



## **MIND IN CROYDON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

Mind in Croydon is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding is taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children and young people's welfare are minimized. It is designed to reassure service users, parents/carers/advocates, and the contracting/commissioning bodies for whom we provide services. It also establishes the roles and responsibilities of everyone who works for Mind in Croydon in relation to safeguarding the children and young people with whom we work. It does this by setting out clear guidance so staff, volunteers, trainees, and managers are able to act appropriately in any given situation. This policy is based on and reflects the principles of both UK legislation and guidance and other relevant Mind in Croydon policies and procedures. The approach has been developed in such a way as to be consistent with 'Best Practice' within the field of safeguarding children and young people.

### **2. Statutory Framework**

- 2.1 The Children's Act 1989 provides the legal framework for the protection of children in the UK. Under the Children's Act, a child is defined as any person under 18 years of age.
- 2.2 The Protection of Children Act 1999 requires employers to carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before employees are allowed to come into contact with children. Mind in Croydon is required under this legislation to apply for enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service for staff working with children.
- 2.3 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 was passed in November 2006 for full implementation during Autumn 2008. This Act has introduced a new vetting and barring system which will integrate the current List 99 (for teachers) and the Protection of Children Act lists (for those working in childcare settings). It will transfer the responsibility for barring decisions to a new statutory Independent Board and for the first time enable employers to make a 'real-time' instant check of whether a prospective employee is barred with secure online access.
- 2.4 On occasion we may deliver work in school settings: Keeping Children safe in Education  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1101454/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf)

### **3. Forms of Abuse**

Abuse can take many forms. These include:

### **3.1 Physical Abuse**

This may include hitting, shaking, throwing burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a young person who they are looking after. This is commonly described using such terms as 'fictitious' illness by proxy or 'Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy'.

### **3.2 Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **3.3 Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, and clothing; failure to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a young person's basic emotional needs.

### **3.4 Emotional**

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on young people. It may involve causing young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a young person, though it may occur alone.

### **3.5 Significant Harm**

Some young people may be in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act V section 47 (1) introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of the young person.

## **4. Protection From Harm or Abuse**

It is everyone at Mind in Croydon's responsibility to promote the safety of the children and young people we work with. Staff, volunteers, trainees, and management committee members are always expected to maintain a sense of proportion, apply common sense to situations, and protect the child' or the young person's welfare as the key priority. It is also Mind's duty to ensure that staff, volunteers, trainees, and management committee members are never placed in situations where abuse might be alleged. It is not intended that the policy should restrict staff, volunteers, trainees,

and management committee members from normal ways of working, but they always need to consider how an action or activity may be perceived as opposed to how it is intended.

## 5. Principles of Good Practice

Mind in Croydon considers that:

- 5.1 All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief, and sexual identity have a right to be treated with care, respect, and dignity.
- 5.2 The welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration.
- 5.3 Those working for Mind in Croydon will be perceived by children and young people as trusted representatives of the organization(s) providing support.
- 5.4 It is important to ensure communication with children and young people is open and clear.
- 5.5 It is important for staff, volunteers, trainees, and management committee members to avoid physical contact with children and young people except for that which is clearly outlined in the service user's risk assessment and the duties outlined in job descriptions and role profile

## 6. Child AT RISK – SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE – Alerting Manger

- 6.1 You are not expected to be an expert in identifying abuse or investigating allegations, instead it is your duty to report any concerns to your line manager or other senior person in the organisation and support them in acting where required. In line with the pan London adult safeguarding policy the organisation's alerting manager is the person tasked with making referrals to the local authority.
- 6.2 At Mind in Croydon, we have identified Alerting Managers as being the Manager of each service, and in their absence, the Director of Services (Direct Dial 020 8253 8211, email [tom@mindincroydon.org.uk](mailto:tom@mindincroydon.org.uk)) or the Chief Executive (Direct Dial 020 8017 3900, email [emma@mindincroydon.org.uk](mailto:emma@mindincroydon.org.uk)). If you receive a disclosure of alleged abuse or develop a strong suspicion that abuse is taking place, you should: record the allegation clearly and accurately, notify one of the organisations alerting managers. In situations in which the alerting manager cannot be contacted all staff, trustees and volunteers should ring the Croydon adult abuse **Reporting line** of 020 8726 6400 (including out of hours) or **Online**: MASH referral [Single Point of Contact \(SPOC\) Safeguarding Referral Form \(croydon.gov.uk\)](#).
- 6.3 The Alerting Managers responsibility is to ensure that Mind's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy is implemented throughout the organization and; Carry out all necessary child protection/safeguarding-related inquiries, procedures, and investigations.
- 6.4 The Alerting Mangers ensure secure and confidential record-keeping on safeguarding matters, that a "need to know" confidentiality policy is preserved on such matters, and that all staff, volunteers, trainees, and management

committee members apply themselves fully to the Data Protection Act 2018 which is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

