Dear Sir/Madam,

The Cabinet Member for Central Services (Councillor J.A. Jackson) is to consider the following report and make a decision on Wednesday, 8th February, 2012, at 6.00 p.m. in Interview Room D, Town Hall, Nuneaton.

Yours faithfully,

PHILIP RICHARDSON

Assistant Director – Governance and Recreation

A G E N D A

1. EVACUATION PROCEDURE
A fire drill is not expected, so if the alarm sounds please evacuate the building quickly and calmly. Please use the stairs and do not use the lifts. Once out of the building, please gather outside the Yorkshire Bank on the opposite side of the road.

Exit by the door by which you entered the room or by the fire exits which are clearly indicated by the standard green fire exit signs.

If you need any assistance in evacuating the building, please make yourself known to a member of staff.

Please also make sure all your mobile phones are turned off or set to silent.
2. **PUBLIC CONSULTATION** - Members of the public will be given the opportunity to speak on specific agenda items if notice has been received.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - To receive declarations of personal/prejudicial interests in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

   Note: Following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct, members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their personal interests at the commencement of the relevant item (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a prejudicial interest the member must withdraw from the room unless dispensation has been given by the Standards Committee.

4. **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND GUIDANCE** – report of the Assistant Director Governance and Recreation attached (Page 2).
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**Summary:** To seek approval to produce an updated version of the Child Protection and Guidance to ensure that the Council is compliant with the Children’s Act 2004.

**Recommendations:** That the Portfolio Holder for Central Services approves the revised Child Protection Policy and Guidance, attached as Appendix A to this report.

**Reasons:** To ensure that the Council is compliant with the legal requirements under the Children’s Act 2004.

**Options:**
1) Accept recommendations.
2) Do not accept recommendations.

**Subject to call-in:** Yes

**Forward plan:** No

**Corporate priorities:** All

**Relevant statutes or policy:** Children’s Act 2004
**Equal opportunity implications:** This Policy is vital to underpin the Council’s compliance with the Children’s Act 2004. The actions the Council are carrying out surrounding child protection will ensure that all employees, children and members of the public will be treated equally in relation to safeguarding children activities.

**Human resources implications:** No direct Human resource implications.

**Financial implications:** No direct Financial implications

**Health Inequalities Implications:** No direct Health Inequalities Implications.

**Risk management implications:** Failure to implement this Policy could leave the Council vulnerable to claims it is not complying with its Section 11 duties under the Children’s Act 2004.

**Environmental implications:** No direct Environmental Implications.

**Legal implications:** The Council is required by law to carry out activities for Child Protection in line with the Children’s Act 2004. Section 11 of the Act places a statutory duty on key people and bodies in England to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Contact details:** Craig Dicken, Equality and Child Protection Officer  
Telephone: 024 7637 6333  
Email: craig.dicken@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk
1.0 **Purpose of Report**

1.1 To seek approval from the Portfolio Holder for Central Services to publish an updated Child Protection Policy and Guidance that will ensure the Council continues to comply with its duties as set out in the Children’s Act 2004.

2.0 **Recommendation**

2.1 That the Portfolio Holder for Central Services approves the revised Child Protection Policy and Guidance, attached as Appendix A to this report.

3.0 **Background & Section 11 Review**

3.1 The Council’s first Child Protection Policy was introduced in October 2004 following the introduction of the Children’s Act 2004. Following an audit by the NSPCC in February 2007, the Council produced its second Child Protection Policy in August 2007. The third Child Protection Policy was introduced following an internal review in October 2009.

3.2 At the beginning of 2011, the Council was subject to a Section 11 of the Children’s Act (2004) review by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children’s Board (WSCB). The Council had to complete an audit of compliance with Section 11 which was submitted to the WSCB by the 28th February 2011. The Council received a positive response to the Audit, and was commended for demonstrating sound compliance with our statutory requirements.

3.3 The Audit did pick up some areas to refresh and improve our work around child protection and as a result of this an action plan was produced and submitted to the WSCB following approval by CMT.

4.0 **Amendments to the Child Protection Policy and Guidance**

4.1.1 As part of the action plan, a main action agreed was to update the Child Protection Policy and Guidance. The Child Protection Policy has been amended to reflect current responsibilities for the child protection agenda within the Council.

4.2 There have been several changes to the Child Protection Guidance. In addition to updating the document for current responsibilities, the amendments/additions are:

- Section 1.1, which details our wide variety of services which interact with children and the importance of a District Council role in safeguarding children.
Section 2.3, which details factors influencing the vulnerability of children, has been expanded to reflect the Inter Agency Child Protection Procedures, commonly known as the 'Blue Book'.

The definition of abuse section in 2.5 has been updated to reflected current definitions.

Section 2.6, covering how to recognise abuse, has been expanded to detail the types of abuse with physical and behavioural indicators for each. Bullying has also been added.

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 have been updated to reflect current practise when making a child protection referral.

Section 4.11, covering the uncollected child procedure, and 4.12 detailing internal reporting, have been updated.

Section 4.22, looking at social media interaction with children, has been added to reflect the growth in social media use and the potential interaction that could be had with children online and the dangers that this could have.

Section 5 covering allegations against employees have been updated to reflect Council practise, the Blue Book and the role of Warwickshire’s Local Authority Designated Officer.

The incident form for internal reporting of child protection concerns has been updated and is available to all employees via CLIP.

5.0 Promotion and future work

5.1 In addition to the revised Child Protection Policy and Guidance, the work on the Child Protection agenda has already begun with the following pieces of work from the post Section 11 audit action plan:

- There has been the production of Child Protection Business Cards. The Business Cards were attached to wage slips for all employees and Elected Members in November 2011.
- Several posters have been displayed across the authority from the WSCB promoting safeguarding children.
- A review of which posts require a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check is also underway. As part of this review, those posts who are identified as requiring a CRB Check will also be required to attend Child Protection Training.
- A stock take of all Council activities which involve children has also been carried out so that there is a corporate record of all services which interact with children.

PHIL RICHARDSON
Child Protection:
‘We’re all in it together’

Nuneaton & Bedworth
United to Achieve
First Policy Date: October 2004

2nd Version: August 2007

3rd Version: September 2009

4th Version: November 2011

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Equality Impact Assessment: Initial Screening completed Tuesday 2nd August 2011.

