

Safeguarding Policy (Including Child Protection)

This policy was first agreed by In Your Corner's Board on 29 December 2022.
This policy is reviewed annually (or earlier if the law changes)

Version History

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Lead Author	Date signed off by Board
VF1	Policy created	Dr Kathy Adcock, Director	29.12.22
VF2	Annual Policy Review and Update	Dr Eloise Wynter, Trustee	15.07.24
VF3	Annual Policy Review and Update	January Jones, CEO and DSL	27.05.2025
VF3.1	Cause for Concern Procedure Added	January Jones, CEO and DSL	19.11.2025

1. About In Your Corner

In Your Corner (IYC) runs boxing projects to support emotional wellbeing. We take evidence-based ideas from psychological intervention and deliver them in a flexible way alongside non-contact boxing skills in boxing clubs, schools, and accessible community settings. We run projects for young people that are free to access, and commercial boxing classes for adults.

2. In Your Corner's Safeguarding Policy

IYC is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people using its services. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect these children, young people from harm, abuse, and exploitation regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, or sexual identity. IYC acknowledges its duty to act appropriately when it receives any allegations, reports, or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will work together to encourage an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children and young people.

This policy covers all children, young people accessing services run and managed by IYC.

The policy is endorsed by IYC's Board and will be reviewed annually to make sure it remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of IYC and its children and young people.

This Safeguarding Policy is freely accessible to all. This means that IYC will share copies of this policy with staff and volunteers as part of their induction and training. IYC's safeguarding policies will appear on its website and hard copies of this policy will be available upon request.

Note: The Digital Safeguarding Policy (Appendix 3) should be read and followed in conjunction with this Safeguarding Policy.

For further information about Safeguarding visit:

www.londonscb.gov.uk - Child Safeguarding

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/adultsafeguardinglondon/index.asp> - Adult Safeguarding

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/> - NSPCC

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and policy documents:

- The Children Act (1989) provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. This was strengthened by The Children Act (2004).
- London Child Protection Procedures www.londoncp.co.uk
- Working together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation (FGM) (Home Office, 2016)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015)
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Courts and Criminal Justice Act 2015
- The Care Act 2014
- Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) Regulations
- The Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998

3. Named Persons & Contact Details

The details below are contacts for the safeguarding referrals teams in local children's services. Contact details are given for the boroughs In Your Corner are currently delivering service (as of April 2025).

Agency	Named Person	Telephone No
IYC Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer (Staff)	January Jones	07759 156143
IYC Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead (Board Member)	Dr Eloise Wynter	07759 156143
England Boxing If you are working in a project that works in partnership with an England Boxing affiliated boxing club (ABC), then the club will also have a DSL who you can share concerns with, if the In Your Corner DSL is not available. England Boxing also has a confidential safeguarding and whistleblowing helpline. England Boxing's Safeguarding Policies can be found here .		0800 023 2692 (England Boxing Safeguarding Helpline)
Southwark Borough Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Email: MASH@southwark.gov.uk Website: www.southwark.gov.uk/childcare-and-parenting/children-s-social-care/child-protection/child-protection-referral-and-assessment Referring to the LADO: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/childcare-and-parenting/children-s-social-care/child-protection/allegations-against-people-who-work-with-children-in-southwark	Duty Social Worker	020 7525 1921 020 7525 5000 (Out of hours)
Camden Borough Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Email: LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk Website: www.camden.gov.uk/early-help-for-families Referring to the LADO: https://cscp.org.uk/professionals/managing-allegations-against-staff-and-volunteers-lado/	Duty Social Worker	020 7974 3317 020 7974 4444 (Out of hours, after 5 pm)
Islington Borough Council Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT)	Duty Social Worker	0207 527 7400 (all hours)

Email: csctreferrals@islington.gov.uk Website: https://directory.islington.gov.uk/kb5/islington/directory/service.page?id=72oH6rIO3Js Referring to the LADO: https://www.islingtonscp.org.uk/professionals/local-authority-designated-officer Email: LADO@islington.gov.uk		
AllChild (Delivery Partner) Safeguarding processes and policies are located for staff on the IYC shared drive. Additional safeguarding procedures and information can be found here: https://www.allchild.org/our-support/safeguarding Please follow their processes if they are the partner.	Link Worker in the school	n/a
Metropolitan Police Child Protection – If you think someone is in immediate danger https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/		999
NSPCC – national helpline https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/our-services/nspcc-helpline/	Advisors Counsellors	0808 800 5000
Child Line – national helpline Website – https://www.childline.org.uk	Advisors Counsellors	0800 1111

4. Culture of safety, equality, and protection

In Your Corner works with children, parents, and the community to ensure we support children's rights and create and maintain the safest possible environment for children.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse and harm.
- Promoting joint working with parents and carers in the interest of children's welfare.
- Following safer recruitment procedures which ensure that staff are carefully selected, vetted, and have the relevant qualifications and experience.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children.
- Designating a safeguarding lead who takes specific responsibility for children's protection, safety, and well-being.
- Supporting all staff in bringing concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL),

- Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Providing parents, carers, and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Adopting positive behaviour management strategies.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, including this procedure.
- Working in partnership with external organisations and professionals to ensure that children are protected.

5. Definitions and scope

- a) **Child** refers to a child or young person up to their 18th birthday.
- b) **Vulnerable adults** refer to people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.
- c) **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- Protecting children from maltreatment.
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
 - Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
 - Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances, to enter adulthood successfully and live a fulfilled life as an adult.
- d) **Child protection** and **vulnerable adult protection** are parts of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- e) **Abuse** can include physical, financial, material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory, emotional abuse, and neglect. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone. For definitions and indicators of child and vulnerable adult abuse, please see Section 6 'How to identify abuse'.

This policy is applicable to all children under 18 and all adults who seek to become involved, or are involved, in the work of In Your Corner. This includes all staff and volunteers involved in direct work with children, and those in all other aspects of business operations that have any contact with children under 18 or their sensitive data.

In Your Corner frequently works in partnership with other organisations to deliver projects, such as schools and England Boxing clubs. When working in partnership, all staff, and volunteers of In Your Corner are expected to always act in accordance with this policy. When working in partnership, we will share any concerns with the DSL of the partner organisation and agree between the organisations who will lead when reporting or responding to any concerns.