**6.5** The Alerting managers liaise with social services and the police in the relevant boroughs on child protection/safeguarding matters, both formally and informally. Reporting allegations and suspicions of abuse to the appropriate authorities. Ensure there are adequate and appropriate induction and training for all Staff, volunteers, trainees, and management committee members on child safeguarding matters. Ensure that all activities carried out by Mind satisfy safeguarding requirements with regard to personnel, practices, and premises.

**6.6** Check and countersign all incident reports made by staff making such reference to outside agencies as is appropriate.

**6.7** Report on the implementation of the Safeguarding Children Policy at all Mind in Croydon management / SMT meetings.

## **7. Procedures for Mind's Personnel (Staff, Volunteers, Trainees, Senior Management Team Members)**

**8.1** Reporting Witnessed Incidents or Abuse or Reports from Children and Young People

**7.1.1** All Mind in Croydon staff, volunteers, trainees, or trustee members should be alert to any signs of abuse and report any concerns or suspicions to their line manager or in the case of management committee members directly to the Alerting Managers, immediately or as soon as it is practicable to do so.

**7.1.2** The member of staff, volunteer, trainee, or management committee member will be required to complete an occurrence report.

**7.1.3** In the case of staff, volunteers, or trainees, the line manager will refer this matter to the alerting manager who should contact the contracting authority.

**7.1.4** If the alleged incident did not occur within the context of a contract operated by Mind in Croydon, the local authority within which the alleged incident occurred should be contacted and/or the police. Their guidance should then be followed.

**7.1.5** A record of the incident and action taken must be kept and filed within Mind in Croydon's record-keeping on safeguarding matters and must be secure and confidential, that a "need to know" confidentiality policy is preserved on such matters and that all staff and members of the management committee within Mind must apply themselves fully to the Data Protection Act 2018 which is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

## **7.2 Reports from Children and Young People**

- 7.2.1** If a child or young person tells a member of Mind in Croydon personnel of any incident of abuse or states any concerns about the behaviour of any person, this person must inform the child or young person that this matter cannot remain confidential.
- 7.2.2** The member of Staff, volunteers, or trainee should contact their line manager who will require them to complete an occurrence report. If this is a management committee member, they should contact the alerting manager.
- 7.2.3** The line manager will then refer this matter to the alerting manager who should contact the contracting authority or agency. The contracting authority or agency's child protection/safeguarding children and young people's procedures will then apply.
- 7.2.4** A record of the incident and action taken must be kept and filed within Mind. Record-keeping on safeguarding children matters must be secure and confidential, that a "need to know" confidentiality policy is preserved on such matters and that all staff and members of the management committee within Mind must apply themselves fully to the Data Protection Act.

## **7.3 Allegations Made Against Mind's Staff, Volunteers, Trainees or Trustees.**

- 7.3.1** If an allegation against any person working for Mind in Croydon is made, the following procedure must be followed. The person or persons making the allegation will be required to complete an occurrence report. This should be taken by a member of Mind in Croydon's senior management team. The manager will then refer this matter to the Reporting Managers.
- 7.3.2** The member of Staff, Volunteer, trainee, or trustee member in question may remain suspended unless and until the police and/or social services confirm there was no substance to the report. An incident report will be made and treated as confidential.
- 7.3.3** If no criminal allegation has been made, the reporting managers or nominee will conduct an investigation by gathering as much detail as possible from available sources of information. For Staff, Volunteers, and trainees, the investigation will follow Mind's in Croydon Disciplinary Procedure.

## **8. Review and Evaluation**

### **8.1 Documenting Disclosure**

In all cases outlined above, written records of the process and the decisions taken throughout must be maintained. In the first instance, this will include the

completion of an incident report.

## 8.2 **Monitoring, Review and Evaluation**

Incidences of breaches of this policy should be kept and reviewed at contract/depot meetings and Senior Managers meetings to review how these matters were dealt with to inform future policy and practice.

**Next Review Date:** September 2024 (Policy to be reviewed annually in September or at a relevant change of circumstance)

### **Appendix:** Croydon Safeguarding Children Board Threshold Guidance

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Children%20social%20care/Croydon%20Safeguarding%20Children%20Board/Croydon%20Safeguarding%20Children%20Board%20Threshold%20Guidance.pdf>