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1 Introduction

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council recognises that it has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when Council representatives (including employees, councillors, partner agencies, agency workers, contractors and providers of services on behalf of the Council) are given responsibility for children, they should provide them with the highest standard of care.

Abuse can occur within many different situations. Children are abused regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity. It is important to have a policy in place to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and one that helps to protect the wellbeing of children. This policy applies to everyone regardless of whether or not they have regular contact with children. It is extremely important that everyone has a basic understanding of the issues surrounding child protection.

A commitment is made that this document will be reviewed annually in order to make sure that best practice is implemented to its fullest potential.

2 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council’s Policy Principles:

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- All children whatever age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- It is the responsibility of Children’s Social Care to determine whether abuse has taken place but it is everyone’s responsibility to report any concerns.
- All children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.
- All employees (whether paid or voluntary) & Elected Members have the right to recourse against any allegation made against them.
- It is essential that if children are to be given appropriate protection that everyone works together to achieve this and that this Council is able to integrate with other agencies such as the Police and Children’s Social Care who have a statutory responsibility in this area.
- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)

The Council will be working towards maintaining a high standard of professionalism and best practice.

This can be achieved by:

- Offering safeguards, as outlined in this document, to the children with whom we work.
- Ensuring that employees, volunteers and members of organisations taking part in Council activities or contracted to undertake work on behalf of the Council are appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children by undertaking an applicable Criminal Records Bureau check and are trained in child protection procedures
- Making all available resources available to ensure safeguards are in place
Any other method which ensures the welfare of a child/children

3 Accountability for Child Protection

In accordance with the duties placed on District Councils to promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children's Act the Council can demonstrate:

A clear statement of the Council's responsibilities towards children available to employees
The Council has a wide variety of information on Child Protection on the Council’s intranet site CLIP and external website.

Senior Management's commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
Alan Franks, Executive Director, has been designated as the Authorities’ Children’s Champion. He oversees the work of key Officers to ensure a consistent approach to dealing with issues relevant to children.

A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
The Equality and Child Protection Officer is responsible for co-ordinating any reports and actions taken in response to any Child Protection matters. The Child Protection Guidance summarises the action that should be taken if an employee suspects a child is at risk from harm. The summary flowchart indicates reporting mechanisms and clear lines of responsibility.

The role of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)
The WSCB is an inter-agency forum constituted in accordance with the Children Act 2004, which places a legal duty on Warwickshire County Council and its partners to cooperate in the establishment and operation of a Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The objective of the WSCB as set out in the statute is to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children in Warwickshire, and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.

Member Champion for Children and Young People
In addition to the above, the Council has a Member Champion who champions the work with Children and Young People. This is currently Councillor Vicky Fowler.

4 Interagency Working and Sharing of Information

The Council is an active member of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Warwickshire Children’s Trust. A Senior Officer also represents the Council at District Council Sub Committee.

The Council is also a signature in the Warwickshire Information Sharing Protocol.

The Council also acknowledges that there is nothing in the Data Protection Act or the Human Rights Act which prevent the sharing of information to safeguard children. Child abuse is a crime and the Council commits itself to sharing whatever information possible to safeguard a child to relevant agencies. All employees will be encouraged to report incidents or concerns they have via the Council’s internal Child Protection reporting mechanism, which the form can be found on the intranet site.
Child Protection Guidance

Child Protection:
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5 Allegations against Employees

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1 Introduction

This guidance has been produced to provide practical support to Council employees when dealing with Child Protection matters.

The Council’s Child Protection Policy can be found as a separate document.

1.1 Child Protection and the Council

The Council has a major role to play in the protection of children. Despite not administering the Children Services function for the Borough and also not delivering the Leisure Services Function, there are many services which the Council provide that bring the Council into contact with children. Many serious case reviews over the last several years have highlighted that District Councils have had an involvement in these cases and contribute towards a multi-agency approach to safeguard children.

Below are just some of the services that the Council may come into contact with children:

- Housing
- Customer Services
- Home Visits
- Planning/Building Control inspections
- Homelessness
- Car Parking
- CCTV
- Play Rangers/Break Away Activities
- Environmental Health Issues
- Community Events/Activities
- Waste/Recycling Education
- Museum/Civic Hall Activities

In light of the multitude of scenarios which the Council can potentially interact with children, the following has been implemented to reflect the involvement Council services have with children:

- Maintain a Stocktake of all Council activity in connection with Child Protection
- Carry out appropriate consultation with children and young people
- Ensure all relevant employees who may come into contact with children attend Child Protection training.
- All posts which come into contact with children are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check
- Promote and maintain awareness of Child Protection agenda within the Council to employees and Elected Members

1.2 Accountability Lines for Child Protection

Executive Director – Environmental Services

The Children’s Champion for the authority and who has ultimate responsibility for Child Protection activities within the Council.
Assistant Director – Governance and Recreation

The Assistant Director who has responsibility for Child Protection within their Service Unit.

Audit and Governance Manager

Manager who oversees the operational Child Protection activities of the Council. Second contact within the authority to make Child Protection referrals to Children’s Services in the absence of the Equality and Child Protection Officer.

Equality and Child Protection Officer

Officer who carries out the operational activities for Child Protection within the Authority. Main contact within the authority to make Child Protection referrals to Children’s Services.

Other Council Employees

Responsibility to report any Child Protection concerns that they have witnessed
2 Recognising Abuse

2.1 Being Alert to Children’s Welfare

Everybody who works with children, or works with parents and other adults in contact with children should be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that a child’s welfare or safety may be at risk. The abuse or harm to children may occur from:

- parents;
- others who have parental responsibility;
- adults who are in a position of trust or who are temporarily entrusted with their care;
- people who, though not having parental responsibility, are known within a wider circle of the family or neighbourhood;
- a complete stranger;
- other children;

It must also be recognised that abuse or harm occurs as much from omissions and lack of protection as from commission of acts of abuse. Effective measures to safeguard children should not be seen in isolation from the wider range of support and services available to meet the needs of children and families:

- Many of the families who become the subject of child protection concerns suffer from multiple disadvantages. Providing services and support to children and families under stress may strengthen the capacity of parents to respond to the needs of their children before problems develop into abuse. It is worthy of note, however, that Child Protection permeates all classes of society;
- Child protection enquiries may reveal significant unmet needs for support and services among children and families. These should always be explicitly considered, even where concerns are not substantiated about significant harm to a child;
- If child protection processes are to result in improved outcomes for children, then effective plans for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare should be based on a wide-ranging assessment of the needs of the child and their family circumstances;
- All work with children and families should retain a clear focus on the welfare of the child. Just as child protection processes should always consider the wider needs of the child and family, so broad-based family support services should always be alert to, and know how to respond quickly and decisively to, potential indicators of abuse and neglect.

