



AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT
for parents/carers of children with
ADHD and/or on the Autistic Spectrum

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff including Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers or anyone working on behalf of Angels Support Group. It outlines our commitment to protecting and safeguarding children against potential harm or actual harm.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive services from Angels Support Group. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of their level of dependency or their communication needs
- Working in partnership with children, young people and their parents, carers and statutory bodies and voluntary agencies is essential in promoting children's and young people's safety and welfare.

Angels Support Group will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to, and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for children and young people, a deputy and a lead Trustee for safeguarding

- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets and on our website
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share relevant information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents/carers, children and young people appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Reviewing our safeguarding policy and procedures annually.

Angels Support Group will endeavour to safeguard the children who are members or who attend activities we organise or facilitate by following the procedure if a concern is raised about a child's welfare.

The definition of a child for the purpose of this document is anyone under the age of 18 years. For concerns about anyone over 18 years of age please see our Safeguarding Adults policy.

Contact details

Angels Support Group has appointed Leise Cooper to be responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns. In her absence, staff can directly call any of the contact numbers listed below:

Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Leise Cooper, Parent Support Manager

Work telephone number:	01462 485150
Mobile number:	07815 458355
Emergency contact number:	07815 458355

Other Key Contacts:

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:	0300 123 4043
Hertfordshire Adult Care Services Team (over 18 years):	0300 123 4042
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Hertfordshire:	0300 123 4043
Police in an emergency, if immediate danger call:	999
NSPCC Helpline:	0808 800 5000

The member of Angels Trustee Board with responsibility for Safeguarding is:
Hilary Forrester: Email: secretary@angelssupportgroup.org.uk

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance which seeks to protect children and young people, namely:

- [The Children Act 1989](#) sets out that the child's welfare is paramount and safeguarding and promoting it is the priority.
- [The Children Act 2004](#) set out a duty on local authorities to work closely with those providing services to children and young people.
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. It is important that all practitioners working to safeguard children and young people understand fully their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.
- [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991](#) sets out key principles which are enshrined within these acts and the statutory guidance. The rights included in the UN convention apply to all children and young people, with no exceptions.
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulations \(EU\) 2016/679](#)
- [DPA \(Data Protection Act\) 2018](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education\(2020\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children: Statutory Guidance](#)

This policy should be read alongside the following*:

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Privacy Policy for Members
- Complaints Policy
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers including e-safety
- Support Group Meeting Rules
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Induction and training procedures
- Whistle blowing procedures

*(*Available on our website or may be requested from info@angelssupportgroup.org.uk)*

Outcomes for children and their families

Angels Support Group intends that it will promote the welfare of children and young people attending and taking part in activities. Children and young people and their parents / carers can be assured that Angels Support Group takes their welfare seriously and wants them to enjoy the activities in a safe and secure environment.

Every adult who works with or on behalf of Angels Support Group is aware of the contents of this policy and understands the procedures if there are any activities that may be unsafe or may present a risk of harm, or if the child or young person (or their parent(s) / carer(s)) makes a disclosure of abuse or an allegation against an adult working with them. Such disclosures or allegations will be taken very seriously to ensure that the child is protected.

All adults working for or with Angels Support Group have been recruited in accordance with safer recruitment practices, and DBS or Enhanced DBS checks will be applied for and references taken up as required. Staff and volunteer induction into the organisation will include basic safeguarding training and a briefing on this policy.

Safeguarding Procedures

It is imperative that staff are equipped with the knowledge and awareness that will enable them to detect any abuse or ill treatment of children. These procedures apply to Trustees, all members of staff and volunteers.

