



UNFOLDING THEATRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

This policy details the organisational procedures and best practice implemented by Unfolding Theatre (UT) in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people.

UT is a theatre company based in Newcastle upon Tyne that brings together surprising combinations of people to take part in professional creative processes. These collaborations generate remarkable theatre for national audience, reflecting stories of people from a range of communities. The company's aims are more people are leading happier, more creatively fulfilled lives; mainstream theatre better reflects England's diversity, driving artistic excellence and people with different lived experiences are better connected.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people when they participate in activities and events organised by UT.
- To ensure the safety of anyone working on behalf of UT, including but not limited to, all paid staff/employees, the board of trustees, creative practitioners, artists, volunteers and interns (collectively referred to as 'Associated UT Individuals') when undertaking an activity or event organised by UT.
- To provide Associated UT Individuals, as well as children and young peoples and their families, with the overarching principles that guided our approach to safeguarding.
- Set out UT's commitment to meeting the needs of children and young people.
- Allow Associated UT Individuals to take appropriate decisions with regard to the needs of children and young people.

This policy applies to:

- Children and young people involved in activities led by UT, whether in or outside of school, in community groups or as a member of an audience.
- Associated UT Individual working on behalf of UT, whether they are directly or indirectly in contact with children or young people.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of the following legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect Children and young peoples in England. A summary of key legislation is available from nspcc.org.uk/learning.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance that follow this statement.

UT believe that:

- Children and young peoples should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all Children and young peoples, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

UT recognise that:

- The welfare of Children and young peoples is paramount in the work we do in all the decisions we take all Children and young peoples, regardless of age, disability, gender identify, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some Children and young peoples are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with Children and young peoples, their parents/carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the Children and young peoples' welfare.

UT will seek to keep children and young peoples safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing nominated employee and trustee leads for safeguarding.
- Adopting safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for Associated UT Individuals.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all Associated UT Individuals know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting Associated UT Individuals safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- Making sure that Children and young peoples and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving Children and young peoples, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against Associated UT Individuals appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
- If children are employed to work on a show, the appropriate licences will be sought from the child's Local Authority at least 21 days before the performance. Proper supervision and travel arrangements will be made, in line with local authority guidelines.

CONTACT DETAILS

Nominated safeguarding and child protection lead:

Annie Rigby, Artistic Director

07946 523 112 / annie@unfoldingtheatre.co.uk

Trustee/senior lead for safeguarding and child protection:

Bex Bowsher, Chair of Trustees

07534 801 084 / rhbowsher@gmail.com

NSPCC Helpline:

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed and approved by the Unfolding Theatre Board of Trustees on 6th December 2021.

Annie Rigby, Artistic Director

Bex Bowsher, Chair of Trustees



UNFOLDING THEATRE SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. STAFF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of UT's trustees are:

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- To ensure simple and appropriate procedures are in place for managing any concerns that Associated UT Individuals have about children and young people.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To investigate all disclosures, observations and allegations of abuse.
- To understand, monitor, review and update this Safeguarding Policy.

The responsibilities of UT's employees are:

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of the Safeguarding Policy.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To refer immediately any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Lead.
- To ensure that at all times, an identified Associated UT Individual is present whilst UT activity involving children and young people takes place.

The responsibilities of all Associated UT Individuals are:

- To read, understand and comply with the requirements of this policy.
- To undertake training as necessary to enable them to ensure this policy can be implemented.
- To take all reasonable steps to promote a safeguarding culture.
- To refer immediately any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Lead.
- To understand and abide by the Code of Conduct and Best Practice (Appendix 1).

The responsibilities of parents and consenting adults are:

- To be ultimately responsible for the children and young people's welfare at all times.

2. RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE, OR CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELFARE

2.1. Identifying concerns

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- Directly – making a specific disclose in a verbal statement about what is happening to them.
- Indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statement which suggest something is wrong.
- Behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this can be deliberately, but not always)
- Non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

You should not wait until a children or young person tells you directly that they are being abused before taking after. Instead, ask the children or young person if everything is okay or discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead. Not all concerns or disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse, but all concerns and disclosures should be taken seriously and reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

If an Associated UT Individual has a concern (where no disclosure has taken place), UT requests the following procedure is followed:

- Discuss the matter with UT's Safeguarding Lead.
- Complete a Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form (see appendix)

2.2. Definitions and Signs of Abuse

In order to effectively protect children and young peoples against harm, all Associated UT Individuals should be familiar with the various types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Child sexual exploitation (including County Lines exploitation)
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Emotional abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child trafficking
- Female genital mutilation

Please refer to Appendix 2 for detailed definitions of the types of abuse listed above.