2.2 Assessing Children in Need

The Department of Health Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families provides a systematic basis for collecting and analysing information to support professional judgements about how to help children and families in the best interests of the child.

The framework is to be used for the assessment of all children in need including those where there are concerns that a child may be suffering significant harm. The definition for Children in Need used
in Warwickshire identifies a range of circumstances in which children may be deemed in need if their health or development would be impaired without provision of service.

2.3  Background Factors Influencing the Vulnerability of Children

Many families under great stress nonetheless manage to bring up their children in a warm, loving and supportive environment in which the children’s needs are met and they are safe from harm. Sources of stress within families may, however, have a negative impact on a child’s health, development and well being, either directly, or because they affect the capacity of parents to respond to their child’s needs. Research tells us that such sources of stress may include the following:

2.3.1  Social Exclusion

Many of the families who seek help for their children, or about whom others raise concerns about a child’s welfare, are multiple disadvantaged. Many lack a wage earner. Poverty may mean that children live in crowded or unsuitable accommodation, have poor diets, health problems, be vulnerable to accidents, and lack ready access to good educational and leisure opportunities. Racism and racial harassment are additional sources of stress for some families and children.

2.3.2  Domestic Violence

Everyone working with children should be alert to the frequent inter-relationship between domestic violence and the abuse and neglect of children. Where there is evidence of domestic violence, the implications for any children in the household should be considered, including the possibility that the children may themselves be subject to violence or other harm.

Domestic violence has an impact in a number of ways. It can pose a threat to an unborn child because assaults on pregnant women frequently involve punches or kicks directed at the abdomen, risking injury both to mother and foetus. Children may also suffer blows during episodes of violence. Children may be greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent. Both the physical assaults and psychological abuse suffered by adult victims who experience domestic violence can have a negative impact on their ability to look after their children.

Children who are experiencing domestic violence and/or conflict may benefit from a range of support and services, and some may need safeguarding from harm. Domestic violence and/or conflict is not in itself a definition of abuse but, as outlined above, children living in circumstances where this is a feature may be at risk and in need of child protection services.

2.3.3  Mental Ill Health

Mental ill health in a parent or carer does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child, but it is essential always to assess its implications for any children in the family. Parental illness may markedly restrict children’s social and recreational activities. Where a parent is suffering from a mental or physical illness, children may have caring responsibilities placed upon them inappropriate to their years. If they are depressed, parents may neglect their own and their children’s physical and emotional needs. In some circumstances, some forms of mental illness may blunt parents’ emotions and feelings, or cause them to behave towards their children in bizarre or violent ways. Children most at risk of significant harm are those involved in parental delusions, and children who become targets for parental aggression or rejection, or who are neglected as a result of the parent’s illness.
2.3.4 Drug and Alcohol Misuse

As with mental ill health, it is important not to generalise, or make assumptions about the impact on a child of parental drug and alcohol misuse. It is, however, important that the implications for the child are properly assessed. Maternal substance misuse in pregnancy may impair the development of an unborn child. Some substance misuse may give rise to behaviour that put children at risk of injury, psychological distress or neglect. Children are particularly vulnerable when parents/carers are withdrawing from drugs. Children may be at risk of physical harm if drugs and equipment are not kept safely out of reach.

2.3.5 Parental Learning Disability

Where a parent has a learning disability it will be important not to generalise or make assumptions about their parental capacity. They may need support to develop the understanding, resources, skills and experience to meet the needs of their children, particularly if they experience additional stressors such as having a disabled child, domestic violence, poor physical and mental health, substance misuse, social isolation, poor housing, poverty or a history of growing up in care.

It is these additional stressors when combined with a learning disability that are most likely to lead to concerns about the care a child may receive.

Unless parents with learning disabilities are comprehensively supported by a capable relative such as their parent or partner, their children’s health and development is likely to be impaired. A further risk of harm to children arises because mothers with learning disabilities may be targeted by men wishing to gain access to children to sexually abuse them.

2.3.6 Children who are disabled

The particular needs of children with disabilities may make initial recognition more difficult. Disclosures of abuse may be less likely from children who are disabled because of communication difficulties, or isolation, or lack of awareness. Children who are disabled may have less access to safety/abuse prevention programmes. Signs may be more subtle, more confusing or explained away as resulting from a child's disability. Some disabled children may receive intimate personal care, possibly from a number of carers, which may increase a risk of exposure to abuse and make it more difficult to maintain physical boundaries.

Recognition of the abuse of a child who is disabled does not need specialist skills, but the application of existing knowledge to the particular vulnerability of these children who will be children in need.

2.3.7 Child victims of trafficking

Trafficking includes the exploitation of children through the use of force, coercion and threat. It can involve children being exploited for the purposes of benefit fraud, in situations such as domestic service or within the sex trade industry. Some children enter the country as unaccompanied asylum seekers, or students or as visitors. Children are also brought in by adults who state they are their dependants or at the airport by an adult who claims to be a relative.

Some children may be brought in via internet transactions, foster arrangements and contracts as domestic staff or tricked into a bogus marriage for the purpose of forcing them into prostitution.

The offense of trafficking is covered by the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004, as well as the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the national Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
2.3.8. Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation, also regarded as physical abuse is a collective term for procedures which include the removal of part of or all the external genitalia for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons. The procedure is typically carried out on girls aged between 4 and 13. However in some cases it has been carried out on newborn infants or young women before marriage or pregnancy. A number of females have been known to die as a result of blood loss or infection.

Female Genital Mutilation is a criminal offence in the UK under the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. This was replaced by the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 which also makes it an offence for nationals or permanent UK residents to carry out Female Genital Mutilation abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal.

