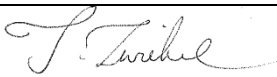


Sunbeams

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Document Control Sheet

Document Title	Sunbeams Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Document Reference	SBP5
Version Number	19
Date Created	September 2014
Date Approved	September, 2025
Next Review Date	September, 2026
Status	Approved
Approved By	Jessica Zwiebel, Safeguarding Officer and Trustee
Signature	

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Approved By
1.0	Sep 2014	DSL	Initial release outlining safeguarding principles and reporting pathways.	Board of Trustees
2.0	Mar 2015	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
3.0	Apr 2016	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
4.0	Jan 2017	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
5.0	Oct 2017	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
6.0	Jun 2018	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
7.0	Mar 2019	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
8.0	Jan 2020	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
9.0	May 2020	DSL	COVID-19 update	Board of Trustees
10.0	Nov 2020	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
11.0	Jun 2021	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
12.0	Nov 2021	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
13.0	Apr 2022	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
14.0	Sep 2022	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
15.0	Feb 2023	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
16.0	Jul 2023	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
17.0	Dec 2023	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
18.0	Apr 2024	DSL	Review	Board of Trustees
19.0	Sep 2025	DSL	Comprehensive annual review; full reformat and alignment with related frameworks.	Board of Trustees

1. Introduction

1.1. This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Sunbeams (London Ltd) which will be followed by all staff and volunteers of the organisation and followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the organisation.

1.2. This Safeguarding Children Policy will be given to young people and their parents together with their starter pack upon joining Sunbeams, and to paid staff and volunteers at their induction sessions.

1.3. Sunbeams (London Ltd) recognises its responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection. It carries responsibility for ensuring that their employees are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.

1.4. The purpose of Sunbeams (London Ltd) is to provide mentoring and befriending services to vulnerable children and young people between the ages of 5 and 16.

1.5. We know that children and young people can be vulnerable to abuse by adults. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by the organisation are transparent and safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people.

1.6. This policy is informed by statutory and local authority guidance and legislation, including:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance (2009)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The London Child Protection Procedures (April 2018)