2.3. Responding to Disclosures

A disclosure is when a child or young person makes it known that they have been, or are currently being abused or neglected, that they are at risk of harm from others or from themselves, or that they may cause harm to another person.

A disclosure can be direct, indirect (verbal, written or graphic hints that appear to be about abuse) or third party (a children or young person tells another person they are being abused).

If a child or young person discloses to you, UT requests the following procedure is followed:

Receive

- Listen and accept what is being said. Take what is being said seriously.
- Give your full attention and keep body language open and encouraging.
- Do not express verbally or non-verbally how it makes you feel, that is a separate issue for you to deal with later.
- Respect pauses and don't interrupt.
- Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.
- Make notes.

Reassure

- Reassure the child or young person as much as you can.
- It is important to let them know you take them seriously.
- Be compassionate, understanding and reassure them that their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown courage today' can help.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not make false promises, such as 'I won't say anything'.
- Show you understand and reflect back to check your understanding – use their language to show it's their experience.

React

- React to the conversation only so far as is necessary for you to know whether a referral to Social Services is required.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Do not ask 'leading' questions.
- Make it clear that it is your responsibility to pass on information. Never promise confidentiality.
- Make it clear what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Don't criticise the perpetrator who may be a family member or close to the child.
- Do not ask the child or young person to repeat anything to other staff.

Record

- Write up notes on the Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form (see appendix). Write these notes in as full a way as possible, without throwing away any original notes.
- Use the child or young person's words rather than your words for any body parts or activities described.
- Include the child or young person's details (name, age, address) date, time, place, and any non-verbal behaviour the child or young person displays whilst talking to you, for example moments of distress and when they occurred in the conversation.
- If there is any bruising or marks noticed, draw a diagram to show where they are.

Talk

- Report the disclosure to UT's Safeguarding Lead (Annie Rigby) as soon as possible.

Please also be aware that:

- It is not your responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse.
- You should not take any action beyond that identified above.
- You cannot promise a young person complete confidentiality – you must explain that you may need to pass information on.

Information Sharing and Consent

Children and young people should be given the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their personal information being shared. If a child or young person doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions, ask their parent or carer (unless doing so would put the child or young person at risk of harm).

Tips for getting consent:

- be open and honest
- make sure the child or young person you're asking for consent understands what information will be shared and why
- explain who will see the information and what it will be used for

- make sure the child or young person you're asking for consent understands the consequences of their information not being shared
- get the consent in writing, in case there are any disputes in the future. If it's only given verbally, make a written record of this
- make sure the person knows they can withdraw consent at any time.

2.4. Sharing information without consent

If consent is refused or if you're unable to seek consent, you can still share information with relevant professionals if this is in the public interest. This includes protecting child or young person from significant harm and promoting the welfare of children.

When deciding whether to share information without consent, you should consider each case individually.

- Decide if the need to share information is in the public interest and whether it outweighs the need to maintain confidentiality.
- Consider all the implications of sharing the information, for example if you are sharing sensitive details about a person's life.

If you're sharing information without consent keep a written record explaining:

- what steps you took to get consent
- the person's reasons for not giving consent (if known)
- why you felt it was necessary to share information without consent.

Pass a copy of this record on to the agency/agencies you're sharing the information with.

Confidentiality

Never promise a child or young person that you will keep the things they're telling you a secret. Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help.

2.5. Reporting allegations, suspicions or concerns

Record any safeguarding concerns immediately using the Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form in the Appendix 3.

It is not the role of any Associated UT Individual to decide whether a child or young person has been subjected to abuse or neglect. However Associated UT Individuals have an obligation to report any justified concerns regarding children and young people they are working with, especially when a disclosure has been made.

