CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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SECTION 1

1.1 Policy Statement

The Kids Network (TKN) supports children at a crucial time in their development by providing them with a volunteer mentor to help build their confidence, resilience and curiosity for ambitious futures.

As an organisation, TKN is committed to promoting the welfare of all children to keep them safe from abuse, harm, neglect, radicalisation and exploitation. A child is anyone under the age of 18, and all children have an equal right to protection regardless of any personal characteristics. We believe no child or person should be subject, or vulnerable to, abuse of any kind.

We recognise that, as an organisation working with children, we have additional responsibilities to ensure we have measures, practices, policies and the right organisational culture in place to protect children from harm perpetrated by those who have a duty to keep them safe. We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

This policy outlines TKN's commitment to keeping children safe from any possible harm caused by staff, operations or programmes. It sets out the collective and individual expectation and responsibility for all representatives of TKN to comply with legislation, codes of conduct and behaviours required as a representative of TKN.

1.2 Scope of this Policy

All TKN staff, trustees and volunteers must act in accordance with this policy in both their professional and personal lives. This includes, but is not limited to: TKN staff, volunteers (including volunteer mentors), Trustees and other affiliates of TKN.

Donors, corporates, journalists, celebrities, politicians and others must be made aware that this policy applies to them when they act with or on behalf of TKN or while interacting with children in our network. This policy applies during or outside of working hours, every day of the year.

1.3 Policy Principles

- The welfare of a child is of paramount importance and will be at the heart of all decisions when planning, organising, advising on and delivering TKN's mission.
- TKN believes all children, regardless of age, gender expression, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic situation and identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm.
- TKN will actively engage with children and their caregivers to ensure they are valued, listened to and respected.
- TKN is a trauma-informed organisation: this means we take a strengths-based and child-led approach and work to support the development of coping skills and resilience in the children in our community.
- TKN will ensure staff and volunteers have access to this policy as well as appropriate safeguarding materials, training and support to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns relating to children
- TKN will proactively assess, monitor, respond and learn from safeguarding risks.
- The contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer will be given to children, their caregivers and other representatives so they may report any worries or concerns. The contact details are also listed in this policy and published publicly on the TKN website.
- TKN will review this policy at least annually, sooner if additional safeguarding risks are identified or if there is a change in government legislation and/or advice.
- TKN will record, store and use information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and internal policies and procedures.
- Throughout the policy, when referring to children who have, will or are currently taking part in the TKN mentoring programme will be referred to as 'mentee/s'

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility of all representatives of TKN, and requires effective collaboration between volunteers, staff, agencies and professionals that have different roles. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in this policy, individuals at different levels of the organisation have additional responsibilities, to ensure there are clear lines of accountability.

Staff

Staff at The Kids Network may have additional responsibilities for ensuring safeguarding processes, including monitoring attendance registers for mentoring sessions, gaining consent and medical information in advance of supporting a mentee, and keeping a log of safeguarding concerns in line with the data protection policy.

Designated Safeguarding Leads(DSL)

The DSL is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and protection at TKN. The Programme Managers are the first point of contact to monitor and record concerns and liaise with schools. This is then escalated to the DSL to receive and respond to safeguarding and protection concerns. The DSL is provided with quality training to ensure they can fulfil their role.

The DSLs are **Joni Warner, Programme Leader** who can be contacted via

j.warner@thekidsnetwork.org.uk or 07412 778062

Or **Hend Abushowayb, Programme Leader,** who can be contacted on

h.abushowayb@thekidsnetwork.org.uk or 07354 468447

Their role is to oversee and ensure that our safeguarding policy is embedded into organisational culture and adhered to.

Their responsibilities include:

- ✓ Ensuring concerns are monitored and recorded in line with best practice and TKN guidelines
- ✓ Making referrals to social services, NSPCC, the police or any other government or regulatory body as necessary, without delay
- ✓ Liaising with other agencies (such as the NSPCC) as needed to keep children safe
- ✓ Ensuring all staff are trained at an appropriate level for their role and safeguarding responsibilities

When the DSL is not available, and when in post the acting Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO) should be contacted.

The DDSO is:

Priya, Nagda-Swainson, Schools Partnerships Leader

p.nagda-swainson@thekidsnetwork.org.uk or 07542 922119

Board of Trustees

All board members are expected to hold themselves and the organisation accountable for ensuring safeguarding is championed within TKN and a culture of safe practice and safeguarding is embedded. The Safeguarding trustee leads on guidance, support and accountability, with support from the People and Safeguarding Committee.