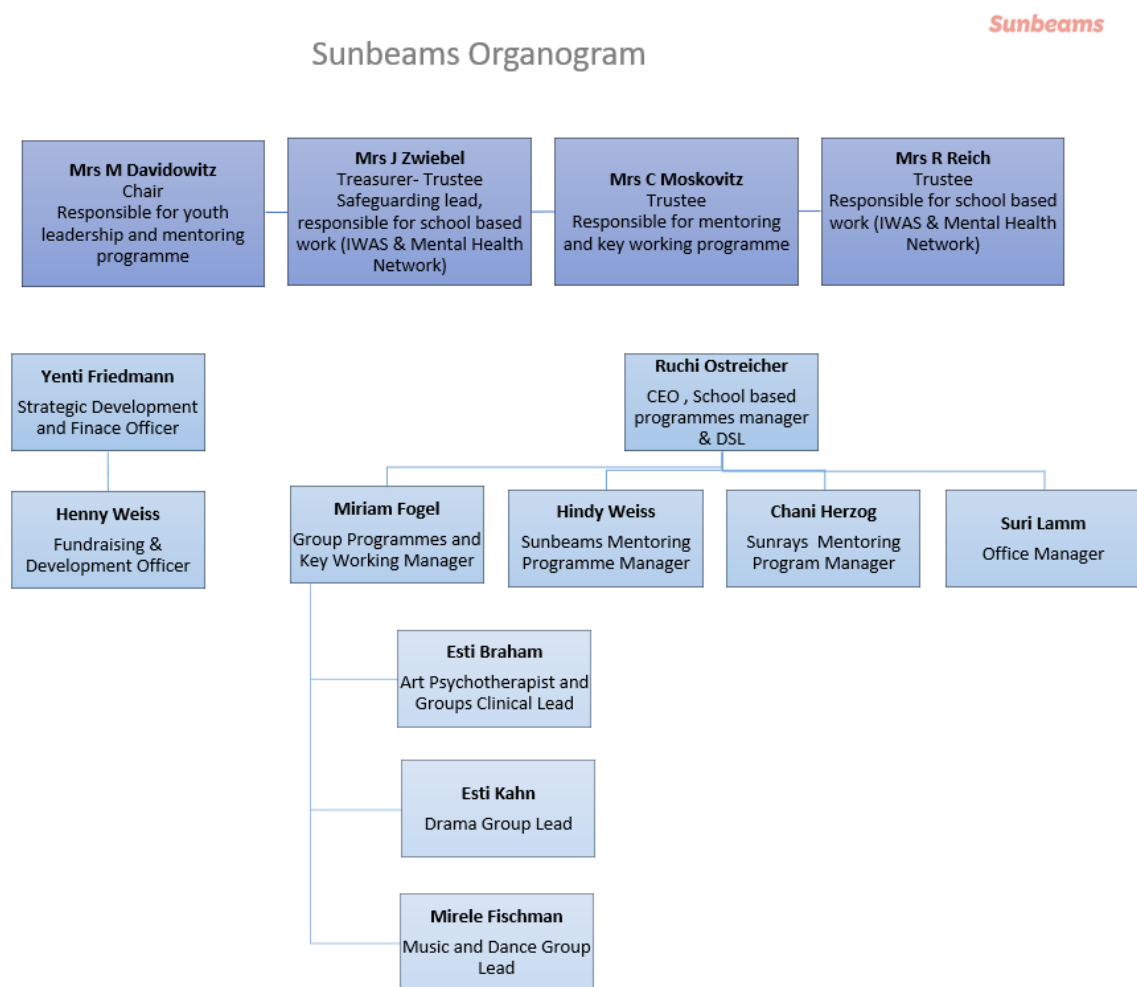
2. Principles

- Children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.
- It is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging.
- Children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.
- Volunteers mentoring and befriending vulnerable children and working with the same children over a period of time are in a unique position to be able to observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate a child may be being abused or neglected.

- Paid and volunteer staff in voluntary organisations need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to local authority children’s social care or the police if necessary.
- Paid and volunteer staff should make sure that they are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, that they question the behaviour of children and parents/carers and don’t necessarily take what they are told at face value. They should make sure they know where to turn to if they need to ask for help and refer to children’s social care or to the police, if they suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger (see the section on Taking Action for further information).

3. Roles and Contacts

This is the Sunbeams Organogram:



3.1. The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):

Ruchi Ostreicher — 07539 458 876

3.2. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Chani Herzog — 020 8802 8789

3.3. Safeguarding Lead Trustee:

Jessica Zwiebel — 07432 084 528

3.4. Hackney Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

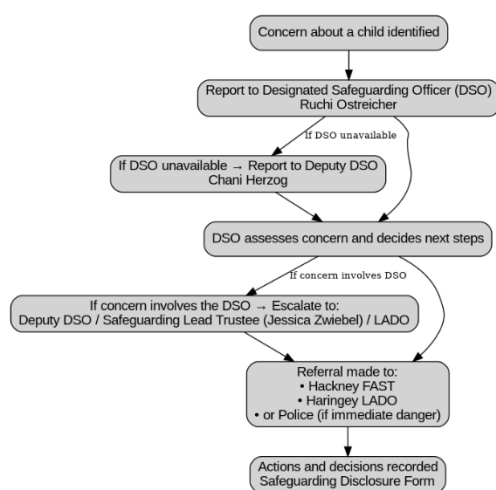
020 8356 4569

3.5. Haringey Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

020 8489 2968

Reporting Flow:

Concern identified → Report concern to DSO (or Deputy DSO if unavailable) → DSO conducts initial assessment and determines next steps → If the concern involves the DSO, report to Deputy DSO, Lead Trustee, or LADO → Referral made to Hackney First Access Screening Team or Police as required



4. Safeguarding Children & Young People

4.1 Safe Recruitment & Selection

Sunbeams is committed to safer recruitment in order to protect the children and young people who access our services. Safeguarding is central to every stage of our recruitment process, and we only appoint individuals who can demonstrate their suitability to work safely with children. All recruitment is conducted fairly, openly and transparently, in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy, and with safeguarding considerations built into shortlisting, interviewing and appointment.