Senior organisational lead

January Jones, Chief Executive Officer, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and as such leads on safeguarding in our organisation and takes responsibility for In Your Corner's safeguarding arrangements. January Jones is the accountable person that will ensure that children's welfare is promoted in the provision of all services to children.

Procedures

All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the paper **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused**. (HM Government, March 2015).

Named person's role and responsibilities

It is the role of the DSL to act as a source of support and guidance on all matters of child protection and safeguarding for In Your Corner. In the absence of the DSL, staff should report any concerns to their clinical supervisor or the DSL of the partner organisation in project delivery, who will act in accordance with this policy and the London Child Protection Procedures 2017 and will report back to the DSL.

Everyone in the organisation should know who the DSL is and how to contact them.

It is not the role of the DSL to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the task of the borough's Children's Social Services who have the legal responsibility. It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that concerns are shared, and appropriate action taken.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Liaising with the Children's Social Care and work in partnership with parents and carers, schools, and other agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate child protection training so that they are up-to-date with current legislation, policy and practice and understand their responsibilities and how to carry them out to respond sensitively and appropriately to any child protection concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff new to the setting receive induction training to enable them to understand and adhere to the organisation's policies, including reporting and whistle-blowing procedures.
- Ensuring that safeguarding / child protection referrals are made using the format required by the borough's Children's Social Care.
- Ensuring any partner agency / setting's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are maintained, up-to-date and are disseminated and adhered to by all staff.
- Agreeing a mechanism with the leadership team to ensure the procedures are adhered to (e.g. safeguarding incidents included in annual reports).

6. Understanding and identifying abuse and neglect

We recognise that abuse may often occur as a reaction to stress or trauma within a family and everything should be done to support a family in a non-judgmental way. We also recognise that abuse can happen in organisations, for example between a member of staff and a child.

Abuse can be carried out by an adult or by another child. If the abuse is perpetrated by another child, protection procedures will apply for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

Indicators

We recognise that:

- It is often the clustering of indicators and not isolated indicators themselves that are significant.
- Even when several indicators are present this does not mean that abuse has occurred or will occur, but it may mean the young person needs support.

- We need to consider not only the most visible and pressing causes for concern but also the less obvious indicators and less clear concerns.
- We must be alert to possible indicators of domestic violence.
- We must be alert to possible indicators of Honour Based Violence.
- We must be alert to possible indicators of female genital mutilation (FGM).
- We must listen to what the child, young person or vulnerable adult has to say and observe how they act.
- We must listen to what their parents/carers have to say and observe how they act.
- It is important to remember that behaviour and physical signs which may suggest abuse can have a satisfactory explanation.

Some factors in families have a known association with abuse, for example domestic violence, abuse of drugs and/or alcohol, parent/carer learning disabilities, and parent/carer mental health problems. Presence of these factors does not mean abuse is taking place. However, awareness is important and a balanced approach that considers these against the available evidence is important.

7. Categories of Abuse detailed in the Care Act 2014

Whilst it is helpful to consider the following categories of abuse, it should be emphasised that children or vulnerable adults who are subject to one category of abuse are likely to be particularly vulnerable to experiencing other forms of abuse, and that all categories of abuse include an element of emotional abuse.

- Physical
- Domestic Abuse
- Sexual
- Psychological / Emotional
- Financial or Material
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational / Institutional
- Neglect or Acts of Omission
- Self-Neglect

a) Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, female genital mutilation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical abuse, as well as being the result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect a child or vulnerable adult from harm.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained injuries, for example, bruising, bite marks, burns and fractures, particularly if recurrent.
- Improbable explanations given for injuries, several different explanations provided for an injury, or refusal to discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries.
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive or inappropriate
- Shrinking from physical contact or flinching..
- Fear of going home or of a parent/carer being contacted.
- Fear of undressing or changing or being changed.
- Fear of medical help.

- Aggression/bullying towards peers, staff, or volunteers.
- Over-compliant behaviour or a 'watchful attitude.'
- Running away.
- Significant changes in behaviour with no explanation.
- Unexplained patterns of attendance.
- Covering up i.e. wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather / context.
- Signs of physical discomfort without explanation.
- Female genital mutilation- partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or injury to the female genital organs.

b) Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged over 16 or who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; as well as 'honour' based practices including forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and honour-based killings.

The Home Office definition of Domestic violence and abuse was updated in May 2018 as:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: Psychological; Physical; Sexual; Financial; Emotional."

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

This definition includes so called **honour-based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage**, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group. All agencies need to work together to identify and protect these children/young people.

It has been widely understood for some time that coercive control is a core part of domestic violence, and it is important to recognise coercive control as a complex pattern of overlapping and repeated abuse perpetrated within a context of power and control.

The main characteristic of domestic violence is that the behaviour is intentional and is calculated to exercise power and control within a relationship. Seeing or overhearing violence to another person in the home has adverse effects on a child's development and welfare. Unborn children are also at increased risk. Domestic violence is a prime cause of miscarriage, still birth, premature birth, foetal psychological damage, foetal physical injury, and foetal death. Children of all ages living with a parent, most often the mother, who is experiencing domestic violence, are vulnerable to significant harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and / or neglect.

In addition to what is stated above Domestic Abuse also encompasses modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and perpetrators use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

Significant harm

The legal definition of significant harm includes “the harm that children suffer by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, particularly through domestic violence in the home”.

Professionals should apply the [London Safeguarding Children Board guidance](#) to all situations of domestic violence, for example, where it is perpetrated by women or girls against men and boys, within same sex relationships and from a child.

Professionals should be aware of the possibility that adolescents could be experiencing violence within an intimate partner, peer, or sibling relationship.

c) Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

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.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in watching sexual activities, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials. Also, through encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be committed by adults of all genders, or other children.

Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation.

Under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003, Children under the age of 13 are legally deemed incapable of consenting to sexual activity and therefore all incidences of sexual behaviour involving children under 13 are a potential criminal or child protection matter.