Making a referral to Social Services

Once the Safeguarding Lead has been made aware of a disclosure, concern or observation it is their responsibility to determine whether to formally report this concern to Social Services. UT will make all referrals within 24 hours and fully comply with Social Services.

If a concern is allayed and the decision is taken not to make a referral to Social Services, details of the concern and details as why a referral was not made will be retained.

2.6. Whistleblowing and Complaints

If an Associated UT Individual feels that UT doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures, a safeguarding concern isn't being acted upon, dealt with properly, may be being covered up, or you are worried that you might experience repercussions if you raise a concern, you should contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk.

Further guidance on Whistleblowing and Complaints is outlined in UT's Dignity at Work Policy.

3. PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Bullying will not be tolerated in any environment, event or activity organised by UT. UT Associated Individuals are asked to be aware of the various behaviours and actions associated with bullying:

- Verbal abuse (i.e. name calling)
- Physical abuse (i.e. hitting/pushing a Children and young people)
- Emotional abuse (i.e. making threats, excluding Children and young peoples from groups/activities)
- Cyberbullying/online bullying (i.e. sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages, 'trolling', creating up fake accounts, etc.)

3.1. Recognising, Responding and Preventing Bullying

Any child or young person can be bullied, particularly those seen by others as 'different' in some way. This might include physical appearance, race, faith/culture, gender identity, sexuality or disability. Bullying can also occur when the Children and young people appears anxious or has low self-esteem, lacks assertiveness or is shy/introverted.

All Associated UT Individuals should be familiar with the following indicators in child or young person to support in recognising bullying:

- Being distressed or anxious
- Losing confidence or becoming withdrawn
- Having problems eating/sleeping
- Having unexplained injuries
- Changes in appearance
- Changes in performances/engagement with UT events and activities.

If an Associated UT Individual has concerns about bullying, please contact the Safeguarding Lead (Annie Rigby) to discuss.

UT will create environments and cultures where it is clear that bullying will not be tolerated and that any child or young person knows they can speak to someone if they have a problem.

A fuller approach to anti-bullying is outlined in our Dignity at Work Policy.

4. ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE BY AN ASSOCIATED UT INDIVIDUAL

If a child or young person has a concern about an Associated UT Individual, the Associated UT Individual should discuss the matter with UT's Safeguarding Lead (Annie Rigby) immediately. If the allegation concerns the Artistic Director, they should contact the Trustee responsible for safeguarding (Bex Bowsher).

Follow the procedure for Responding to Disclosures (2.3). In addition:

- Keep the child or young person making the allegation and the alleged perpetrator separate

- Keep all information confidential from other members of staff and other participants
- Refer to UT's Whistle-blowing Procedure (within the Dignity at Work Policy) if relevant

5. ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE BY CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

If a child or young person has a concern or makes an allegation about another child or young person, then the Associated UT Individual should discuss the matter with UT's Safeguarding Lead (Annie Rigby) immediately.

Follow the procedure for Responding to Disclosures (2.3). In addition:

- Keep the child or young person making the allegation and the child or young person the allegation involves separate
- Keep all information confidential from other members of staff and other participants

6. DATA AND INFORMATION SHARING

5.1 Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice

UT is committed to ensuring a safeguarding culture within the organisation. In order to do this, UT has in place the following procedures.

- UT will publish the name of the Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Policy and how to make a complaint on the UT main website.
- UT will include on any consent forms how parents/guardians can access UT's Safeguarding Policy.
- UT will include on any consent forms how children and young people's data will be stored.

5.2 Holding information

- All data will be stored in line with UT's Privacy Policy.
- All Safeguarding Concerns Notifications, including records of actions taken, will be reviewed quarterly as part of the UT Board Meetings to ensure ongoing good practice and learning from experiences.
- All child protection records will be kept confidential and stored securely. Electronic files will be password protected.
- Information about child protection concerns will be kept separate from a child's general record, but a note will be added to the general record to indicate that there is a separate child protection file.