4.2 Equal Opportunities

We are committed to equal opportunities and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, faith, sexual orientation or other protected characteristics. At the same time, safeguarding the welfare of children is paramount, and therefore all appointments remain subject to safer recruitment checks.

4.3 Responsibility for Safer Recruitment

Overall responsibility for safer recruitment lies with the Board of Trustees, delegated to the Safeguarding Lead Trustee and the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). They ensure that all required checks are completed, records are kept up to date, and that safer recruitment principles are consistently applied across the organisation. Day-to-day responsibility for implementing these processes rests with the DSO, with oversight from the Trustee Lead.

4.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

All staff and volunteers who work directly with children must hold an Enhanced DBS check before they can begin unsupervised work. DBS checks are renewed every three years, or sooner if concerns arise, and the DSO maintains the central record of DBS clearances. The DSO is responsible for ensuring that renewals are tracked and completed on time, and reports quarterly to the Safeguarding Lead Trustee on compliance. No individual is permitted to start in a regulated activity role without a valid DBS certificate and full clearance. Where staff or volunteers begin before a DBS is completed, they are never left unsupervised with children until clearance is confirmed.

4.4a References

At least two references are required for all staff and volunteers, one of which must be from a recent employer or, where relevant, a role involving work with children. References are requested in writing and followed up by telephone where necessary. Any discrepancies or gaps in employment history are fully explored and resolved before appointment.

4.4b Shortlisting

All applications are assessed against a clear role description and person specification. Shortlisting is carried out by at least two members of staff or trustees to ensure consistency, transparency and fairness. Safeguarding experience and attitudes are considered throughout this process.

4.4c Recruitment Process Summary

In accordance with Sunbeams' Safer Recruitment Policy, all individuals working or volunteering with children are subject to a rigorous recruitment process which includes:

- Submission of a detailed application or letter of interest
- Verification of identity through two forms of ID (including one photographic)
- Interview by at least two trained staff members
- Receipt of two references, one of which must relate to work with children
- Completion of an Enhanced DBS check and renewal as required

4.5 Management & Support

In accordance with Sunbeams' Staff Supervision, Development and Training Policy, staff and volunteers are provided with:

- Clear job or role descriptions and codes of conduct
- Induction within six months, including safeguarding training
- Regular supervision (six-weekly for staff; as appropriate for volunteers)
- Mandatory safeguarding training:

- Basic safeguarding at induction
- Annual refresher for all direct service roles
- Biennial advanced training for DSOs and Deputies
- Trustee-level training every three years

4.6 Safer Activities & Trips

Necessary arrangements:

- People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check, must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children.
- All paid staff and volunteers undertaking specialist support roles are provided with appropriate training.
- All activities are risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent children and young people being harmed whilst participating in the organisation's activities.
- Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance have been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part are covered.
- All activities being provided are properly planned and organised. Planning ensures that the services are age-appropriate, appropriately supervised, take account of staff ratio and use qualified instructors, or guidance as appropriate.
- The organisation has a Photography Policy about taking and using photographs of children and young people and a consent form for the use of photographs and filming and will remain compliant with GDPR regulations.
- Vehicles will have up-to-date Tax and MOT, appropriate seats (including booster seats and seatbelts).
- First Aid Travel Kits are available in the office, for trips.
- Staff-to-Young Person Ratios:

To help keep children and young people safe and in line with NSPCC recommended good practice, the following adult-to-child ratios apply during all group activities and off-site trips:

- Aged 8–12 years: One adult to eight children
- Aged 13–16 years: One adult to ten young people

In all group activities or trips, a minimum of two adults must be present, even when group sizes are small. These are minimum ratios and should be increased depending on the complexity of the activity, the needs or behaviour of the young people involved, or any elevated risk. Group leaders are responsible for ensuring these ratios are adhered to during both planning and delivery stages.

Where one-to-one mentoring is provided, this is covered under the organisation's Lone Working Policy, which sets out the procedures and safety controls in place

for such arrangements. Lone working may only take place where appropriate permissions are in place and safeguarding procedures are followed.