Some possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Continual or excessive masturbation.
- Asking if you will keep a secret if a young person tells you something.
- Unexplained sources of money, sweets or presents.
- Reluctance to get changed for an activity.
- Chronic ailments such as stomach aches or headaches.
- Displaying harmful sexual behaviour to other children.
- Self-harm.
- Bruises, bites, or marks on the body.
- Scratches, abrasions, or persistent infections in anal or genital regions.
- Age-inappropriate sexual awareness, may be evident in play, drawings, vocabulary, writing or behaviour towards children or adults.
- Refusal to stay with certain people or to go to certain places.
- Aggression, anger, anxiety, tearfulness.

d) Psychological / Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development.

This may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children, including interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning.
- Preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction..
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic abuse
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Continual self-deprecation, low self esteem.
- Fear of new situations, beyond what would be appropriate.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to new, difficult, or painful situations.
- Self-harm (this can present across the age range).
- Repeated stealing.
- Obsessive/repetitious behaviours such as rocking or thumb-sucking.
- Detachment – 'Don't care' attitude.
- Social isolation – does not join in and does not have friends.
- Needing levels of attention from adults and others - beyond what would be age appropriate.
- Eating problems including lack of appetite or over-eating.
- Depression, withdrawal.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Masturbation in public.
- Acting out aggression between parents or talking about domestic violence at home.
- Attaching inappropriately to strangers or people that they do not know well.

e) Financial and Material Abuse

Financial abuse is the theft or misuse of money or personal possessions which involve an individual's resources being used to the advantage of another person. It can include theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an individual's financial affairs or arrangements, such as wills, property, inheritance, possessions, or benefits.

Indicators include:

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Unexplained shortage of money - fear of spending on legitimate items/bills.
- Change in living conditions - lack of heating, clothing, food.
- Unexpected changes in financial documents.

f) Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory abuse may manifest itself as any of the categories of abuse stated in this policy. What is distinctive is that discriminatory abuse is motivated by oppressive and discriminatory attitudes towards a person's disability – physical or learning disability, mental ill-health, or sensory impairment. Discrimination may be on grounds of

disability, age, gender, race, sexuality, religious beliefs or customs or other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment.

Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs, or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. It can result from situations that exploit a person's vulnerability by treating the person in a way that excludes them from opportunities they should have as equal citizens, for example, education, health, justice and access to services and protection.

g) Organisational Abuse

Whenever any form of abuse is caused by an organisation, it may be organisational abuse. Organisational abuse includes neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital care home, residential placement, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment.

Organisational abuse includes neglect, poor professional practice, pervasive ill treatment, gross misconduct, lack of respect for users, and repeated instances of poor care; it can be the result of issues within the organisation's structure, policies, or processes.

h) Neglect and Acts of Omission

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, or clothing, leaving a child or vulnerable adult 'home alone', or the failure to ensure a child or vulnerable adult gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of neglect can be difficult to identify. Indicators of poverty may sometimes be misread as signs of neglect. Poverty affects material standards, but it does not necessarily affect the quality of care. There can be neglect in affluent households in which children, young people are surrounded by material comfort, but where they do not receive adequate care and supervision appropriate for their age. Neglect normally has a time dimension. It can reflect individual incidents but is usually cumulative. It may not be all the children in the family who suffer from neglect. Some, because of their age, developmental stage, profile of needs and abilities, and their relationships with caregiving adults, may not experience neglect, when other siblings or family members do.

Some children and young people will experience neglect because they have disabilities which make them particularly dependent on adult care, or because they are particularly disliked or rejected by carers (scapegoated). See **Vulnerability of Disabled Children** section.

The following signs can be used to guide discussion and decision-making about the possibility of neglect:

- The child or vulnerable adult is dirty, perhaps smelly, and inadequately dressed.
- An obvious lack of adult care leads to the social isolation of the child or vulnerable adult.
- The child looks malnourished, constant, or frequent hunger.
- The child or vulnerable adult is lacking in confidence and self-esteem.
- The child or vulnerable adult is developmentally delayed for no apparent medical or physiological reason.
- The home is dirty in a way that may damage a child's or vulnerable adult's health.
- There is such a lack of warmth or food that the health and development of the child or vulnerable adult may be impaired or damaged.

- Children or vulnerable adults are left alone without any appropriate arrangements for their care and supervision.
- Children or vulnerable adults, because of lack of supervision, are exposed to dangers, e.g. fires, busy roads, exploitation by adults etc..
- Health appointments are not kept.
- Frequently being sent to school or nursery when ill.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance.
- Repetitive stealing or begging.
- Constant lack of response or interest from parent/carer.
- Under-achieving at school or nursery.
- High and unusual levels of anxiety or being preoccupied.

i) Self-Neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviours which involve neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene/health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Any suspected cases of self-neglect should be reported to DSL and recorded accordingly.

j) Honour Based Violence

Honour based violence is a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community.

Honour based violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. It is often linked to family members or acquaintances who believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture. For example, honour-based violence might be committed against people who:

- Become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
- Do not want to take part in an arranged marriage.
- Do not want to take part in a forced marriage.
- Wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour-based violence however it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include domestic abuse, threats of violence, sexual or psychological abuse, forced marriage, being held against your will, or taken somewhere you don't want to go, and assault.

A child who is at risk of honour-based violence is at significant risk of physical harm (including being murdered) and/or neglect and may also suffer significant emotional harm through the threat of violence or witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or other family member.

Murders in the name of 'so-called honour' are often the culmination of a series of events over a period of time and are planned. These include house arrest and excessive restrictions; denial of access to the telephone, internet, passport, and friends; threats to kill; pressure to go abroad. There tends to be a degree of premeditation, whole family involvement and a belief that the victim deserved to die.