7. USE OF WORK AND IMAGES

- Do not use images of children or young people without written consent from parents/guardians. Children and young people should also be consulted about the use of their image and give consent to it being used and shared.
- UT will store any images and video recordings of children and young people securely.
- Any social media posts sharing work and images of children and young peoples should be from an official UT account.
- Work produced by children and young people will only be used with the informed consent of its producer. Associated UT Individuals will consider whether the child or young person is capable of giving the necessary consent based on that individual's maturity, understanding,

nature of consent required and content of the work and will obtain written consent from their parent/guardian where they consider the individual is not so capable.

8. SAFE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

UT understands its duty to ensure our events and activities keep children and young people safe. The Associated UT Individual will consider and action the following when organising an UT event or activity:

- Ensuring anyone working or volunteering on the event/activity is suitable to do so.
- All UT Associated Individuals are aware of this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Consent from parents/carers is sought for the involvement of children and young people in UT events/activities.
- Create a list of emergency contact numbers for children and young people involved in UT events/activities.
- Utilise good record keeping to ensure information is handled appropriately and in accordance with UT's Privacy Policy.
- Ensure all necessary health and safety measures are in place, including, but not limited to first aid cover, risk assessments and fire safety.

9. SUPERVISION: ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

UT will ensure appropriate supervision levels for any UT events/activities. This will take into consideration:

- the nature and duration of the event/activity
- the competence and experience of the Associated UT Individuals
- The location of the event/activity
- Any additional needs of the children and young people
- Any specialist equipment required

The following ratios, as recommended by the NSPCC, will be adhered to by UT when organising events/activities:

- Under 2 years – one adult to three children
- 2-3 years – one adult to four children
- 4-8 years – one adult to six children
- 9-12 years – one adult to eight children
- 13-18 years – one adult to ten children

When delivering an event/activity in a school setting, UT will adhere to the relevant ratios outlined in the school's risk assessment.

UT will ensure that all relevant licences and chaperones are in place for any performing arts activities that involve children and young people.

10. TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

On most occasions, parents/carers will be responsible for the travel and transport arrangements of children and young people to and from UT activities.

UT will ensure an orderly handover of children and young people to parents/carers once a UT activity has ended. This will involve ensuring the children and young people leave a session with an

identified family member. UT will not allow a child to leave with unauthorised people without first speaking to the child or young person's parents/carers.

There are some instances where a children or young person will travel to and from a UT activity unaccompanied. Where this is the case, UT will ensure that a parent/carer has indicated they are happy with this arrangement as part of the consent form they complete to enable their child or young person to take part in a UT activity.

When UT is arranging and providing transport to get children and young people to and from a UT activity, a reputable bus, coach or taxi company will be used. UT will ensure these companies have the correct insurance and drivers are appropriately vetted.

11.ONLINE SAFETY

UT understand that there are many benefits to engaging with children and young people via social media and other online platforms, but recognises the risks associated to using these tools also.

If UT is providing or hosting activities that involve direct interaction with children and young people online, consent should be sought from parents/carers or the child themselves as appropriate.

Creating an online community

If it is deemed appropriate for UT to create an online community, hosted either on an online forum, website or social media platform, UT will take appropriate measures to keep everyone who uses it safe. This will include:

- Considering who can join the community
- Using the most appropriate online platform (referring to <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> for guidance on a regular basis.
- Encouraging children and young people and their parents/carers to utilise security settings on online accounts.
- Ensure appropriate moderation is in place to make sure children and young people are not exposed to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Ensure Associated UT Individuals are appropriately checked and trained to run and moderate online communities.

Using Social Media

If it is necessary to communicate with children and young people via social media, Associated UT Individuals will:

- Use social media accounts that have been authorised by your organisations and never use personal accounts.
- Utilise privacy settings on social media accounts that are used to interact with children and young people, such as 'request to join' features.
- Use organisational devices to communicate with children and young people. If this isn't possible; a member of the Senior Management Team should authorise Associated UT Individuals to use a personal device on a case-by-case basis and keep a record of this authorisation and who can see the communication.
- Ensure all communications are relevant to the work of UT and related projects/activities.
- Use age-appropriate language.

Associated UT Individuals should also be aware of their digital footprint as it is possible children and young people may look up personal social media accounts. Associated UT Individuals should ensure

these are free of inappropriate or harmful content and do not include any personal information such as personal email addresses or phone numbers.

Associated UT Individuals should not accept children and young people as “friends” on social media platforms.