4.7 Online Safety

The welfare of the children/young people who come into contact with our services is paramount and governs our approach to the use and management of electronic communications technologies.

Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to e-safety.

The use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives; it is involved in how we as an organisation gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is also an intrinsic part of the experience of our children and young people. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused either by an adult or a young person, can be actually or potentially harmful to them.

We will seek to promote e-safety by:

- Examining and risk assessing any emerging new technologies before they are used within the organisation. We will provide guidance for staff and volunteers for use.
- We will work with TAG (Technology Awareness Group) to appropriately filter IT equipment.
- Supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online and when using their mobile phones and any computer-based activities; We will encourage TAG services to support parents with this.
- Incorporating statements about safe and appropriate ICT use into the codes of conduct both for staff and volunteers and for children and young people.
- Using our procedures to deal firmly, fairly and decisively with any examples of inappropriate ICT use, complaints or allegations, whether by an adult or a child/young person (these may include breaches of filtering, illegal use, cyberbullying, or use of ICT to groom a child or to perpetrate abuse).
- Informing parents and carers of incidents of concern as appropriate.
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.
- Providing adequate physical security for ICT equipment.
- Ensuring that usernames, logins and passwords are used effectively.
- Using only official email accounts provided via the organisation and monitoring these as necessary.
- Ensuring confidential information sent by email is sent securely, and depending on the sensitivity of the data, it may need to be encrypted.

- Ensuring that the personal information of staff, volunteers and service users (including service users' names) is not published on any online websites or promotional links.
- Ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, (including children over 12) and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers on ICT issues, through supervision, support and training.
- Activities involving watching a video or video clips will be by special request and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with full consent from parent/s and line managers.

5. Codes of Conduct & Whistleblowing

5.1. Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to Sunbeams' Code of Conduct which outlines appropriate and professional boundaries, expected standards of behaviour, and organisational values in relation to safeguarding. This Code of Conduct is shared during induction and included in the Staff and Volunteer Handbooks. Breaches of the Code can lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal. A Behaviour Policy is also in place for children and young people, promoting respectful, safe, and cooperative conduct.

5.2. Whistleblowing

Sunbeams promotes a culture of transparency where safeguarding concerns or inappropriate conduct can be reported without fear of reprisal. Concerns should be raised with a line manager, the DSO, or a senior leader. If concerns remain unresolved or staff feel unable to report internally, they may contact:

- **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:** 0800 028 0285 (Mon–Fri, 8am–8pm)
- **Email:** help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Shema Koli Helpline:** 0203 670 1818

6. Peer-on-Peer Abuse & Bullying

6.1. Awareness

Peer-on-peer abuse can take different forms including:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexting

Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who have any other of the protected characteristics or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse.

6.2. SEN Users/Users with Disabilities

At Sunbeams we recognise that some of our users may have SEN or disabilities and therefore may be more vulnerable. As such staff will be specifically made aware:

- Not to assume that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- To recognise that children with SEND are more prone to peer group isolation than other children.
- Of the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Of communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

6.4. Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop peer-on-peer abuse.

This includes staff, the parent/guardian, the child/young person, and the organisation's official commitment to the early identification of peer-on-peer abuse or bullying and prompt, collective action to deal with it. Any reported incident of peer-on-peer abuse will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.

We recognise that both the victim and the perpetrator may need support.

Children/young people experiencing peer-on-peer abuse will be supported or mentored and assistance given to reduce the risk of further incidences, uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.

7. Comments, Compliments & Complaints

Sunbeams values feedback and encourages open communication. Children, families, staff, and volunteers are encouraged to raise:

- **Comments** – to suggest improvements
- **Compliments** – to highlight good practice
- **Complaints** – to express dissatisfaction

A written Complaints and Feedback Policy guides how concerns are managed. All feedback is acknowledged, documented, and escalated where necessary, with learning used to improve service delivery.

8. Child Protection

8.1. Immediate Action

If a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, staff must:

- Call emergency services (999)
- Take the child to A&E or call an ambulance if necessary
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) as soon as it is safe to do so

8.2. Recognising 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, institutional, or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children.

Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources, including abuse by members of that organisation.

Sunbeams (London Ltd) staff should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children and where there are concerns about a child's welfare. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

Abuse can take many forms, and the following is a summary of the most common forms of child abuse as set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*:

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 parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; bite marks

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Examples include:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Silencing children or making fun of how they communicate
- Age-inappropriate expectations
- Limiting learning or social interaction
- Exposure to domestic abuse
- Serious bullying, including cyber bullying

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong

- Parents or carers who withdraw attention from their child
- Blaming the child for family problems
- Humiliating the child, e.g. name-calling or making negative comparisons

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.

This may include:

- Lack of adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Failing to protect a child from physical/emotional harm
- Inadequate supervision or care
- Not providing appropriate medical treatment
- Neglect of emotional needs

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children living in a dirty or unsafe home
- Children who are hungry or appear unwashed
- Lack of clothing for weather conditions
- Exposure to drugs, alcohol or violence
- Aggression, anger or self-harming behaviours
- Missed health care or untreated injuries

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware.

These may include:

- Physical contact (penetrative or non-penetrative)
- Non-contact acts like watching sexual activities, grooming, or sharing sexual images
- Women and children can also be perpetrators

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate for their age
- Sexual language or behaviour that's not age-appropriate
- Asking others to behave sexually
- Physical signs such as soreness in genital areas or STIs

8.3. Further Information on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation involves exploitative situations where young people receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, gifts, money, or affection) in return for sexual activity.

CSE may involve:

- Coercion or manipulation
- Unhealthy or imbalanced relationships
- Peer pressure, gang exploitation, or online grooming
- "Consensual" acts where the power dynamic is abusive

Some young people may not realise they are being exploited.

8.4. Further Information on Radicalisation

Protecting children from radicalisation is part of Sunbeams' safeguarding duties.

Radicalisation is the process by which someone comes to support terrorism or extremist ideologies.

Staff and volunteers must be alert to:

- Changes in behaviour or views
- Online activity or exposure to extremist content
- Influence by peers, family or online contacts
- Isolation or unmet emotional needs

Concerns must be reported to the DSO.

8.5. Taking Action

There are four key steps to help you to identify and respond appropriately to possible abuse and/or neglect:

1. Be alert to the signs of harm and abuse (see 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4 for guidance on the signs and symptoms of abuse, CSE and radicalisation).
2. Question the behaviour of children and parents/carers — don't necessarily take what you are told at face value.
3. Ask for help from the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), or if unavailable, from the Deputy DSO, a manager, or trustee.
4. Refer to local authority children's social care or to the police, if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.

Please note: you may not always feel it is appropriate to go through each step one by one — if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

If you suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect, it is not your responsibility to investigate further. Instead, you must:

- Try to establish the basic facts.
- Consider whether the concern is serious enough to warrant a referral to children's social care or the police, or whether you need to seek advice from the DSO.
- Discuss your concerns with the DSO, unless doing so would put the child at greater risk.
- If unsure, consult with the Deputy DSO or a manager.
- In an emergency, call the police (999).

8.6. Making a Record

It is essential that you record in writing all concerns and any decisions made about them and actions taken. The organisation's safeguarding disclosure form should be used (see Appendices A and B). The record should:

- Be made as soon as possible after the event
- Include the date, time and context of the concern
- Use the exact words of the child or young person wherever possible
- Distinguish clearly between fact, opinion and hearsay
- Include your name and signature
- Be passed promptly to the DSO

8.7. When to Discuss Concerns with the Child's Family

In general, you should discuss concerns with the child's family and agree with them what should be done. However, this should only be done where such discussion and agreement will not place the child at increased risk of significant harm or lead to interference with any potential police investigation.

You must not discuss the concern with the parent/carer if:

- Sexual abuse is suspected
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) is suspected
- Contact with the parents or carers would place you or others at risk
- It is not possible to contact the parent or carer without causing undue delay in making the referral
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage or so-called "honour-based violence" is suspected

In these cases, or where you are uncertain, the matter should be discussed with the DSO and/or referred directly to children's social care. The DSO will seek advice from children's social care about whether to discuss the concerns with the family.