When receiving a disclosure from a child or suspecting a child is at risk, professionals should recognise the seriousness / immediacy of the risk of harm. Professionals should not minimise the potential risk of harm or attempt

to be a mediator. Professionals should see the child immediately, on their own, in a secure and private place and report immediately to children's services.

k) Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is defined as comprising all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons (WHO, 1997). The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM that states, "FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed several international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

FGM has been a specific criminal offence in the UK since 1985 when the (UK-wide) Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act ("the 1985 Act") was passed. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") replaced the 1985 Act in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. There is now a legal duty to report FGM for public sector employees working for a statutory agency, as part of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

Indications that a child is at risk of FGM:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM, especially if there are elderly women involved in the family.
- If a woman has already undergone FGM, and it comes to the attention of any professional, consideration needs to be given to any Child Protection implications e.g. for younger siblings, extended family members, and a referral made to Social Care or the Police if appropriate.
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM.
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony or procedure.
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin where FGM is practised.
- Parent/Guardian requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations.

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change (e.g. withdrawal, depression), especially after a return from holiday.
- Spend long periods of time away from school or college, or during class time during the day; and a reluctance to take part in physical activities / sports games.
- Spending longer than usual in the toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Recurring urinary tract infections or menstrual problems.
- Reluctance to undergo routine medical examinations linked to the genital regions (e.g. smear tests).

A child who has undergone or at risk of FGM should be seen as a child protection issue.

l) Ideological Harm

This is not a category of abuse in its own right. However, In Your Corner takes the vulnerability of children to being seduced by extreme ideological positions very seriously. Ideological harm includes radicalisation, extremism and the 'Prevent Duty'.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism or forms of extremism. Without undermining values such as freedom of speech, mutual respect and tolerance, all staff and volunteers must respond to the ideological challenge of extremist views. The government has defined extremism as “vocal or active opposition to British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”.

The Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values

From 1st July 2015 all schools, registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

At In Your Corner we will:

- Raise awareness amongst staff and volunteers including providing appropriate training for staff and volunteers. Part of this training will enable staff and volunteers to identify children and young people who may be at risk of radicalisation.
- We will build the children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting democratic values including the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and enabling them to challenge extremist views.
- As with managing other safeguarding risks, our staff will assess the risks; be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection (children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views); and ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet.
- We will not carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life, but we will take action if we observe behaviour of concern by reporting concerns to the DLS and making a referral to the local MASH.

m) Children who harm other children

Managing situations where children have been harmed by other children can be complex and stressful. It is important to be conscious that any child who is engaging in harmful or abusive behaviour towards others may have been subject to abuse or harm from others themselves. Harmful behaviour can be displayed in a variety of ways and can consist of sexual abuse / activity; physical harm; emotional abuse; verbal abuse – also see categories above.

Where an allegation is made regarding alleged abuse or harm perpetrated by another child, professionals must decide whether or not behaviour directed at another child should be categorised as abusive or not. The circumstances of the alleged perpetrator must be assessed separately from those of the alleged victim. It may be appropriate for workers to ask the local MASH for advice as required to support decisions about threshold in these cases.

Children who abuse others should be held responsible for their abusive behaviour, whilst being identified and responded to in a way which meets their needs as well as protecting others.

The decision as to whether or not behaviour directed at another child should be categorised as harmful is clearly dependent on the individual circumstances of the situation. It may be helpful to consider the following factors:

- The relative chronological and developmental age of the two children.
- Whether the alleged abuser is supported or joined by other children.

- Any differential in power or authority (e.g. related to race, gender, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability of victim).
- The actual behaviour (consider all factors).
- Whether the behaviour could be described as age appropriate or involves inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation.
- The degree of coercion, physical aggression, intimidation, or bribery.
- The victim's experience of the behaviour and the impact it is having on them.
- Attempts to ensure secrecy.
- Duration and frequency of behaviour.

Additional guidance is available via the London Child Protection procedures:
https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/ch_harm_others.html

It is part of our duty of care that we make sure children are protected from harm and exploitation from other children. At In Your Corner, we work with children and young people with complex social and emotional needs. We are a non-contact boxing organisation, however occasional pushing, hitting or verbal abuse from one young person to another may possibly occur. Such incidents need to be actively managed in sessions according to the ground rules and behaviour management processes and recorded and followed up as safeguarding or possible risk issues in the session debrief.

If you think that a child is targeting another child in relation to their behaviour in session, or any criminal behaviour or exploitation outside of the sessions, it is important to raise this with the DSL immediately to consider if further action is required.

n) Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA)

Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA) fits the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse, which is 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse.' (See categories above). While this definition applies to those aged 16 or above, APVA can equally involve children under 16.

A young person using abusive behaviour against a parent must receive a safeguarding response.

Further information can be found via the Home Office:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/420963/APVA.pdf

o) Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power, or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection, or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care, or education at some point.

Some possible signs of sexual exploitation are:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who have older “boyfriends” or “girlfriends.”
- Children who present with sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- Children who show changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late.
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don’t take part in education.

p) Child Criminal Exploitation

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited, and put into dangerous situations.

The word ‘gang’ means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper ‘Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity’ distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs. Examples of gangs can be:

- **Peer group** A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.
- **Street gang** Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.
- **Organised criminal gangs** A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most, crime is their occupation.

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang, however, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, travelling independently on public transport, staying in accommodation, and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:

- Airbnb and short term private rental properties
- Budget hotels
- “Trap houses” or “bandos”
- The home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as “cuckooing”

Children involved in County Lines are at risk of neglect and all other types of abuse. If you’re worried, it’s important to contact the Police immediately.

A child or young person might be recruited into a gang because of where they live or because of who their family is or they may become involved with a gang for many reasons, including:

- Peer pressure and wanting to fit in with their friends.
- They feel respected and important.
- They want to feel protected from other gangs, or bullies.

- They want to make money, and are promised rewards.
- They want to gain status, and feel powerful.
- They've been excluded from school and don't feel they have a future.

Organised criminal gangs groom children and young people because they're less suspicious and are given lighter sentences than adults. There are some signs to look out for if you're worried a child or young person has joined a gang or is being criminally exploited:

- Frequently absent from and doing badly in school.
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons.
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them.
- Being angry, aggressive, or violent.
- Being isolated or withdrawn.
- Having unexplained money and buying new things.
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos.
- Using new slang words.
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly having new, multiple, or burner (unregistered) phones.
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

It's important to be aware of the risks of criminal exploitation or being involved with a criminal gang. They can use different tactics to recruit and exploit children and young people, including bribing them with rewards, befriending them, and threatening them, or coercing them.