12.SAFER RECRUITMENT

UT follows a range of procedures to ensure that all UT Associated Individuals are recruited safely and fairly. This includes:

- Defining the role – providing a job description and person specification, highlighting the importance of understanding safeguarding issues.
- Asking applicants to provide at least two referees and checking references as part of vetting checks.
- Shortlisting processes and interviews include at least two people.
- Candidates’ identity will be checked during the recruitment process.
- Any offers of work are made subject to satisfactory completion of vetting checks.
- Induction – Associated UT Individuals will cover Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and UT’s commitment to creating a strong safeguarding culture.
- Regular and ongoing training is provided to Associated UT Individuals in relation to safeguarding.

Disclosure and Barring Service – Criminal Record Checks

- UT requests DBS checks for positions that bring Associated UT Individuals into contact with children and young people.
- If it is not practical to wait for a DBS check to come through, or pay for one, an Associated UT Individual with another organisation’s DBS will be accompanied by one who has been DBS checked by UT.
- UT’s DBS applications are verified by a UT programme manager, processed confidentially by Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and the information is tracked and securely stored by UT’s Safeguarding Lead.

13.CONTACT DETAILS

UT’s main contacts for the purposes of safeguarding are:

Nominated safeguarding and child protection lead

Annie Rigby Artistic Director 07946 523 112 / annie@unfoldingtheatre.co.uk

Trustee/senior lead for safeguarding and child protection

Bex Bowsher Chair of Trustees 07534 801 084 / rhbowsher@gmail.com

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC Whistleblowing Line: 0800 028 0285

If a child/Children and young people is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999.

**Newcastle City Council:
Children’s Social Care**

0191 277 2500 (weekdays 8.45am to 5pm)
[Professional Online Referral Form](#) (weekdays 8.45am to 5pm)

0191 278 7878 (out of office hours)

Care and Support for Adults

0191 278 8377 (8am to 5pm Helpline)

07968 474 891 (mobile)

0191 278 7878 (Emergency Duty Team Helpline)

0191 278 8156 (Emergency Duty Team report abuse of neglect)

Appendix 1: Code of Conduct for Associated UT Individuals

Appendix 2: Definitions & Signs of Abuse

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Concerns Notification Form

This Policy and associated procedure was last reviewed and approved on 6th December 2021.

Subject to review, monitoring and revision by:	Annie Rigby	Every:	12	months or sooner if work activity changes
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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ASSOCIATED UT INDIVIDUALS

Employees, trustees, creative practitioners, artists, volunteers, interns, and any other individual working on behalf of, or associated with Unfolding Theatre ("Associated UT Individuals").

Unfolding Theatre requires all Associated UT Individuals to be aware of UT's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

This Code of Conduct outlines the conduct Unfolding Theatre expects from all Associated UT Individuals. This includes trustees, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

The behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

Unfolding Theatre is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our services has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

In your role as an Associated UT Individual, you are acting in a position of authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately.

Responsibilities:

Associated UT Individuals are responsible for:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people.
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people.
 - Ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
 - Having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- Following UT's principles, policies and procedures:
 - Including our policies and procedures for child protection/safeguarding, whistleblowing and online safety.
- Staying within the law at all times.
- Modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow.
- Challenging and reporting all unacceptable behaviour
- Reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following UT's Safeguarding Procedures
 - This includes behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

Rights

Associated UT Individuals should:

- Treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination

- Respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- Challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Encourage children and young people and Associate UT Individuals to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

Relationships

Associated UT Individuals should:

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- Avoid favouritism
- Be patient with others
- Exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work of the project you are involved in
- Ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
 - If a situation arises where you are alone with a children or young person, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults.
 - If a children or young person specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are.

Respect

Associated UT Individuals should:

- Listen to and respect children and young people at all times
- Value and take children and young peoples' contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- Respect children and young peoples' right to personal privacy as far as possible.
 - If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

Unacceptable behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- Allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- Take unnecessary risks
- Smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- Make inappropriate promises to children and young peoples
- Engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
 - Including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- Invite a children or young person to your home
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- Patronise or belittle children and young people
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact with any children and young people.
- Tolerate bullying in any shape or form, including but not limited to verbal, physical, social and cyber bullying.