8.8. Taking a Disclosure

If a child or young person discloses to you that they are being abused or neglected, you must:

- Listen carefully to what is being said. Try not to interrupt.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Avoid making promises you cannot keep. Do not promise that you will not tell anyone else.
- Do not ask leading questions. Stick to open questions such as "Tell me what happened."
- Explain what you will do next and who you will tell.
- Record the information using the child or young person's own words. Include the time, date and your name.
- Inform the DSO immediately. If the DSO is not available, inform the Deputy DSO or another trusted senior member of staff.

Ensure you use the Safeguarding Disclosure Form and complete it on the same day. If in doubt about what to write, speak to the DSO or Deputy.

8.9. Responding to Concerns Without a Disclosure

There may be times when a child or young person does not disclose abuse, but you notice concerning behaviours, injuries or changes in presentation.

In these cases:

- Be curious and concerned — you may ask the child non-leading, open questions, such as "How did you get that bruise?"
- Record any observation and behaviour changes in writing
- Share concerns with the DSO or Deputy DSO
- If neither are available, report to a manager or directly to children's social care
- In an emergency, contact the police on 999

All concerns, whether there is disclosure or not, must be documented and acted upon without delay.

8.10. Making a Referral

When you are making a referral to children's social care, you should:

- Be clear about your concerns
- Provide information about your organisation and your role

- Share the full name, DOB, address and contact details of the child
- Share names and details of parents/carers and any other household members
- Include any additional needs or known concerns
- Outline what has been said or observed, and when
- Share whether parental consent has been sought and obtained

Referrals can be made:

- By phone: Contact Hackney FAST (First Access Screening Team) on 020 8356 5500
- By email: csc referrals@hackney.gov.uk
- Out of Hours: 020 8356 2710

You should record:

- The time and date of the referral
- Who you spoke to and their role
- What information you shared
- The outcome or any actions agreed

If no referral was made, record the reason why.

8.11. Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

An allegation should be made if a person who works with children (paid or unpaid) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

All allegations must be taken seriously and reported immediately.

You must:

- Report the allegation to the DSO (or if about the DSO, to the Deputy DSO, the Safeguarding Trustee, or directly to the LADO)
- Not investigate yourself
- Not share details with colleagues unless authorised
- Record the allegation clearly and accurately

Contact points:

- Volunteer allegations → Report to: Chani Herzog (Deputy DSO) — 020 8802 8789
- Staff allegations → Report to: Jessica Zwiebel (Safeguarding Trustee) — 020 8802 5928

Sunbeams will then liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

In serious cases, staff or volunteers may be suspended while investigations take place.

8.12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All records of safeguarding concerns, incidents and referrals are stored securely and confidentially.

Information must only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding legislation.

Important: The child's right to safety overrides the right to confidentiality in safeguarding situations. If a child is at risk, it is appropriate to share information with the DSO, social care, or police.

Staff should always seek guidance from the DSO when unsure.

8.13. Useful Contacts

- **Hackney FAST:** 020 8356 5500 | csreferrals@hackney.gov.uk
- **Out-of-Hours Social Services:** 020 8356 2710
- **City of London Children's Services:** 020 7332 1224 / 3621 | social.services@cityoflondon.gov.uk
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000 | help@nspcc.org.uk
- **ChildLine:** 0800 1111 | Textphone: 0800 400 222

9. Contextual Safeguarding

Sunbeams recognises that children and young people may be exposed to risk in a range of social contexts beyond their family environment. These include peer relationships, schools, neighbourhoods, and online spaces. We adopt a contextual safeguarding approach that considers these influences and actively works with relevant partners to reduce risk and promote protective factors.

To support this approach:

- Staff are trained to identify environmental and contextual factors that may increase vulnerability.
- Displays in settings promote children's rights, safe behaviours, and how to seek help.
- Children and young people are encouraged to speak with trusted adults and contribute to discussions on safety in their communities.

10. COVID-19 Addendum

The following information relates to adaptations and updates made to Sunbeams' safeguarding policy and working practices during the Covid-19 pandemic. These additions supplement, rather than replace, any of the core safeguarding principles set out in this policy.