Dangers of criminal exploitation include:

- being subject to threats, blackmail, and violence.
- being exploited and forced to commit crimes.
- being arrested, including for crimes committed by the gang that they have not directly committed under the law of joint enterprise.
- not being able to leave or cut off ties with the gang.
- having their safety or the safety of friends and family threatened.
- risk of physical harm, rape, and sexual abuse.
- risk of emotional abuse.
- risk of severe injury or being killed.
- abusing drugs, alcohol, and other substances.
- long term impact on education and employment options.

Exploiting a child into committing crimes is abusive. However, as children involved in gangs often commit crimes themselves, sometimes they aren't seen as victims by adults and professionals, despite the harm they have experienced. It's important to spot the signs and act quickly if you think a child is being groomed or is becoming involved with a gang or may be involved in County Lines.

Childline has advice for young people who are in a gang or worried about a friend.

q) **Bullying**

Bullying can also be a type of abuse. Bullying is the abuse and/or intimidation by a person, people or an organisation against another or others. It may be a specific act, or it may be institutional. It is an abuse of a perceived power relationship. Children can also bully other children. Bullying may include verbal abuse and intimidation, acts of physical or sexual abuse and coercion, e-bullying, through texting, filming on mobiles and posting on social networks. Whatever its form it is unacceptable. It must be challenged and appropriately addressed.

Some possible signs of bullying:

- Reluctance to attend activities previously enjoyed.
- Tearfulness, depression, emotional dysregulation, loss of concentration.
- Stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, bruising, cuts, scratches, damaged clothing, bingeing on food, alcohol, or cigarettes.
- Shortage of money, frequent loss of possessions.
- Asks for money or starts stealing (to pay bully/ies)
- Drop in performance.

r) **Spirit Possession or Witchcraft**

Spirit possession is when parents, families and/or the child believe that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling them; the belief includes the child being able to use the evil force to harm others.

A child may suffer emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and neglect if they are labelled and treated as being possessed with an evil spirit. Significant harm may occur when an attempt is made to 'exorcise' or 'deliver' the evil spirit from the child. Dismissing the belief may be harmful to the child involved.

s) **Forced Marriage**

Forced marriage, as distinct from a consensual arranged one, is a marriage conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds. A child who is being forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Suspensions that a child may be forced into marriage can include:

- A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early
- Depressive behaviour including self-harming and attempted suicide
- Being kept at home by their parents
- Being unable to complete their education
- A child always being accompanied including to school and doctors' appointments
- A child talking about an upcoming family holiday that they are worried about
- A child directly disclosing that they are worried they will be forced to marry

Where a suspicion or allegation of forced marriage or intended forced marriage is raised, there may be only one opportunity to speak to a potential victim, so an appropriate initial response is vital. Professionals should not minimise the potential risk of harm or attempt to be a mediator. Professionals should see the child immediately, on their own, in a secure and private place and contact In Your Corner's designated safeguarding lead.

7. Vulnerability of Disabled Children

Research indicates that children with special educational needs or disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse. This may be for the following reasons:

- Attitudes and assumptions can lead to the denial or failure to report abuse.
- Reluctance to challenge carers – misplaced empathy.
- Seeing abuse as attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child.
- Beliefs that abuse does not impact on disabled children in the same way.
- Double standards – unsatisfactory situations accepted for disabled children.
- Dependency – exposure to a wide range of carers for personal and intimate care.
- Isolation – easier for abuse and neglect to remain hidden.
- Lack of participation and choice in decision making – disempowered and less likely to complain.
- Especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation.
- Behaviours misconstrued as part of child's disability.
- Communication barriers – may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.
- Judgements made about a child's ability to communicate that are not based on accurate information and specialist advice.
- Child's preferred method of communication not recognised / equipment and / or facilitation not available.
- Communication aids don't contain the necessary words to help a child describe an experience of abuse.

In addition to the above some possible signs of abuse for disabled children are:

- Bruising on sites that may not be concerning on a non-disabled child.
- Not getting enough help with feeding.
- Over or under medicating.
- Poor hygiene and personal care arrangements.
- Rough handling / excessive restraint.
- Lack of stimulation.
- Unwillingness to learn a child's means of communication.
- Ill-fitting equipment / invasive procedures which are unnecessary or carried out against the child's will.

8. Working With People from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds

There is a need to be mindful of some of the issues in working with children from ethnic minority backgrounds, and their families.

- Children from ethnic minority backgrounds are generally over-represented in looked after / care systems and some families may feel threatened and disempowered by involvement with statutory agencies.
- Families from ethnic minority backgrounds may also have experienced the stresses of racial abuse and discrimination.
- Refugee families have often had negative experiences of authority and time needs to be taken to ensure that trust and confidence is built appropriately.
- Racial stereotyping can lead to inaccurate or unfair judgements being made about people from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is important that all those working with children from ethnic minority backgrounds avoid further stigmatising them whilst still being mindful of the need to protect children.
- Where the first language of the family is not English the use of an interpreter must always be considered, and an interpreter provided where necessary.

9. Procedures to follow if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm

We have a statutory duty to notify agencies if we have a concern about children's safety and welfare (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

1. Where there is a concern about a child's welfare or wellbeing or a concern that a child needs protection, this should be recorded in writing on a session debrief form under the safeguarding section and then passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for action as soon as possible. If the DSL is unavailable, then seek direct advice from the partner agency's DSL or the local borough's Children's Social Care Team.
2. If the child already is a Child in Need or on a Child Protection plan, or is Looked After, their allocated social worker is the first contact at Children's Social Care. If not, please contact the MASH of the local borough's Children's Social Care.
3. All staff and volunteers must report concerns immediately
4. All records of concerns, emails, notes of phone conversations and actions are filed confidentially and securely (password protected) in the child's file.
5. Staff know that when they have concerns about a child's welfare they need to:
 - a. Focus on the needs of the child – their physical and emotional welfare
 - b. Be sensitive
 - c. Talk it over with one of the Designated Members of Staff
6. The flowchart for '***Making a safeguarding referral to children's social care***' is displayed and attached to this policy (**Appendix 1**).
7. Contact phone numbers/emails for children's social care are given at the start of this document – **Section 3**.
8. This Safeguarding Policy is accessible to all parents and carers
9. Concerns will be discussed with parent/carers before referral, unless this would put the child at further risk of serious harm
10. Unless we are advised otherwise by Children's Social Care any referral forms will be shared with parents.