Suspicions arise in a number of ways that a child is to be taken abroad for Female Genital Mutilation. These include:

- Knowing the family belongs to a community which practices Female Genital Mutilation
- Making preparations for the child to take a holiday or absence from school
- Child may talk about a ‘special procedure’ to take place

Indicators that Female Genital Mutilation may have taken place include:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behavioural changes
- Long periods away from classes or other normal activities
- Problems with bladder or menstrual problems

Midwives and doctors may be aware that Female Genital Mutilation has taken place in an older woman and this may prompt concern for female children in the same family.

2.4 Significant Harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Warwickshire County Council is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. A court may only make a Care Order (committing the child to the care of the local authority) or Supervision Order (placing the child under the supervision of a social worker, or a probation officer) in respect of a child if it is satisfied that:

- the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm; and
- that the harm or likelihood of harm is attributable to a lack of adequate parental care or control.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely in judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single traumatic event may be considered as significant harm, e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child’s physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosive nature of long-term emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm.
2.5 Definitions of Abuse

Abuse occurs in a wide range of settings both in and outside of families. It can be very difficult to identify even for those professionals who are experienced in working with child abuse. Situations where abuse is occurring or where there is potential for it to arise are sometimes difficult to identify. Employees whether paid or voluntary are unlikely to be experts at recognising abuse.

The following definitions of abuse and the guidance on recognition are given to assist professional staff and those providing services to children in assessing whether abuse may have occurred. A child is defined as a young person under the age of 18 years. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

2.5.1 Neglect

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

2.5.2 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

2.5.3 Sexual Abuse

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

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

2.5.4 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 the children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

2.5.5 Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullies may have been abused themselves and come from all walks of life. Bullying can come in different forms either physical or verbal. The people they target are usually singled out for a variety of reasons like shyness or for physical reasons.

It can take a number of forms:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, and theft)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, constant teasing and sarcasm)
- Emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring)

The damage inflicted by bullying can be underestimated. It causes deep distress to a child and may affect their health and development.

2.6 How to Recognise Abuse

The recognition of abuse is not easy for individuals even for the professionals. In many situations personal feelings in the form of shock or anger may interfere and it is easy to deny something is happening. It should be stated though that recognising the presence of one or more indicators may not mean that abuse is occurring. It is not the responsibility of those working in either paid or unpaid roles to decide if abuse it actually taking place but rather to act on any suspicions in an appropriate manner.

General Indicators of possible abuse:

- An unexplained or suspicious injury such as bruising cuts and burns.
- Something a child has said.
- Expressions of concern regarding a child’s welfare from a third party.
- Change that is observed over a long period of time, i.e. weight loss.
- Unexplained changes of behaviour such as becoming withdrawn, very quiet or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
More detailed types of abuse is below, however it is important to stress that this is not a definitive list and several abuses can be taking place at the same time. Also worth noting is that indicators can cross over into different types of abuse e.g. a fear of parents being contacted could also indicate emotional abuse as well as physical.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
<th>Physical Indicators</th>
<th>Behavioural Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>Constant Hunger</td>
<td>Begging/stealing food</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor Hygiene</td>
<td>Truancy/late for school on regular basis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weight loss/underweight/overweight</td>
<td>Constantly tired</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inappropriate dress</td>
<td>Regularly alone/unsupervised</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Constant lack of supervision/abandonment</td>
<td>Poor relationship with parents/carers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unattended physical problems or medical needs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Frequent or unexplained bruises, marks or injuries</td>
<td>Fear of parents being contacted</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviour extremes – aggressive/angry outbursts/withdrawn or violent behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of going home</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Flinching when approached or touched</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depression</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Keeping arms/legs/body covered</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reluctance to change clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panics in response to pain</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reports injury caused by parents/carers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Delays in physical development or progress</td>
<td>Neurotic behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudden speech disorders</td>
<td>Sleeping disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Failure to thrive</td>
<td>Unable to play/interact with others</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of making mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sucking, biting or rocking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inappropriately acting younger or older than age</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impairment or intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>Pain/itching in the genital area</td>
<td>Inappropriate sexual behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bruising/bleeding near genital area</td>
<td>Inappropriate sexual knowledge for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexually transmitted diseases</td>
<td>child’s age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaginal discharge/infection (girls)</td>
<td>Promiscuity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent unexplained abdominal pains</td>
<td>Sudden change in behaviour</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discomfort when walking/sitting</td>
<td>Running away from home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bed wetting</td>
<td>Emotional withdrawal through lack of trust in adults</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Excessive crying</td>
<td>Unexplained sources of money or gifts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inappropriate sexually explicit drawings or stories</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bedwetting or soiling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overeating or anorexia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sleep disturbances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Having secrets which cannot be told</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance/drug misuse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reports of assault</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bullying</th>
<th>Reduced concentration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stomach aches</td>
<td>Becoming withdrawn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Clingy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty sleeping</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bed wetting</td>
<td>Tearful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scratching</td>
<td>Erratic mood swings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruising</td>
<td>Reluctance to go to school, activities or sports clubs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Damaged clothes</td>
<td>A drop in performance at school or standard of play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binging e.g. on food, cigarettes or alcohol</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2.7 The Impact of Abuse and Neglect

The sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally or sexually, can have major long-term effects on all aspects of a child’s health, development and well being.

The harm may be physical, such as neurological damage, physical injuries, impaired growth, disability or, in the extreme, death.

The harm may be emotional and impact on a developing child’s mental health, behaviour and self-esteem and is especially damaging in their infancy. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and substance misuse may feature in the families where children suffer emotional harm.
The harm may be psychological, manifesting itself in behaviour problems, such as aggression, long-term difficulties with social functioning and relationships, educational difficulties or intellectual impairment.

Sexual abuse can lead to disturbed behaviour, including self-harm, inappropriate sexualised behaviour that may endure into adulthood. The severity of the harm increases the longer the abuse occurs, the more extensive the abuse and the older the child. The severity of harm is also linked to the extent of premeditation and the degree or threat of coercion. The child’s ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised or disclosed, is strengthened by support of a non-abusive adult or carer who believes the child, offers protection and helps the child to understand the abuse.
3. **MAKING A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL**

It is the responsibility of all employees to report any concerns that they have about the welfare of a child. It should never be presumed that someone else has done it.

However it is not the responsibility of employees to determine whether abuse has taken place. The appropriate agencies should be informed so that they can investigate any suspicions/allegations and take the required action to ensure the protection of the child in question.