Safeguarding is a recurring agenda item at board meetings and the DSL is expected to submit a safeguarding report ahead of every board meeting and P&S committee.
The Safeguarding Trustee is **Emyr Fairburn**, who can be contacted at:

safeguardingtrustee@thekidsnetwork.org.uk

The Safeguarding Trustee:

- Regularly reviews safeguarding policies, procedures, and culture at The Kids Network to ensure they keep children and vulnerable adults safe.
- Proactively ensures The Kids Network is in line with best practice in safeguarding policy and reacts to any changes in charity commission guidance and legislation.
- Champions safeguarding throughout the organisation, including at board level.
- Educates and makes recommendations to support the other trustees in their responsibilities to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.
- Supports the Designated Safeguarding Officer and other key staff on specific safeguarding issues, as required.
- Supports with the creation and implementation of an annual safeguarding workplan
- Ensures the organisation's risk register reflects safeguarding risks properly and determines which measures should be taken to mitigate risks.

1.4 Confidentiality Statement

TKN recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

TKN is subject to a legal duty (Data Protection Act 1998) to process personal information about children and caregivers and this information should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the caregiver. The law does however permit the disclosure of confidential information without

permission if it is necessary to safeguard a child or children; this includes cases of Safeguarding.

All concerns and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Staff at TKN should follow the Government's seven golden rules for information sharing:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their caregiver where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. Seek advice from your line manager, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Staff should also references TKN Data Retention and Data Protection Policies for more information on how to process and store data.

SECTION 2

2.1 Safeguarding Code of Behaviour

All TKN staff members, volunteers, including volunteer mentors, Trustees and other affiliates of TKN must follow the below code of behaviour to keep children safe.

DO:

- Treat all children and their caregivers with dignity and respect
- Allow children to talk about their concerns in their own words, without judgement
- Provide children with accessible, child-friendly information to understand what safeguarding is, and inform children as to how they can report concerns to a variety of stakeholders, including their mentor and/or TKN Programme Manager
- Ensure children are made aware of their right to confidentiality, circumstances where confidentiality may be broken, and procedures for doing this
- Recognise and celebrate strengths, social connections and identities to develop children's wellbeing.
- Take all allegations, concerns and suspicions of abuse, harm, neglect, radicalisation and exploitation seriously and log/report them straight away.
- If a child discloses something to you, listen carefully. Use the 5 Rs of safeguarding, 'Recognise', 'Respond', 'Report', 'Record', 'Refer'. Ensure you tell them you need to pass this information on to keep them safe
- Challenge attitudes and behaviours that contravene this code of behaviour or our Safeguarding policy, procedures and/or guidelines
- Share information with other agencies, when necessary, to safeguard children
- Disclose any information during vetting stages that could be pertinent to the role and follow TKN's safer recruitment procedure

DO NOT:

- Spend any time with TKN mentees alone, isolated from others. Mentors should always meet TKN mentees in public, populated places and restrict session to between one to three hours
- Have any contact with the caregiver or child following the end of the mentoring programme
- Offer a lift to a TKN mentee and use of private transport e.g. cars, including taxi. Only public transport is allowed.
- Engage in rough physical activities with TKN mentees – apart from structured activities that have been approved by a TKN Programme Manager in advance, such as boxing or rock-climbing
- Engage in sexual activities or make sexually suggestive comments of any kind about or to a child under any circumstances
- Take part in inappropriate physical, verbal or sexual behaviour with or in the presence of children (including online or via mobile phone) or knowingly put a child in danger or harm's way
- Let an allegation a child makes go unrecorded and unreported or allow personal relationships, own experience or bias prevent you from reporting an incident
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves e.g., assisting a child to go to the toilet. Any personal care must always be agreed in advance by TKN and caregivers
- Take TKN mentees to your own home, enter the mentee's home (even if the caregiver is present), or meet with them in private
- Exchange personal details or send private messages, online or via mobile phones, to children you've met through The Kids Network. You should not befriend a mentee or caregiver on any form of social media.
- Leave a child unattended whilst in your care or place a child in unsafe situations or situations that are inappropriate for their age (unless in situations of bathroom breaks where privacy is needed)
- Engage in relationships that could be an abuse of trust, for example, a romantic or sexual relationship, or friendship with a mentee's caregiver
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about a mentee or their caregiver to anyone other than a TKN staff member or board member, in certain situations.