Managing a 'disclosure'

If a child tells a member of staff something that leads them to believe they, or another young person is at risk, then staff should:

- Stay calm and listen to the child.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer (keep questions open).
- Consider how to explain to the child about our policies and procedures so that they know what is going to happen.
- Tell them who you are going to tell so that they can be made safe – children may fear that what they have said will be passed on to everyone and they need to know that this will not be the case.
- Control expressions of panic or shock.
- Use the child's language or vocabulary.
- Offer comfort bearing in mind the age and needs of the child.
- If the child has disclosed sexual abuse, ask them when it happened but nothing more. Whether a child is asked this question will depend upon the child's age and understanding.
- Tell them that they were right to tell you and it was not their fault and they are not bad.
- Do not be tempted to give false reassurances to the child (e.g. about who you will tell or what will happen) but tell them that you will do your best to protect or help them.

- As soon as possible take care to record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Record the date, time, setting, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given, and other people present. Sign and date the record.
- Record any subsequent events and actions.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. Any disclosure must be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Regarding any alleged abuse, children can only be interviewed once, and this interview must be conducted by a trained police officer and social worker under Home Office 'Achieving Best Evidence' (ABE) guidance. If a child has already been "interviewed" before an ABE, it means that the police may not be able to pursue the matter. Therefore, it is important to follow the guidance above and not "interview" the child yourself.

A child may recall former abuse once in a safe situation (e.g. make a disclosure of historical abuse). Although they may be under no current threat to their safety, any disclosure of historical abuse must be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and followed through appropriately, as the allegation may be relevant to another child or children's current safety.

You may also have concerns about a child's welfare where there has not been any disclosure or allegation. In the best interests of the child / young person, these concerns should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and followed through appropriately.

DO	DON'T
● Be accessible and receptive ● Listen Carefully ● Take it Seriously ● Reassure the child they were right to tell ● Say what will happen next ● Make a careful record of what was said ● Inform the DSL immediately ● Follow up with DSL to confirm action (if required) has been taken	● React strongly ("that's terrible, blame child or abuser") ● Jump to conclusions ● Speculate or accuse anyone ● Tell them you will keep their secret ● Ask leading questions ● Make promises ● Interrupt or stop them from speaking freely ● Tell them to stop talking so you can get someone else (DSL or manager)

Obstacles to reporting abuse

Children are sometimes reluctant to talk about abusive experiences because they:

- Are anxious about the consequences (they may have been threatened or told to keep abuse secret).
- I wish to protect the abuser.
- Are worried that they will be removed from home.

Staff and volunteers may be reluctant to recognise or report abuse because they:

- Are worried about getting it wrong.
- Believe that things will get better, or the abuse was a 'one-off' and will not continue.
- Are anxious about what will happen to the child or their family.
- Do not know what to do and are unfamiliar with child protection procedures.

Recording and reporting

Recording is a tool of professional accountability and is central to safeguarding and protecting children. It is not always possible to know whether a small or vague concern held today may increase as the days or weeks pass and later form the substance of a child protection referral. For this reason, it is vital that concerns are recorded accurately so that they can be monitored and emerging patterns over time noticed.

- Concerns should be recorded on the Cause for Concern form ([Cause for Concern Form](#)) by the person who notices the concern.
- The form should be emailed directly to the DSL (january@inyourcorner.uk)
- The DSL should also be called to alert that the form has been completed.

Please see **Appendix 3 Cause for Concern Form**

Designated Safeguarding Lead Response: Please see **Appendix 2 flowchart**

10. Training

All members of staff will regularly access appropriate safeguarding training within the requirements of the London Child Protection Procedures Safeguarding Training Competency Framework and ensure their knowledge is up to date on safeguarding issues. In Your Corner will ensure that the training made available will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.

11. Safer recruitment

Safe recruitment and selection practice is vital to safeguarding and protecting children. In Your Corner are committed to safer recruitment practices including:

- All staff and volunteers are carefully selected. In Your Corner's recruitment procedures are in line with the LSCB safer recruiting guidelines https://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/safer_recruit.html.
- DBS checks are carried out in accordance with legislation for all staff and volunteers before they are allowed to work with us. We may use their current DBS, if they have one, from an accrediting or governing body (such as England Boxing or the NHS) if this was dated within 12 months. If this is the case, we will ensure there have been no concerns or allegations since the date of issue.
- DBS disclosures are recorded in staff files.
- All new members of staff and volunteers complete the induction process and sign to agree they have understood our policies, procedures, and safeguarding practices.
- Staff must give management details of any incident, order, determination, conviction, or any other possible issue which may impact on their suitability to work with children at the earliest opportunity including those which have occurred since their most recent DBS.

12. Responding to allegations made against a member of staff/volunteer

Despite all efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations are made of abuse by staff or volunteers against children. All staff must be vigilant in relation to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, or any other person working with children. Examples include inappropriate sexual comments; overly harsh or

humiliating discipline; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual roles and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. Staff should behave in accordance with In Your Corner's organisational values and code of conduct.

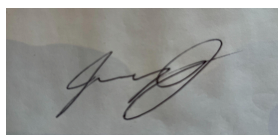
All concerns about staff should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the whistle-blowing policy should be followed (see Appendix 2). It is the responsibility of the DSL to report allegations to, and otherwise liaise with, the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations against people who work with children. All staff have a duty to protect children from abuse and keep children safe. Wanting to support a colleague or finding it difficult to believe what you have seen or heard, must always come second to that.

- If any worker is concerned that appropriate action has not been taken by the DSL, it is their responsibility to report the matter directly to the LADO.
- The flowchart '**Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff**' is in **Appendix 2**
- Contact details for the LADO are in **Section 3**

13. E-safety and use of digital devices – See Digital Safeguarding Policy Appendix 3

The CEO will oversee the implementation of this policy.