3.1 **What Circumstances to Refer**

It is particularly important that all those whose work either brings them into contact with children or contact with adults who have children, are alert to the definitions and indicators of child abuse. In circumstances where you have concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm to his or her health or development, or where a child gives information detailing abuse, the following principles must be adhered to:

a) all concerns and allegations, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and considered with an open mind which does not pre-judge the situation;

b) In circumstances where a child volunteers/discloses information about abuse, listen to the child. Do not question him/her;

c) Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events. The child should not be asked to repeat their story to a colleague or asked to write it down;

d) in circumstances where a child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained;

e) if there are concerns about the explanation given for the cause of the injury, this must be referred using the incident form;

f) Always make a written record using the incident form as soon as possible of any information disclosed to you or what you have witnessed. The incident form will guide you through the information required.

g) Record all subsequent events up to the time of referral or Children's Social Care/Police intervention;

h) Do not promise confidentiality;

i) Never put yourself in a position of danger. All Council employees are encouraged to think about their safety and wellbeing and to refrain from getting into harms way, especially when a situation has occurred in front of them.

j) **ACT NOW – DO NOT DELAY.**

If you are unsure about what you have witnessed or been told, please contact the Equality and Child Protection Officer to discuss any concerns.
3.2 Procedures to Follow When Making a Referral

It is very important that all Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council employees are aware of the reporting procedures if they have a concern about child protection or a child’s welfare.

When an employee is made aware of a child protection disclosure, it is their duty to complete an incident form and forward this with their concern to the Equality and Child Protection Officer, who will in turn make the phone call to Children’s Social Care.

If the Equality and Child Protection Officer is not available, the report should be referred to the Children’s Champion, who will inform Children’s Social Care.

Referrals will be made to the Duty Officer of Children Services. Out of hours, the Emergency Duty Team will be contacted.

When you are dealing with child protection concerns, it is important to obtain the following information wherever possible so it can be passed to Children’s Services:

- Name, date of birth, ethnic origin, address and telephone numbers;
- Details of family members e.g. parents/guardian, who lives with the family etc
- Location of incident
- Details of witnesses
- The details of the incident;

The Incident Report form and associated incident checklist can be found in the Appendix, this form is openly accessible on CLIP for all employees of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council under ‘Forms’. This form will enable employees to record the important information as highlighted above.

The completed Incident form and any other material relating to the referral should be kept and given to the Equality and Child Protection Officer, or their nominated Deputy for recording and storage in a confidential file system. This material may be need for evidence at a later stage. Only the Equality and Child Protection Officer, their nominated Deputy and the Children’s Champion should have access to the file.

Staff in Children’s Teams will make enquiries with other agencies that may have information regarding the child and family. On the basis of the information gathered, they will then make an initial assessment on what further action is necessary or appropriate.

Whenever Children’s Social Care receives information about a possible criminal offence against a child, they will share the information with the Police at the earliest opportunity and a decision will be made jointly on how to proceed with the enquiries.

Details of the referral will be made in writing within 24 hours addressed to the Children’s Team for that locality.
3.3 FLOWCHART Summary of Child Protection Guidelines

**RECOGNITION**

**Physical or Behavioural Indication**
- Contact the Equality and Child Protection Officer and tell them of your suspicions

**Suspicion an Adult is a Threat to Children**
- Maintain surveillance of the person and immediately contact the Equality and Child Protection Officer to discuss your suspicions

**A Child tells you they are being abused**
- React calmly, believe and reassure the child. Question only to clarify, **not** to investigate. Pass on the information to the Equality and Child Protection Officer

Complete Incident Form and pass on to Equality and Child Protection Officer who makes the decision of contacting Children’s Team. The Children’s Champions may also be consulted.

**Yes – Call is made**
- Equality and Child Protection Officer telephones Children’s Services
- Equality and Child Protection Officer confirms referral details to Children’s Team Manager in writing within 24 hours.

**No call is made**
- Incident form is completed and reason for decision.
- Further follow up actions may occur.

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**Emergency Contact Numbers**

- Children’s Team
  - 01926 410410
- Child protection referral number 01926 414910
- Children’s Team - Out of Hours Service
  - 01926 886922
- Nuneaton Children’s Team Fax 01926 413979
- Bedworth Children’s Team Fax 01926 413154
- Police Child Protection Unit [24 hours]
  - (01926) 415000 ask for Control Room Inspector

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**Remember** – no young person is immune from abuse. If you have concerns pass the information on to the Equality and Child Protection Officer

*A completed incident report form will be stored in a private and confidential file at the site where the report was made. Only those Officer identified has access to these files.*
4. GUIDELINES FOR THE COUNCIL

The following information is relevant should a Council Employee be involved in or organising an event where children are present and/or are being supervised by a Council Employee/Council Employees:

4.1 Ratios of Adults : Children

The ratios that must be adhered to, to comply with the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) guidelines, are as follows:

- **Children 0 - 2 years**: 1 adult : 3 children (Children up to the age of 2)
- **Children aged 2**: 1 adult : 4 children (Children from the age of 2 up to the age of 3)
- **Children 3 - 7 years**: 1 adult : 8 children (Children from 3 up to the age of 8)
- **Children 8 - 11 years**: 1 adult : 12 children (no official guidance)
- **Children 12 - 16 years**: 1 adult : 15 children (no official guidance)
- **Children 16 years +**: 1 adult : 18 Children (no official guidance)

Ratios for Trips (no official guidance)

- **Children 4 - 8 years**: 1 adult : 4 children
- **Children 8 - 11 years**: 1 adult : 10 children

4.2 Parental Consent

Consent forms must be completed by parents/guardians to enable children to take part in Council activities (See Appendix 6). At one-off events, where this is impractical, session leaders should ensure that they have: name, address, basic medical information and an emergency contact number. Other information may include consent for photographs and/or video to be used, consent to travel in a car/minibus and details on who will collect the child at the end of the session.

4.3 Site Risk Assessment

Prior to the start of a session, all employees should familiarise themselves with the venue. Employees should be aware of the location of telephones, fire exits and emergency evacuation procedures, toilets, first aid kit, and equipment stores. Employees should also check the work area for safety hazards such as slippery floors, or objects placed in hazardous locations (e.g. corridors, at the side of activity areas, etc.).