- Give gifts or money to children and young people. If gifts are offered from a children or young person to an Associated UT Individual this must be declared immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Meet up with any children or young person outside of designated sessions, unless agreed in advance with the Safeguarding Lead who will confirm appropriate conditions.
- Engage in unobserved situations of one-to-one contact with a children or young person. If it is unavoidable, keep a door open and ensure you are within hearing (but ideally sight) of other adults.
- If it is necessary to do things of a personal nature for children and young people (i.e. help with toileting if very young or disabled) this should ideally be carried out by a trained support worker. If this is not possible, then any support of this nature should be carried out in consultation, and with the knowledge and approval of the parent/carers and your line manager.
- Offer to take a children and young person alone in your vehicle. In the case of emergency, book a taxi and accompany the children and young people in the taxi.
- Never approach children and young people on social networking websites or online. Use UT's website and social network pages, not personal accounts, to make arrangements or share information.
- Restrain a child or young person, unless they are at risk of inflicting immediate harm to themselves or to others.
- Enter a room where children and young people may be changing their clothes or not be fully dressed. Clearly getting their consent to enter when they are ready.

Associated UT Individuals should:

- Support the development of a culture in which members of staff feel comfortable to point out inappropriate attitudes and behaviours to each other.
- Familiarise yourself with the process to follow should children and young people make a disclosure to you; Receive, Reassure, React, Record and Talk (outlined in more detail in section 3.2 in the Safeguarding Procedures).
- Seek advice from the Safeguarding Leads if you don't understand any of the information in the Safeguarding Policy or have any questions.

Definitions and signs of child abuse

Guidance for professionals who work with children on how to recognise the signs of child abuse

July 2020

What is child abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve neglect.

Children may be abused by:

- family members
- friends
- people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings
- people they know
- strangers.

General signs of abuse

Children experiencing abuse often experience more than one type of abuse over a period of time.

Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend.

Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be able to recognise the signs. These include a child:

- being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- knowing about or being involved in 'adult issues' which are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others
- becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child's behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between parents or carers. If you have any concerns about a child's wellbeing, you should report them following your organisation's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

➤ [Find out more about recognising and responding to abuse](#)

Physical abuse

What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).

Spotting the signs of physical abuse

All children have trips, falls and accidents which may cause cuts, bumps and bruises. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of their body such as elbows, knees and shins and are not usually a cause for concern.

Injuries that are more likely to indicate physical abuse include:

Bruising

- bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking
- bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand or an object, like a belt or shoe
- large oval-shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds

- any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns
- burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times.

If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation doesn't match the injury, this should be investigated. It's also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.

➤ [Find out more about physical abuse](#)

Neglect

What is neglect?

Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- providing adequate food, clothing or shelter
- supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving them with unsuitable carers)
- making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- making sure the child receives a suitable education
- meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

Spotting the signs of neglect

Neglect can be difficult to identify. Isolated signs may not mean that a child is suffering neglect, but multiple and persistent signs over time could indicate a serious problem.

Some of these signs include:

- children who appear hungry - they may not have lunch money or even try to steal food
- children who appear dirty or smelly
- children whose clothes are inadequate for the weather conditions
- children who are left alone or unsupervised for long periods or at a young age
- children who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems
- children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of development
- children who live in an unsuitable home environment.

➤ [Find out more about neglect](#)

Sexual abuse

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- making a child masturbate while others watch

- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Spotting the signs of sexual abuse

There may be physical signs that a child has suffered sexual abuse.

These include:

- anal or vaginal soreness or itching
- bruising or bleeding near the genital area
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- an unusual discharge
- sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- pregnancy.

Changes in the child's mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.

For example:

- they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to
- they might become sexually active or pregnant at a young age.

- [Find out more about child sexual abuse](#)
- [Find out more about online abuse](#)

Child sexual exploitation

What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people may be coerced or groomed into exploitative situations and relationships. They may be given things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs (Berelowitz et al, 2013).

Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

- [Find out more about grooming](#)

Spotting the signs of child sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- go missing from home, care or education
- be involved in abusive relationships
- hang out with groups of older people
- be involved in gangs or anti-social groups
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- be involved in petty crime such as shoplifting
- have access to drugs and alcohol
- have new things such as clothes and mobile phones, which they aren't able to easily explain

- have unexplained physical injuries.