Signed:



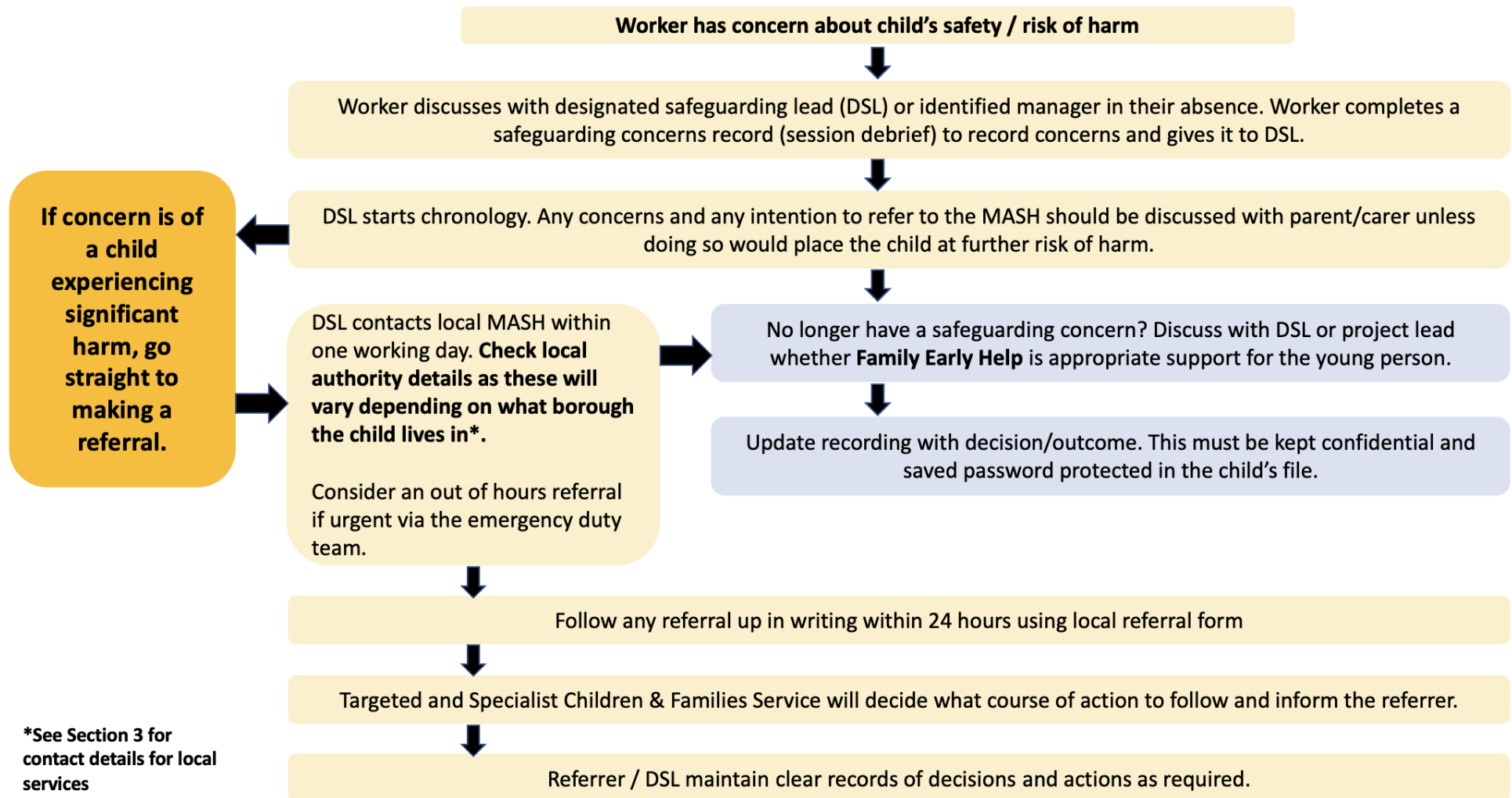
January Jones, Chief Executive Office

Date policy initially adopted: 29 December 2022

Policy reviewed and VF3.1 signed off by Board: 19 November 2025

Policy due for next review: October 2026

Appendix 1 Flowchart: Making a safeguarding referral to children's social care



*See Section 3 for contact details for local services

Appendix 2 Flowchart: Allegations Made Against A Member of Staff

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has harmed a child; is alleged to have behaved in a way in their private life that may suggest they are unsuitable to work with children and young people; **or if a disqualified person lives or is employed in their household*, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or in their absence a member of senior management must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the DSL, the Director/designated board member must be informed.

To assess the most appropriate course of action, the following initial information must be collated:

- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- the exact words spoken by the child/staff/member/parent/volunteer as far as possible
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported (with date and time)
- the names of any other person present at the time
- wider relevant knowledge or background information

(Note: it is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later or police investigation)

The Local Authority designated officer (LADO) **must be informed within one working day**. The LADO will clarify if and how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken. In serious situations, the LADO will advise whether a suspension should take place immediately.

After discussing the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to the local borough's Children's Services Contact Team is required.

After discussing the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Social Care is **not** required and In Your Corner will follow their own complaints and disciplinary procedures.

Refer the allegation to Children's Services Contact Team and follow this up in writing within 24 hours. Referrals can be made outside of office hours via the emergency duty service if the level of concern is high.

Children's Social Care will contact In Your Corner as to how to proceed. A formal strategy meeting will take place between Children's Social Care, In Your Corner's representative and the police (as appropriate). This meeting will agree what action is required immediately to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or provide interim services and support.