In implementing this safeguarding policy Angels Support Group will:

- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation by including training on child protection in their induction and in subsequent training that is undertaken.
- Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's Child Protection Procedures and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice.
- Ensure that all workers are aware of the HSCB Inter-agency Child Protection & Safeguarding Children Procedures and are confident in how to work within these guidelines by ensuring their attendance at training and at subsequent refresher training organised by the HSCB.
- Ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection.
- Ensure that a named person responsible for child protection is appointed and that they understand their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. police and/or Children's Services).
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's complaints procedure.
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when appropriate, have access to all guidelines and procedures, depending on the nature of their involvement.
- Keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

- Ensure that appropriate background checks are undertaken when anyone joins the organisation and before they start working directly with children and young people.
- Ensure that all people working directly with children and young people have at least a basic understanding of child protection and as part of their training have at the very least undertaken an online, certificated child protection course.

Roles and responsibilities

All staff and volunteers of Angels Support Group are required to:

- Understand and apply this policy and procedure in their activities;
- Identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role;
- Act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others;
- Be able to recognise harm; and
- Know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way.

Trustees and senior members of the organisation are required to:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand this policy and procedures at the point of recruitment as part of their induction and training. They must send an email to the Safeguarding Trustee to confirm they have read and understood this policy and the “Safeguarding Adults Policy”.
- Undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training
- Ensure that the policy is adhered to
- Ensure that a whistle blowing policy is developed, agreed and communicated with all staff and volunteers
- Notify appropriate authorities in cases where an incident needs to be reported to other regulators such as the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- The Safeguarding Trustee will undertake regular compliance audits by completing the Safeguarding Checklist on an annual basis and to report back to the DSP and other Trustees to ensure that the charity is meeting all safeguarding requirements. A copy of the most recently completed checklist is available on request.
- The Safeguarding Trustee and DSL will notify the Charity Commission promptly if any serious actual or alleged incident safeguarding issues have occurred.

The role and responsibilities of the named DSL is to:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- Record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Safeguarding policy and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused or suffering neglect

1. *Is it neglect or abuse?*

Check Appendix A for guidance on recognising abuse and neglect.

All staff, volunteers and Trustees should be alert to the signs of child abuse and neglect. Abuse (emotional, physical and sexual) and neglect can present in many different forms. Indicators of abuse and neglect may be difficult to spot.

2. *Act immediately if you have any concerns*

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care may need to be made immediately. If it is thought that a crime has been committed and/or a child is at immediate risk, the police should be notified.

3. *Record all concerns*

You can use the form in Appendix B to log a concern and record any discussions.

4. *Speak to the designated safeguarding lead and follow the guidance in the Safeguarding Policy*

Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Leise Cooper

Work telephone number: 01462 485150

Mobile number: 07815 458355

Emergency contact number: 07815 458355

If the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Take advice from the organisations listed below:

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership 0300 123 4043

Hertfordshire Adult Care Services Team (over 18 years): 0300 123 4042

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Hertfordshire: 0300 123 4043

Police in an emergency, if immediate danger call: 999

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is possible.

Any safeguarding matter affecting the Charity should be brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Trustee. This can be done anonymously in accordance with the Whistleblowing policy if necessary.

5. *Do not assume someone else will take action*

Early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. If in any doubt about sharing information, speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. (see www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)

6. Identify who adults and children can contact in the event of an incident

Here are some suggestions:

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:	0300 123 4043
Hertfordshire Adult Care Services Team:	0300 123 4042
Childline:	0800 11 11
National Youth Advocacy Service:	0808 808 1001
Citizens Advice Service:	03444 111 444

Approval and review schedule

This policy and procedures applies to Angels Support Group and covers any activities we run as a group. We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures on a regular basis and when there are significant changes in legislation or to our organisation.