4.4 Registration

Before a session and where applicable, employees should make sure that they have all appropriate documentation, including registers; medical consent forms and minor/major accident report forms. Information on the register should include; child’s name, address, home telephone number, session/course time, emergency contact telephone number (neighbours, grandparents) date of birth.
and information about any medical problems, any special dietary requirements and special needs/disabilities.

All their details are confidential and should be kept in a secure location and used only for the purpose of the activity unless previously agreed with parental consent.

4.5 Identification

Council employees and volunteers must always wear a name badge and appropriate uniform in order to identify themselves to children and parents.

4.6 Medical Consent Forms

All parents/carers should sign a medical consent form when their child first attends a session (if a child is subject to a care order, Children’s Social Care must give medical consent). This is to ensure that supervisors have all relevant information concerning a child’s health before the start of each session. If a parent does not wish to sign a medical consent form, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council retains the right to refuse admission to the session.

4.7 Behavioural Problems

Employees should treat disruptive behaviour seriously, as it can spoil the session for other children. A child should be warned that if bad behaviour continues she/he would be removed from the session. If problems persist the parents should be informed so that they can speak to the child. If there is still no improvement the parents should be informed and the child may be permanently removed from the session.

4.8 Accident Report Forms

At least one employee working at the session must be first aid qualified, and all employees must be aware of the location of accessible first aid kits. A nominated employee should also be responsible for checking and re-stocking first aid kits. Non-prescriptive medicines or tablets should not be given to any child.

If an accident occurs, an accident report form should be completed as soon as possible after treatment has been given. Report forms should be filled in with as much detail as possible concerning the accident. Forms should be signed by the parent/guardian when they collect the child. If the person collecting the child is not the parent/guardian, a duplicate accident report form should be sent home with the child. Forms should then be handed to your Line Manager as soon as possible.

4.9 Procedures for Lost Children

In the event of a child being lost the following actions should be taken.
An employee must search the premises including toilets and playing fields. Other employees should group all children together and find out who was the last person to see the missing child.

Make 3 phone calls to the following:

Once a time and place has been identified “Call the Police immediately” (024) 7664 1111. Give the child’s Name, Address, time and place last seen.

Phone the parent / guardian immediately and tell them their child is missing.
Inform the Children’s Champion on (024) 7637 6439 and report the incident.

Keep the remaining children occupied with another activity and do not worry them unnecessarily.

4.10 Late Collection of Child Procedure

At the end of session:

15 minutes after the child should be collected. Phone the parent and find out if there is a problem. Please remember when calling a parent on a mobile number, it may not be convenient for them to speak if the parent is driving.

Politely inform them that the centre/session are now closed and can they come immediately. If there is a problem find out if there is another family member or friend who could come and collect the child.

Let the child know that their parent will be coming at a new time and comfort them if necessary. Try and ensure the child is involved in an activity and is not hanging around waiting as this is often upsetting.

4.11 Uncollected Child Procedure

If 30 minutes after the estimated time parents detailed arrival for collection has elapsed, phone the parent again and find out if there is a problem.

If there is no reply from the parent the second contact name on the enrolment form should be called.

If there is no reply from the second contact and still no response from the parents the following phone calls should be made:

Inform the Children’s Champion on (024) 7637 6439 and report the incident.

Call the Police immediately on (024) 7664 1111. Give the child’s Name, Address, parent’s contact details.

Keep any other remaining children occupied with another activity and do not worry them unnecessarily.

4.12 Internal Reporting

Should the Children’s Champion be unavailable to report the incident to, the following should be contacted in order to report the incident:

Executive Director: Gareth Owens (024 7637 6262)
Assistant Director: Phillip Richardson (024 7637 6233)
Audit and Governance Manager: Linda Downes (024 7637 6260)

Each of the above Officers will liaise with the Equality and Child Protection Officer if necessary for relevant action. The Children’s Champion will be informed on his return.
4.13 Physical Intervention Policy

It is essential when working with children to understand what physical restraint is and when its use is acceptable. The Department of Health has outlined three main levels of physical intervention in the control of children’s behaviour – i.e. restraint.

- Simple physical presence as control, involving no contact – e.g. standing in front of an exit.
- Holding and touching to persuade a child to comply with verbal requests – e.g. holding a child’s hand or using shoulders to steer a child away from a situation.
- Actual physical restraint, where the child is held or held down.

It must be remembered that the decision to intervene via actual physical restraint is an option to be decided upon as a professional decision, to be taken calmly and in full knowledge of the desired outcome. Though it will probably be as a last resort, it is not an act of desperation but a conscious decision to act in the child or other’s best interest. In summary only the reasonable application of minimum force must be used to restrain a child. Diffusing and avoiding the use of restraint are the priorities and must be considered at all times.

When to implement Physical restraint:

If a child is in imminent danger of significant self harm through his/her actions. If a child is placing others in imminent danger of significant harm through his/her actions.

If a child is about to cause or is causing serious damage to property.

It is also important to remember when not to use physical restraint:

- Exact retribution
- Retaliate for any reason
- To punish the child or young person
- As any kind of treatment or therapy
- To be an administrative convenience
- Instil fear

Employees may be liable for abuse/GBH allegations if any injury is caused to a child whilst under restraint. If a child becomes excessively violent, the parents and the Police should be contacted and assistance obtained from other people on site e.g. teachers.

It is a good idea for employees to ask these questions, if it comes to restraint:

1) Is there a risk to people or property of a criminal offence, or maintenance of good order?
2) Can I restrain using force?
3) Is anyone aware of the situation I’m in?
4) Am I trained or experienced enough?
5) Do I need help?
6) Am I sure I’m not punishing the child?

### 4.14 Code of Behaviour

- **Do** treat everyone with respect.
- **Do** provide an example you wish others to follow.
- **Do** plan activities so that they involve more than one other person being present, or at least in sight of others.
- **Do** respect a young person’s right to personal privacy.
- **Do** provide access for young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like and provide a caring atmosphere.
- **Do** use common sense when demonstrating skills e.g. discuss your actions with children or young people when contact is necessary.
- **Do** remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- **Do** recognise that caution is required especially in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
- **Do** (on overnight excursions) - have separate sleeping accommodation for supervisors / trainers and children.
- **Do** use gender, cultural and disability sensitive language.
- **Do not** permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. ridiculing, bullying).
- **Do not** play physical contact games with young people.
- **Do not** have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with young people.
- **Do not** jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- **Do not** allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes but deal firmly and fairly with such behaviour at all times.
- **Do not** exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- **Do not** show favouritism to any individual.
- **Do not** make suggestive remarks or gestures or tell jokes or stories of a ‘smutty’ nature.
- **Do not** rely on your good name to protect you, it may not be enough!
- **Do not** believe “it can never happen to me” it can!
Do not get close to or have physical contact with a young person without clearly explaining what you are doing (e.g. correcting the position of a foot, showing a skill in the water) etc.