2.2 Safer Recruitment

- TKN will recruit staff, volunteers, Trustees and other affiliates in line with safer recruitment best practice; ensuring all necessary checks are carried out prior to commencement.
- This process is outlined in TKN's Safer Recruitment Process and includes (but is not limited to): a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, suitable references and interview questions that ensure

potential recruits understand and accept their responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

2.3 Training

- TKN commits to ensuring staff, volunteers and Trustees have quality training and continuing professional development in child safeguarding, child protection and reporting mechanisms, so they are competent and confident to undertake their roles and responsibilities.
- Staff and volunteers must attend safeguarding training before meeting mentees and all staff will complete this training within their first 2 weeks of working at TKN.

TKN will provide all staff with annual training in line with its annual risk review. Staff training will be logged and tracked on the TKN policy tracker and on CharlieHR, TKN's HR platform.

We trust and have confidence in all our staff to put the best interests of children first and to make safe and fair decisions when it comes to their safeguarding responsibilities. However, we don't expect them to have all the answers and recognise that engaging with safeguarding concerns can be emotionally demanding. We are therefore committed to providing support for staff and encourage them to reach out to their line manager, the DSL, CEO, Trustees and NSPCC if needed. They will be able to offer guidance and provide practical support.

Recognising abuse in children

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, we provide training to our staff and volunteers in recognising abuse in children. Our team understands that it is important to be observant, to listen to what is being said and record, for example, whether what they are observing and being told about an injury is consistent with the injury.

TKN acknowledges that it is important to not only observe, listen to and record potential concerns relating to a child's caregiver, but to also report any concerns that are linked to the child's environment. This may mean concerns in schools, youth clubs, the local community, in their friendship group, online or when they are out with their mentor. We recognise that children can be at risk in any environment, and our responsibility is to monitor and report any indicators that may suggest abuse is taking place.

Types of abuse

The types of abuse TKN recognises, which builds on the NSPCC's list, are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- County lines and protecting children from exploitation
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Physical abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Online abuse
- Non-recent abuse

The NSPCC has subcategories which address racism, discrimination and prejudice. The NSPCC states that 'Any type of racism or racial discrimination is abusive and distressing for children and young people who experience or witness it.'[1] TKN recognises that racism is one system of oppression by which children are at risk of being minoritised. TKN is committed to being an anti-oppression organisation, about which you can find out more here. Experiencing discrimination based on any protected characteristic is traumatic and abusive.

Further guidance on this can be found here.

Indicators of abuse

The indicators that a child is being abused may depend on the type. For example, the signs that a child is being neglected may be different from the signs that a child is being abused sexually. Common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

[1] https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/children-race-racism-racial-bullying/

This list is not exhaustive, and these signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting a child's behaviour.

The training provided to staff and volunteers, and this policy demonstrates how staff member and volunteer would report any of the above or other potential concerns.

Handling disclosures

It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to investigate suspected abuse, but it is their responsibility to handle disclosures sensitively and seriously and report all concerns in line with guidance on reporting child abuse.

When a disclosure is made by a child or adult at risk, it is important to remember to:

- take what they are being told seriously
- stay calm and reassure them
- do not investigate
- do not delay

and always

- Follow the safeguarding process that has been explained to you in training and is outlined in our policies
- Make a careful record with of anything you are told or observe, and date and add your full name to this record. This will help you to report the concern comprehensively
- Call NSPCC if urgent advice is needed, or call the Police if the child is in immediate danger

Staff and volunteers understand that a disclosure may come from someone informing a team member that:

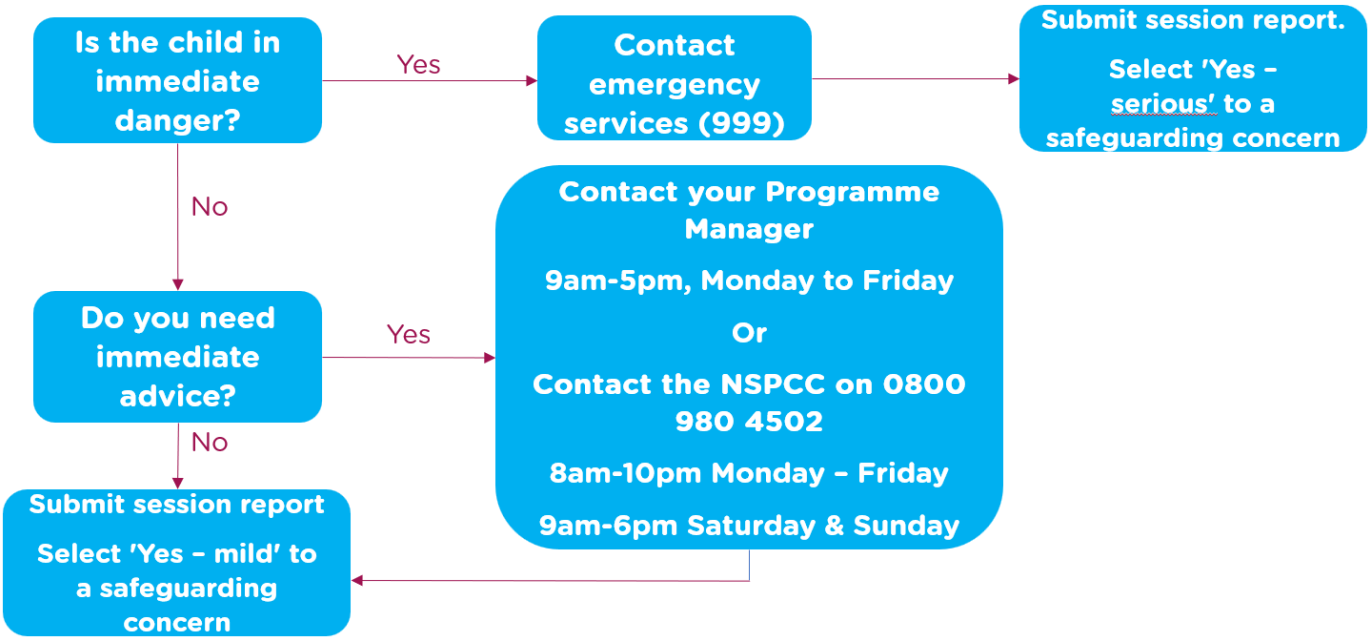
- they have or are being abused
- they have concerns about someone else
- they are themselves abusing or likely to abuse someone else

2.4 Reporting Concerns

TKN has a clear reporting framework in place, this means that representatives of TKN and any child or caregiver who come into contact with TKN knows how to report any safeguarding concerns and are confident that any concern will be dealt with correctly.

The following information covers three steps to report any information on child safety.

Mentors



If you suspect, see, hear or witness a concern or incident that suggests a child might be at risk of harm or abuse, you MUST:

1 Ensure the child is not in immediate danger. If you believe they are at immediate risk, call the Emergency Services on 999 or 101.

2 If the child is not in immediate risk, or once they are safe, should you have any questions or you are unsure if you should call the police, between 9-5 on a working day inform the DSL/DDSO immediately. If outside these times call the NSPCC immediately (at least within 24 hours of the concern occurring), both in writing via email and over the telephone. Remember, do not investigate – just report. If you call the NSPCC you should state that you are a TKN staff member or volunteer.

3 Use the session report to record your actions, include anything the child said, anything you asked the child, and your observations. This may be used as evidence later so record only the facts as you know them, do not offer any personal interpretations, or make any assumptions.

Responding to concerns

Responding is ensuring action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding their welfare or where possible abuse and exploitation is suspected.
Once a concern has been received by a TKN staff member, TKN will deal with the concern swiftly and competently, following the robust reporting

framework details in TKN's responding to concerns policy and the process outlined in TKN's safeguarding log.
This means:

- Programme Managers and the DSL have appropriate knowledge and understanding to respond to safeguarding concerns and provide suitable advice and guidance
- Promptly referring safeguarding concerns to relevant statutory agencies
- Taking follow up actions, where required, to share information with other agencies to protect children
- Ensuring that children affected are protected and given appropriate support within the limits of TKN's reach

TKN is committed to implementing robust, accessible and child-friendly communication, reporting and escalation processes that complement Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and are in line with the reporting requirements of the Charity Commission.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Joni Warner, Programme Leader who can be contacted on:
j.warner@thekidsnetwork.org.uk or