This policy and procedures was adopted as follows:

Date approved: March 2021

Signature of the Chair: _____

Date Signed: _____

Signature of Trustees: _____

Frequency policy to be reviewed: Annually

Date policy to be reviewed: March 2022

History of changes to this policy

Date	Summary of changes
July 2019	Changed reference to “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018” (previous version was 2015) Updated links to websites. Updated legal framework and Angels policy reference list. Restructuring. Reference sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSPCC Voluntary and community sector: keeping children safe (https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-voluntary-and-community-groups/)• Charity Commission Guidance: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees#children-adults-at-risk)
Mar 2020	Reformatted. Safeguarding Trustee details and responsibilities added. Related policy documents revised. Safeguarding Checklist procedure included.
Mar 2021	Changed name of ‘Safeguarding Adults Policy’. Added reference to: ‘Keeping children safe in education(2020)’ and ‘Guidance on Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)’

Appendix A: Recognition of Abuse and Neglect

Definition of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

An abused child is any boy or girl, under 18 years of age, who has suffered from, or is believed likely to be, at risk of significant risk of physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.

Physical abuse

(Including when masqueraded as discipline and chastisement)

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. [...]

Physical abuse often arises from a wish to chastise. English law allows smacking by parents in that parents can use the defence of “reasonable chastisement” but only in a charge of common assault.

The introduction of section 54 of the Children Act 2004 changed the law, to remove the reasonable chastisement defence for actual bodily harm. Actual bodily harm includes minor visible injuries such as a graze, a scratch, an abrasion or bruising around the eye. Common assault implies a transient trifling injury such as reddening of the skin or no injury at all. The use of an implement to hit a child though not specifically prohibited is more likely to leave a mark. Thus the law allows a parent to smack a child where doing so leaves no mark upon the skin, so only light smacks are permitted. “Over chastisement” which implies at least actual bodily harm would be against the law and the reasonable chastisement defence would not apply. This means, for example, that a parent can no longer justify beating a child on the grounds that child is difficult to raise.

Although the reasonable chastisement defence only applies to the criminal law the concept influences decisions taken in the family courts. The defence applies only to parents and adults acting in loco parentis with the parent’s permission. Physical chastisement, i.e. corporal punishment, of any form has been prohibited in state schools since 1986, private since 1998 and by child minders since 2003.

It is important that all professionals treat injuries caused to children by their parents as an assault and do not condone or excuse this because their intention was to discipline the child.

Professionals should be cautious about referring to such assaults as “over-chastisement” as this can have the effect of minimising the impact on the child of the injuries or implying the child’s behaviour was a contributory cause.

There is evidence that even smacking allowed within the law is harmful to children. For example, minor forms of regular smacking of pre-school children is associated with an increased risk of antisocial behaviour after 2-3 years even when allowing for other parenting risk factors and the presence of such behaviour at study entry. Maternal depression and violence between adult partners are associated with a greater risk of smacking children than either factor present alone regardless of child behaviour. Parents who experience physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to smack their own children.

The following definition is taken from a previous version of Working Together (Working Together 2010)

“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 or, or deliberately induces illness in a child”

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

The following definition is taken from a previous version of Working Together (Working Together 2010)

*“Emotional abuse is a form of **Significant Harm** which involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.*

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone."

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Physical, mental and emotional development delay
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Sexual Abuse

The following definition is taken from a previous version of Working Together (Working Together 2010)

*"Sexual abuse is a form of **Significant Harm** which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children"*

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Neglect

The following definition is taken from a previous version of Working Together (Working Together 2010)

“Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- *provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)*
- *protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger*
- *ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-giver)*
- *ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.”

Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Constant hunger

- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

Appendix B: Logging a Concern

This form should be used to record safeguarding concerns relating to Children and/or Vulnerable persons. All the information must be treated as confidential and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within one working day. The form should be completed at the time or immediately following disclosure, but after all necessary emergency actions have been taken.

Please complete the form as fully as possible.

1 Your details – the person completing the form

Name

Address

Telephone
number

Email

2 Other present or potential witnesses

Name

Address

Telephone
number

Email

3 Details of the incident (describe in detail using only the facts) continue on next page

4 Other present or potential witnesses

Name

Address

Telephone
number

Email

5 Additional relevant information

I have completed this form and provided information that is factual and does not contain my own views or opinions on the matter.

Print name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____