4.15 Code of Behaviour for Employees Delivering 1:1 Sessions

For employees who are delivering 1:1 sessions we ask them to consider all of the above in their conduct with special notice to the following:

Do make sure your activities are planned in an open environment where you are in view of others.

Do make sure yourself aware of the nearest first aid points.

Do not allow yourself to deliver a session out of sight of others.

Do not allow yourself to take a group of children away from the central point you are delivering the session.

4.16 Use of camera, video cameras and mobile phones.

There is evidence that some people will use Council run events or community events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and young people. Cameras and mobile telephones present the opportunity for misuse.

The Council has adopted a complete ban of photography and mobile telephones. All photographers are aware of this ban, and that they are only allowed to take photographs with the consent from the participating group, and must be accompanied.

If a request is made for photographic images to be taken at any of the Council sites, then it is the Manager’s responsibility to make parents aware of our stance, for them to attain signed permission.

Relevant documentation can be found in the appendix.

4.17 Reducing Opportunities for Allegations / Abuse to Occur

It is the scheme / manager’s responsibility to protect the children attending their sessions, and to protect any employees from being accused of improper behaviour.

Managers should be aware of the need to reduce the opportunities for allegations of child abuse being made against employees. This can be achieved through an appropriate induction and training process.

All employees who are likely to have unrestricted access to children should undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check before being recruited.

Employees should avoid taking children home alone in the car. If this situation is unavoidable, for example in an emergency when a child needs to be rushed to Hospital employees should ensure there is at least one other employee present. Also, the Council must have a copy of your car insurance to carry people / goods with regards to business use.

All employees or volunteers should receive child protection training and a copy of these guidelines. The manager has a responsibility to ensure that all employees are aware of child protection
procedures, that they are trained and are fully aware of the need to eliminate, as far as is practicable, child abuse opportunities.

4.18 Recruitment and Criminal Records Bureau Check (CRB)

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

The application form used for recruitment purposes will be used to elicit information about an applicant’s past.

Employees will be selected on their suitability and ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children.

Each applicant will be vetted in a variety of means. Applicants will be asked to fill in an application form, they will also be asked to provide details of two referees. On appointment references will be taken up. The applicant will not be able to start until a satisfactory medical has come back along with references and a CRB check. They will have to provide proof of their identity.

All employees who have unrestricted access to children will have to undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. Council employees who potentially have access to children and/or vulnerable adults will have a standard CRB check.

More information on recruitment and selection can be found in the Council’s recruitment and selection handbook. The WSCB have also produced guidelines on recruitment and selection procedures for all adults working with children. Both these documents expand on the information above and are available on request from the Equality and Child Protection Officer.

The Council will adopt guidelines issued by Warwickshire Safeguarding Children’s Board on the appropriateness and frequency of Criminal Records Checks for employees who are directly involved with children and young people.

4.19 Volunteers

It is a responsibility of senior managers to make sure that any Voluntary Workers in assistance are aware of the procedures in Child Protection.

4.20 Training on Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all employees working with, or in contact with children and families

All employees that have unrestricted access to children should attend a child protection training course. This should be followed up with further training to make sure employees are aware in any changes in procedure every three years.

Training programmes are delivered by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children’s Board to ensure that all key employees are trained in the safeguarding of children to the appropriate level.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all employees that work directly or indirectly with children have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the requirement for reporting suspected concerns of possible or potential child abuse.
4.21 Clubs and Organisation using Council Managed Facilities

As a minimum requirement, all clubs and organisations must accept and apply the standards that the Council work to, with regards to Child Protection. A Guideline document will be distributed to hirers along with their Terms and Conditions of hire information, informing the hirer of their responsibilities for Child Protection and Nuneaton and Bedworth standpoint. Schools will be reminded of the working partnership between themselves and the Council upon booking and it is expected that this is adhered to at all times.

4.22 Social Media Interaction with Children

With the growth of social media use, such as Facebook and Twitter, it is important as an employee of the Council to be mindful of who they interact with outside of their working environment and in particular over the internet.

To avoid allegations being made against staff, it is strongly advised that any employee should not have any social media interaction with any child who they work with in their employment with the Council.

Any employee who is found to have an improper relationship or improper interaction with a child via the internet could be vulnerable to allegations and be subject to a Council/Police/Children's Services investigation as per section 5.

5 Allegations against Employees

This procedure applies to people who work with or care for children in a paid or unpaid capacity and about whom allegations of child abuse are made. Please note this section is in addition to the Council’s Dismissal and Disciplinary Policy and Guidance which should be followed should any allegations occur.

It is important to remember that allegations of child abuse against employees or other workers can create particular tensions and be distressing for all involved. Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting. All allegations of abuse of children by a professional staff member or volunteer must therefore be taken seriously. It should be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is subject to the allegation.

This procedure covers the following scenarios:

- Where an employee has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Where an employee has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Where an employee has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

If a member of staff or a volunteer receives an allegation against another member of staff or they themselves have a concern about the behaviour of another member of staff, they must follow the Council’s procedures for dealing with these allegations or concerns.

- The member of staff must report the incident to their Line Manager
The Line Manager must report the allegation/concern to their respective Assistant Director, who will provide advice and liaison as appropriate. In the absence of the Assistant Director, the report should be escalated up to the Executive Director (Children’s Champion).

The Assistant Director should then decide what category the allegation fits into and will take the appropriate action:

1. A Police investigation of a possible criminal offence
2. Contact Children’s services to determine if the child is in need of protection
3. A disciplinary investigation (as per disciplinary procedures in conjunction with Human Resources)

In all cases, the allegation should be reported through to Warwickshire’s Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. It is important to note that although there may be insufficient evidence to support Police prosecution, this does not mean that action cannot be taken to protect a child or that disciplinary procedures should not be pursued.