10.1. Our Safeguarding Commitment During Covid-19

During Covid-19, we continued to deliver our services to vulnerable children and families while complying with government regulations. Many children and young people were confined to unsafe homes during lockdowns and required extra support and safeguarding vigilance. Sunbeams provided this through a combination of remote and Covid-safe face-to-face sessions.

We remain committed to:

- Continuing our safeguarding duties in all formats of service delivery
- Updating our procedures in line with national guidance
- Keeping children's voices central to decision-making
- Ensuring the welfare and safety of both service users and staff

10.2. Enhanced Hygiene and Covid-Secure Practice

All face-to-face interactions are subject to a risk assessment which includes:

- Ensuring face coverings are worn if social distancing cannot be maintained
- Enforcing hand hygiene before and after all sessions
- Using only individually packaged or sterilised materials
- Replacing in-person mentoring with virtual or telephone support where appropriate
- Ensuring activities comply with the latest guidance from Public Health England

Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated as guidelines change.

10.3. Safe Remote Mentoring

Where one-to-one mentoring is delivered online (e.g., via Zoom or phone), the following principles apply:

- Sessions must be pre-arranged with written consent from both parents and school
- Mentors must only use secure platforms approved by Sunbeams
- Waiting room features and passwords must be used to restrict access
- Mentors must not share screens or files unless pre-approved and necessary
- All online sessions are to be logged and monitored by line managers
- The Lone Working Policy and Online Safety procedures still apply
- Children and young people must be encouraged to raise any safeguarding concerns

Mentors must not initiate unscheduled contact and must ensure privacy and professionalism during virtual sessions.

10.4. Safe Recruitment During Covid-19

Where new mentors or staff were recruited during the pandemic:

- Preference was given to previously vetted and DBS-cleared volunteers
- Remote interviews were conducted in line with safeguarding protocols
- ID documents were verified securely online, using two forms of ID
- Reference checks continued as standard

All new recruits completed a safeguarding induction (either in person or online) before beginning any engagement with children.

10.5. Staff Training During Covid-19

Sunbeams remain committed to maintaining staff competency:

- All new staff or volunteers receive safeguarding training during induction
- Trustees continue to complete their 3-year safeguarding refresher
- Where in-person training is not possible, remote learning is delivered
- Refresher training is available on request or as issues arise

Safeguarding updates are circulated to all relevant staff when there are changes in guidance or regulation.

This guidance will be kept under continuous review to ensure that the measures it outlines are adequate and meet current legal and regulatory guidance

Appendix A

Child Protection Procedures Incident Report Form

Records should be handwritten

Child's Name:	Child's Address:	Child's D.O.B:	Is this child known to be on a child protection register?
			Yes/No

Please indicate the nature of this report:

- I have concerns that abuse may be occurring
- I was involved/witnessed an incident with a child
- I have received an allegation of abuse
- A child has told me that they are being abused

Please record incident details as follows:

Date & Time:	
Context:	
Incident:	
What the child said:	
What you said:	
Action taken:	
Concern raised with parents?	
Observer's name:	
Observer's Signature	

Was any other person present at the time of the allegation being made? Yes/No

If yes, please detail who: _____

Any further action or details must be recorded on the monitoring sheet - (unless a further separate incident needs recording on another incident referral sheet).

CONFIDENTIAL: MAY ONLY BE KEPT IN DESIGNATED SECURE PLACE

Signed by person recording _____ on date _____

Appendix B: Child Protection Procedures Monitoring Sheet

(to be used when a situation is being monitored)

Records should be handwritten

Child's Name:	Child's Address:	Child's D.O.B:	Is this child known to be on a child protection register?
			Yes/No

This monitoring form is for those children about whom there is concern or whose name is on the child protection register. Please record summary details as follows:

Date:	
Concern:	
Action taken:	
Concern raised with parents?	
Observer's name:	
Observer's Signature:	

CONFIDENTIAL: MAY ONLY BE KEPT IN DESIGNATED SECURE PLACE

Signed by person recording _____ on date _____