



## **Safeguarding Policy**

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

CCAA is a charity supporting children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) in England and Wales. The charity is run by volunteers who have been affected by the condition through personal experiences. CCAA support families through our local support network of volunteers and through our family support weekends.

CCAA also works with Health Care Professionals in supporting YP with JIA and collaborates with other charities working with children and young people with inflammatory conditions.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who receive CCAA's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of CCAA including the board of trustees and our volunteers.

Everyone involved in the CCAA has a part to play in safeguarding young people and adults at risk. This policy includes guidelines for all those involved in the charity to ensure that everyone is aware of the structures and systems in place and to respond to any concerns that may emerge.

We believe that:

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

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- 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 staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and 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
- making sure that children, young people 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, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers 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, and volunteers, by applying health & safety measures according to 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.

## Relevant Acts

**The Children Acts 1989 and 2004** and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DOH 2018)** highlight the shared responsibility of organisations to promote children's wellbeing and safeguard them from harm.

The **Care Act (2014)** sets out for the first time a legal framework for safeguarding adults.

**The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**

**Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012**

**The Equality Act 2010**

**The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

**Mental Capacity Act 2005**

**Sexual Offences Act 2003**

**The Human Rights Act 1998**

**The Data Protection Act 2018**

It's not possible to eliminate all risks but it's important that those with specific responsibility for children can demonstrate that they've assessed risks and taken steps to minimise them.

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, all organisations that provide services for, or work with, children must have:

- a clear line of accountability for the provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

- a committee trustee to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and adults at risk and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- clear whistleblowing procedures (see Whistleblowing Policy) which are suitably referenced in training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.
- clear information sharing arrangements which set out the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB).
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on obtaining a criminal record check;
- appropriate supervision and support for vols, including safeguarding training;
- clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children

## Safe recruitment

Ensuring that staff and volunteers recruited are safe to work with children includes several areas as outlined in the " Safe Recruitment Guidelines", i.e. application process, interview, criminal records checks, references, induction process.

Criminal records checks form one part of this process. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in December 2012.

The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 ('The Act') and carries out the functions previously undertaken by the CRB and ISA, and the CRB application form has been replaced with a new DBS application form.

Criminal records checks assist organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially work that involves children or adults at Risk

## Dealing with Concerns and Allegations

It is not the responsibility of those volunteering with CCAA to make judgements as to whether or not abuse is occurring. It is however their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Adults within the CCAA have a duty of care to respond to inappropriate behaviour, abuse or bullying.

All information received and discussed must be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within the organisation with a designated safeguarding role. **Our Safeguarding Lead is Glenda Dalton.**

On occasion, it may be necessary to seek advice or inform the statutory agencies e.g. Child/Adult Social Care or the Police.

# Definition of Abuse (Children)

It is important to be aware of what constitutes abuse. The following definitions are adapted from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

- 1. Physical Abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This definition also applies where a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- 2. Emotional Abuse** - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may occur when the child is subjected to unrealistic pressure or is bullied in order to perform to high expectations.
- 3. Sexual Abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. masturbation, kissing and touching outside of clothing) They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at or in production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- 4. 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 (such as food, clothing or shelter).
- 5. Bullying** - deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:
  - **Physical** e.g. hitting, kicking, theft
  - **Verbal** e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling
  - **Emotional** e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group

## There are a number of signs that may indicate that children are being abused:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- unexplained changes in behavior (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- inappropriate sexual awareness.
- engaging in sexually explicit behavior.
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.

- difficulty in making friends.
- being prevented from socializing with other children.
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite. loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- the child becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. Some changes in behavior can be caused by changes at home, for example, bereavement and parents are encouraged to inform the CCAA of any such circumstances. It is important to be aware that some children are additionally vulnerable to abuse.

## Responding to concerns about a child

Abuse can and does occur in a variety of situations. Most children are abused by someone known to them. Concerns may arise from a child or adult expressing concerns or by something observed that raise issues.

It is important that those involved in CCAA are vigilant about concerns, and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

There is a responsibility to inform appropriate agencies of possible abuse so that they can then make enquiries and take any action necessary to protect the child.

## What to do if you have concerns of Abuse

- stay calm.
- keep an open mind.
- listen very carefully to what is being said and take the child seriously.
- as soon as possible record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Explain who needs to know.
- keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing telling you. Report the issue in line with procedures.
- All concerns about a child must be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and treated confidentially.

It is not the responsibility of the CCAA to decide if a child has been abused. It is however their responsibility to act upon any concern.

**The NSPCC Helpline (0800 800 5000) can be contacted to talk through any concerns that arise. This can be done anonymously.**

### **Childline 0800 1111**

If action needs to be taken urgently, contact the Police on 999. If concerns are identified out of hours the Police and CSC (Children's Social Care) provide an out of hours' service.

When concerns are reported to the statutory authorities they will investigate to establish whether a child is at risk of "significant harm". If a criminal offence is suspected the CSC will always work in partnership with the police. Their primary duty is to safeguard and ensure the welfare of the child and to work within LSCB procedures.

If concerns relate to an individual within CCAA, the following applies:

- The relevant disciplinary procedures will be implemented following the advice of the statutory authorities if they are involved.
- The individual will be asked to stop working with the child (children) immediately whilst a full investigation is carried out. This is to protect all parties involved.
- Alongside the disciplinary procedures, and informed by any statutory enquiries, The Safeguarding Lead and/or The Chair will assess whether it is appropriate for the person to return to work with children and how this will be managed.

There are appropriate procedures to manage reported concerns or allegations which have been complied in accordance with Government guidelines and legislation.

## Whistle-Blowing (refer to Whistleblowing Policy)

CCAA are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for young people (U18) to participate in activities organised by and on behalf of the CCAA and recognise their responsibility to promote a safe environment for any concerns to be reported without fear of reprisal.

Whistle-Blowing is an early warning system. It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it.

**The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998** protects those who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. It makes provision about the kinds of disclosure that may be protected and the circumstances in which disclosures are protected. This policy is therefore intended to comply with the Act by encouraging everyone in the CCAA to make disclosures about fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing without fear of reprisal, so that problems can be identified, dealt with and resolved quickly.

## Records and Information

Information passed to the CSC or the Police must be as helpful as possible - hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure or concern will help you to ensure that all relevant details can be reported.

Reporting the matter to the Police or CSC should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to CSC must be confirmed in writing within 24 hrs. A record must also be made of the name and designation of the CSC officer or Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

A copy of this information should be sent to the CCAA Safeguarding Officer.

If advice is required on any aspect of the contents of these Guidelines, your CCAA Safeguarding Officer should be available for advice, and useful contact details are as follows.

## Rules for information sharing

Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family 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.

Seek advice if in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.

Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.

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

Necessary, proportionate, relevant, 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 people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

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.

## Contact details

### **Nominated child protection lead**

Name: Glenda Dalton

Email: [glenda@cca.org.uk](mailto:glenda@cca.org.uk)

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

This policy was last reviewed on: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at our Committee Meeting

Signed: *C J Wescott (CHAIR)*

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025