If the parents/carers of the child concerned are not already aware of the allegation, the Assistant Director will also look at how and by whom they should be informed. In circumstances where the Police or children’s services may need to be involved, the Assistant Director should consult with the LADO about how to best inform the parents/carers. However, in some instances, the parents/carers may need to be advised of an incident involving their child straight away, for example, if the child has been injured while in Council care and requires medical treatment.

The Line Manager should inform the accused employee about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the Assistant Director. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or it is clear that the Police or children’s services may need to be involved, the accused person should not be informed until agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the person.

It is in everyone’s interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible with a fair and thorough investigation. Every effort should be made to manage cases to avoid any unnecessary delay. The time taken to investigate and resolve individual cases depends on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness and complexity of the allegation.

5.1 Protection of Children Act List

If the allegation is substantial and the person accused is dismissed/the Council ceases to use that persons services/the person resigns, the Council in conjunction with Children’s Services and the Police will decide whether a referral to the Protection of Children Act List (Commonly known as the POCA list) is appropriate.
### Appendix 1: Incident Form – Child Protection

Please complete as much information as possible on this form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of child/children:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity of child:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Telephone number:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Address:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age/Ages:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of birth:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent / Guardians Name (BLOCK CAPITALS - of person with parental responsibility):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who lives with the family? (Names, Date of Births etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Details of Incident (please continue on another sheet if necessary)

| **Location of incident (full details):** |
| **Date and time of incident:** |
| **Details of witnesses (name, address, contact details):** |

### Declaration (person completing the form)

I declare that the information provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

| **Name:** | **Date:** |
| **Job Title:** |
| **Signature:** |

This form should be forwarded to the Equality and Child Protection Officer as soon as possible under PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL COVER

| Details of action taken - if none, please state reason for decision: |
| Decision and further action/inaction made by: |
| **Name:** | **Job Title:** |
| **Date:** |
Appendix 2: Incident Guidelines

Good recording of details is essential, whether for a referral or to inform senior officers if a decision is made not to report an incident.

Things to consider:

For physical abuse:

- Where is the injury?
- Who has seen it?
- What does it look like?
- How does the child say it happened and when?
- Does the explanation fit the injury?
- Is the child in obvious pain? - (Does the child need to go to hospital?)
- Has the child’s behaviour or attitude changed - how and when?

For other abuse:

- Who is saying what?
- What is the child actually saying?
- When did this happen?
- Does the person live in the same house?
- Is it safe for the child to go home?
- Is the child in pain?
- Has the child’s behaviour altered - how and when?

Appendix 3: Use of Photographic Equipment

Dear

Thank you for your recent request to take photographic images of your .......................................................... party.

Permission is granted to you for the use of photographic equipment at your pre-booked activity on ..............

Please be aware that it is your responsibility, as the hirer, to seek permission from all your guests to allow you to take photographic images of their children.

PLEASE NOTE: The use of photographic equipment is restricted to the areas you have booked. Also, if any individual expresses concerns regarding the taking of photographs/images, please respect their concerns and stop. You must comply with Nuneaton and Bedworth policy regarding photography and if you fail to do so you may be asked to leave immediately.

Yours sincerely,
**Appendix 4 - Photographic Equipment Sign for Buildings**

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING CAMERAS, VIDEO CAMERAS, MOBILE PHONES ETC) IS **NOT PERMITTED** IN ANY COUNCIL OWNED BUILDING FOR ANY ACTIVITY WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL.

ANY USE OF SUCH PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE NUNEATON & BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL POLICY IN RESPECT OF PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN IN COUNCIL OWNED BUILDINGS.

**Appendix 5: Request to Use Photographic Equipment in buildings owned or used by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Party / Person Booking</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building/Room to be used</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of photography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| What type of equipment is proposed? | Camera  
|                                 | Video Camera  
|                                 | Mobile Telephone  
|                                 | Other  
|                                 | (Please provide details)  |
| Name of proposed photographer |  |
| Address of proposed photographer |  |
| Telephone number of proposed photographer |  |
| Name(s) of subjects |  |
Relationship of photographer to the child/children (including name, address etc.)

Reason or use images are to be put, for example family records

I declare that the information provided in this form is valid and correct. I agree to comply with the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Policy regarding photography in its centres and facilities and I agree that the images taken will only be used for the reasons given above.

Signed ........................................

Name ........................................

Date ........................................

Appendix 6 – Information/Consent Form

Child / young person full name ________________________________

Address ________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________      Post Code ______________________

Emergency contact telephone number main __________________________

Secondary emergency contact number __________________________

Parental Consent

1. Does your child have any allergies? Yes [ ]   No [ ]
   Such as nuts, food colourings, medicines etc
   If so, please give details ...............................................................

2. Does your child have any specific dietary requirements? Yes [ ]   No [ ]
   If so, please give details ...............................................................

3. Does your child suffer from any medical conditions? Yes [ ]   No [ ]
   Such as asthma, migraines, epilepsy, ADHD, Autism etc
   If so, please give details ...............................................................
4. Is your child undergoing any medical treatment or taking any medication? Yes [ ] No [ ]
If so, please give details ...............................................................

Medical Declaration (Optional)
I give consent to the medical examination of my child when necessary whilst he/she is taking part in Breakaway Club activities. Do you request that any operation or any other measures considered necessary by a medical authority for his/her diagnosis and treatment shall be performed. I hereby give my permission for such operation or other measures to be carried out in an emergency ONLY and for the administration of a general or local anaesthetic if necessary.

Yes [ ] No [ ]

First Aid Important Note
All Play Leaders are trained in first aid. If you do not want your child to be receive first aid treatment from the Play leaders tick the opt out box below. However in the event of an emergency, treatment may be provided which is deemed necessary to save life or avoid significant deterioration in the patient's health even if the opt out has been selected.

Do you wish your child to receive first aid if necessary? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Photo Consent (Optional)
As part of Breakaway clubs activities we may take photos to record projects undertaken, and for publicity purposes.

Do you give consent for photographs to be taken Yes [ ] No [ ]

Parent/Guardians

Signature:.....................................................Date: .....................
Name:............................................. Telephone: ......................
Address:..................................................................................
............................................................................................