07412 778062

Or **Hend Abushowayb, Programme Leader,** who can be contacted on:

h.abushowayb@thekidsnetwork.org.uk
or 07354 468447

07731797182

NSPCC Helpline
Sue.rowley@nspcc.org.uk
0800 980 4502

The above is a direct NSPCC line for The Kids Network to use, when calling the above number please state you are calling from TKN

Safeguarding Trustee

Emyr Fairburn

Safeguardingtrustee@thekidsnetwork.org.uk

2.5 Policy Breaches

- TKN will respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse and breaches of this policy.
- Where it has been found that a representative of The Kids Network has breached this policy, or any associated procedures and guidelines, immediate action will be taken. In serious cases this may include dismissal, ending voluntary roles and/or the termination of partnerships, contracts or other forms of relationships. TKN will also notify the DBS for serious cases.
- Acts of a criminal nature will be referred to the police and/or Children's Services and may result in a criminal investigation and conviction. Where this occurs, the Police will notify the DBS and the individual may be barred from working with children.
- Where a safeguarding concern, whether proven or not, meets the Charity Commission's criteria for a Serious Incident, the DSL must inform the Board of Trustees as soon as practically possible who will be responsible for reporting it.
- TKN will act in accordance with TKN's Data Protection Policy and ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate external agencies.

Allegations against staff

If a staff member or volunteer feels unable to raise a concern through any of the reporting routes outlined in this policy or if the concern is about a DSO, DDSO or other TKN staff member, they can raise a concern in the following ways:

- Refer to TKN's Whistleblowing Policy.
- Contact the CEO, Louise Johns-Shepherd on l.johnsshepherd@thekidsnetwork.org.uk
- If the concern relates to the CEO please contact the safeguarding trustee on Safeguardingtrustee@thekidsnetwork.org.uk,
- Contact NSPCC directly if a concern is linked to the DSL or DDSO.
- Contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), further details on this are listed below:

Borough	Phone	Email
Brent	020 8937 4834	brent.lado@brent.gov.uk
Camden	020 7974 4556	LADO@camden.gov.uk
Southwark	020 7525 3297	Email Form
Hammersmith & Fulham	020 8753 5125	LADO@lbhf.gov.uk
Greenwich	020 8921 3930.	Childrens-LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
Lewisham	020 8314 3396.	LewishamLADO@lewisham.gov.uk

Hillingdon	01895 250975 or 07753431285	hives@hillingdon.gov.uk
Hackney	0208 356 4569	LADO@hackney.gov.uk
Lambeth	020 7926 4679 or 07720 828 700.	LADO@lambeth.gov.uk
Islington	020 7527 8102	LADO@islington.gov.uk
Westminster	020 7641 7668	lado@westminster.gov.uk
Tower Hamlets	020 7364 0677 or 07903 238827	lado@towerhamlets.gov.uk

2.6 Changes to this policy

This policy will be updated regularly. Any updates to this policy will not be made until it had been signed off by the Safeguarding trustee.

SECTION 3

3.1 Supporting Documents

Policies	Adults at Risk Policy Code of Conduct (All stakeholders) Responding to concerns Data Protection Policy Whistleblowing Policy
Process/ Procedure	Safer Recruitment at The Kids Network
Forms	Safeguarding Concern Form
Law	Children Act 1989 UN Convention of the Rights of the Children 1991 Data Protection Act 1998 Sexual Offences Act 2003 Children Act 2003 Children Act 2004 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 Children and Families Act 2014
Guidance	Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. MH Government 2018.

	Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. HM Government 2018. Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees. Charity Commission 2018.

3.2 Definitions

Word/ term	Definition
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
Adults at risk	Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting their right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect.
Child	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
Child Safeguarding	The action taken to protect children from harm caused, intentionally or unintentionally, by the action or inaction of TKN staff or representatives
Designated Safeguarding Lead	The designated safeguarding officer is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child safeguarding protection issues at TKN. A deputy is also appointed in case the DSO is unavailable
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
Exploitation	An umbrella term used to describe the abuse of children who are forced, tricked, coerced or trafficked into exploitative activities.
Extremism/ Radicalisation	Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including children – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.
Neglect	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.

Physical abuse	A form of abuse which 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 responsible adult fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Sexual Abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities.

Definitions adapted from Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, the NSPCC and Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees Guidance.