➤ [Find out more about child sexual exploitation](#)

Harmful sexual behaviour

What is harmful sexual behaviour?

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive. It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour.

HSB encompasses a range of behaviour, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards.

HSB can include:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases
- inappropriate touching
- using sexual violence or threats
- sexual activity with other children or adults.

Sexual behaviour between children is considered harmful if one of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other isn't (Davies, 2012). However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them – for example, if the older child is disabled (Rich, 2011).

Spotting the signs of harmful sexual behaviour

It's normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

➤ [Find out more about harmful sexual behaviour](#)

Emotional abuse

What is emotional abuse?

Emotional abuse involves:

- humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- manipulating a child
- exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- persistently ignoring a child
- being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

Spotting the signs of emotional abuse

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.

Some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, for example when being taken to or collected from nursery
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- be unable to play
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect for their age
- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- fear making mistakes
- fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- self-harm.

➤ [Find out more about emotional abuse](#)

Domestic abuse

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Spotting the signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- become aggressive
- display anti-social behaviour
- suffer from depression or anxiety
- not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

➤ [Find out more about domestic abuse](#)

Bullying and cyberbullying

What are bullying and cyberbullying?

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable.

Bullying includes:

- verbal abuse, such as name calling
- non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring
- emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- racial, sexual or homophobic bullying
- physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Spotting the signs of bullying and cyberbullying

It can be hard to know whether or not a child is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might also think that the bullying is their fault.

No one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied, but you should look out for:

- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- not doing as well at school
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- problems with eating or sleeping
- bullying others.

➤ [Find out more about bullying](#)

Child trafficking

What is child trafficking?

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Children may be trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect.

Child trafficking can require a network of organised criminals who recruit, transport and exploit children and young people. Some people in the network might not be directly involved in trafficking a child but play a part in other ways, such as falsifying documents, bribery, owning or renting premises or money laundering (Europol, 2011). Child trafficking can also be organised by individuals and the children's own families.

Traffickers trick, force or persuade children to leave their homes. They use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community. Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats don't need to be proven in

cases of child trafficking - a child cannot legally consent to their exploitation so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation.

Modern slavery is another term which may be used in relation to child trafficking. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking (HM Government, 2014). The **Modern Slavery Act** passed in 2015 in England and Wales categorises offences of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking.

Spotting the signs of child trafficking

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious but you might notice unusual behaviour or events.

Children who have been trafficked may:

- have to do excessive housework chores
- rarely leave the house and have limited freedom of movement
- not have any documents (or have falsified documents)
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children
- be unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- be cared for by adults who are not their parents or carers
- not have a good quality relationship with their adult carers
- be one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- receive unexplained or unidentified phone calls whilst in a care placement or temporary accommodation.

There are also signs that an adult is involved in child trafficking, such as:

- making multiple visa applications for different children
- acting as a guarantor for multiple visa applications for children
- having previously acted as the guarantor on visa applications for visitors who have not left the UK when the visa expired.

➤ [Find out more about child trafficking and modern slavery](#)

Female genital mutilation

What is female genital mutilation?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a child is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016).

FGM is child abuse. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It's dangerous and a criminal offence.

Spotting the signs of female genital mutilation

A child at risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But they might talk about or you may become aware of:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

A child who has had FGM may:

- have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Reporting requirements

Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales must report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s to the police (Home Office, 2016).

➤ [Find out more about FGM](#)

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SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS NOTIFICATION FORM

Note: Please do not interpret what is seen or heard, simply record the facts. After completing the form please pass on immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.

Name of child or young person	
Name of person completing the form	
Role of person completing the form	
Date/Time of disclosure	
Place of disclosure	
Please record the nature of incident, details of disclosure, safeguarding concerns and any relevant background information. Please record the Individual's words verbatim where possible. (Continue on another sheet if necessary.)	
Action taken	
Signed:	Date:
Name of UT Safeguarding Lead	
Action taken by Safeguarding Lead	

Reason for this action
Outcome of action
Follow up and outcome