child protection investigation. The meeting decides if a child’s name is placed on the child protection register and, if so, develops a child protection plan.

“**Child**” means a person under the age of 18.

Social Services, NSPCC and/or Police must carry out a “**Child Protection Investigation**” if a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

A “**Child Protection Plan**” is a plan that sets out actions to be taken and supports mechanisms to be put in place to manage the risks to a child.

The “**Child Protection Register**” lists all children in an area who are subjected to child protection plans.

The “**Comprehensive Assessment**” is a detailed multi-disciplinary assessment undertaken in the context of a child protection investigation.

“**Co-operating to Safeguard Children**” is a legally binding document produced by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. It sets out how organisations that work with children are to protect them and support their families.

The “**Emergency Protection Order**” is an order under the Children Order that authorises Social Services’ preferred method of intervention when concerns are raised about children.

“**Joint Protocol**” is short for the “Protocol for the Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse.” This ensures that child protection and investigations are properly coordinated to minimize their impact on children.

“Look-after Children” means young people aged 18 years or under who are in the care of social services.

The “Leaving and Aftercare Team” helps young adults under 21 years of age who previously were “looked-after”.

The “Named Nurse for Child Protection” must be appointed by a Hospital Trust to provide, among other things, advice, and guidance about child protection.

“Out of Hours Service” is a 24hr emergency service provided by Social Services outside normal office.

The “Paramount Principle” is a fundamental requirement of the Children (NI) Order 1995 that obliges to put the interests of children first.

“Parental Responsibility” means all the rights, duties, powers, and responsibilities, which by law a parent of a child has in relation to a child and his property.

“Police Protection Order” Police may take immediate action if a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. It must be authorised by a PSNI Inspector and lasts for 72 hours.

“Regional ACPC Child Protection Policy and Procedures” are the common policy and procedures that have been drawn up by the four Area Child Protection Committees for use across N. Ireland.

“Significant harm” is the legal term for child abuse. This may involve sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. (See Co-operating to Safeguard Children 2.2 for detailed definitions.

“Strategy Discussion” is a conversation, either by telephone or in person, between the person making a referral and representatives of investigating and other agencies that know a child to determine protective action needs to be taken and to agree what needs to happen next.

“Safeguarding Champion” is a single point of contact for all matters relating to Safeguarding inclusive of ensuring that everyone is aware of policies. Training DBS checks are completed by all employees within First Housing. The Safeguarding Champion is also available to give advice on Safeguarding matters and ensure that everyone is acting within their role in relation to safeguarding matters.

## **APPENDIX 2 - Concern Report Form**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

***Where a referral is made, this form will be sent to the children's social care services as a written confirmation of the referral with a copy retained by the DSP.***

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Age if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

***What prompts your concerns? Please be specific and include the dates and times of any incidents***

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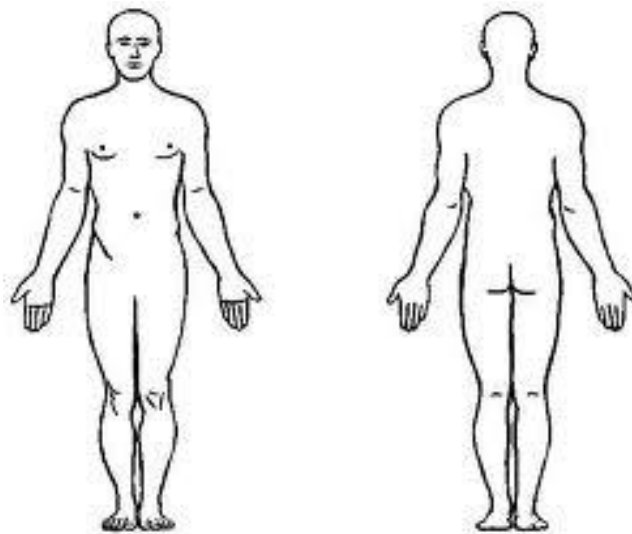
**Were there any physical or behavioral signs? Any other causes of concern? (Use the body map below)**

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**Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?**

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**Have you spoken to the child's parents / carers? If so, what was said?**

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**Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.**

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**Please give your name and contact details.**

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form must be completed and given or sent in a sealed envelope marked "Private & Confidential," to FHASS's Designated Safeguarding Person in the appropriate departments.*