The member(s) of staff may be suspended (advice from the LADO will support the organisation with this decision). Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts

Appendix 3: Cause for Concern Form



Cause for Concern Form

Confidential – Safeguarding Cause for Concern Report

(To be completed by any staff member or volunteer who has a safeguarding concern about a child or young person)

Section 1 – Details of Child/Young Person

Full Name:	
Date of Birth / Age:	
Gender:	
IYC Project (Location):	
Address (if known):	

Section 2 – Your Details (Person Raising the Concern)

Full Name:	
Role:	
Date & Time of Concern:	
Contact Details (e.g. work email/phone):	

Section 3 – Nature of Concern

Physical abuse ☐ Emotional abuse ☐ Sexual abuse ☐ Neglect ☐
 Online safety concern ☐ Domestic abuse / violence ☐ Radicalisation / Prevent concern ☐
 Bullying / harassment ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Section 4 – Description of Concern

Provide a clear, factual account of what you have observed, been told, or noticed. Include dates, times, exact words used if disclosed, names of witnesses, injuries noticed, etc.

Section 5 – Action Taken

Have you spoken to the child/young person? Yes ☐ No ☐
 If yes, record exact words and your response: _____

Have you informed the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL? Yes ☐ No ☐
 Name of DSL/Deputy Informed: _____ Date & Time Informed: _____

Immediate Actions Taken (if any): First aid ☐ Called emergency services ☐ Referred to DSL ☐
 Other: _____
 Details: _____

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Section 6 – Further Information (if applicable)

Any previous concerns or incidents relating to this child? Yes ☐ No ☐
 Details: _____

Section 7 – For DSL / Safeguarding Team Use Only

Date & Time Concern Received: _____
 Received by (Name): _____

Action Taken / Decision Made:
 Logged and monitored ☐ Discussed with parents/carers ☐ Referred to Children's Social Care/MASH ☐
 Referred to Police ☐
 Other (specify): _____

Name & Signature (DSL/Deputy): _____ Date: _____

Data Protection Notice:

All information recorded on this form will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and In Your Corner's safeguarding and confidentiality policies. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

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Link to form: [Cause_for_Concern_Form_Nov_2025.pdf](#)

DSL email address: january@inyourcorner.uk

Mobile: 07759156143

Appendix 4: Digital Safeguarding Policy

In Your Corner Digital Safeguarding Policy

This policy was first agreed by In Your Corner's Board on 29 December 2022.

This policy is reviewed annually (or earlier if the law changes) and will be reviewed again in April 2026.

Note: This Digital Safeguarding Policy should be read and followed in conjunction with IYC's Safeguarding Policy (including Child Protection)

1. About In Your Corner

In Your Corner (IYC) runs boxing projects to support emotional wellbeing. We take evidence-based ideas from psychological intervention and deliver them in a flexible way alongside non-contact boxing skills in boxing clubs, schools, and accessible community settings. We run projects for young people that are free to access, and commercial boxing classes for adults.

2. In Your Corner's Safeguarding Policy

In Your Corner (IYC) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people using its services. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect these children, young people from harm, abuse, and exploitation regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, or sexual identity. IYC acknowledges its duty to act appropriately when it receives any allegations, reports, or suspicions of abuse. Paid staff and volunteers will work together to encourage an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children and young people.

This policy covers all children and young people accessing digital services run and managed by IYC.

The policy is endorsed by IYC's Board and will be reviewed annually to make sure it remains relevant and appropriate to the needs of IYC and its children, young people.

This Digital Safeguarding Policy is freely accessible to all. This means that IYC will share copies of this policy with staff and volunteers as part of their induction and training. IYC's safeguarding policies will appear on its website and hard copies of this policy will be available upon request.

Note: This Digital Safeguarding Policy should be read and followed in conjunction with IYC's Safeguarding Policy.

3. What does this policy cover?

This policy specifically covers all IYC's online and digital activities.

This includes but is not limited to email; website; social media channels (such as Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, LinkedIn, etc.); and other digital platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, and all ICT devices (including phones).

This policy explains our approach to protecting young people and group participants, volunteers, and staff. We are constrained by the terms of service of third-party social media providers in our approach. We promote safe use, but we also recognise that some issues will only be able to be handled by the service provider and the user themselves.

4. IYC's digital safeguarding principles

In order to uphold these principles our staff and volunteers must:

- Ensure that social media accounts are set up appropriately.
- Make it clear on any personal social media accounts using disclaimers that their views, thoughts and opinions are personal and not reflective of IYC policies, procedure, or guidance.
- Make sure that technical solutions are in place to reduce access to inappropriate content on devices owned by IYC (e.g. filtering or monitoring software, parental controls).
- Ensure photo / video consents are in place before taking and using photographs or videos on mobile devices.

- Delete pictures from the device after these images have been used and in accordance with IYC data protection and privacy policy.
- Make sure that they have parental permission to directly contact any young person under 14 years of age, or vulnerable adults, even if the young person or vulnerable adult has contacted you first.
- Make every effort to ensure that young people and users of the service understand why and how they must use social media responsibly and safely using the appropriate privacy settings.
- We recognise that digital safeguarding is an important part of all our work, and we are committed to delivering best practice.

We will:

- Ensure our projects, activities, programmes, and campaigns support all of our participants, volunteers and staff to stay safe online.
- Use best practice digital safeguarding for technical solutions, processes, and procedures.
- Help our staff and volunteers to support members in being effective online.
- Take best practice action when a digital safeguarding incident occurs.
- Support and train appropriate staff and volunteers in digital safeguarding.
- Have appropriate links with key organisations to raise awareness and refer and report incidents when needed.
- Risk-assess all projects, initiatives, programmes, activities, services, and campaigns to make sure appropriate digital safeguards are in place.

5. Who is responsible for digital safeguarding across IYC?

IYC's Safeguarding Leads are responsible for digital safeguarding at IYC. They are:

IYC Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer (Staff)	January Jones	07759 156143
IYC Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead (Board Member)	Dr Eloise Wynter	07534 421334

As a participant, volunteer, or staff member, if you know of an allegation, concern, or disclosure incident you must inform IYC's Safeguarding Leads.

If a digital safeguarding incident happens in a session or activity or a participant raises an issue during an online session, you must deal with it the same way as other safeguarding incidents. If you aren't sure about how to handle incidents you should contact IYC's Safeguarding Lead (January Jones, CEO) on 07759 156143 or january@inyourcorner.uk.

IYC is committed to the protection of our participants, volunteers and staff and will only share information with other agencies where there are significant concerns, or a potential crime has been committed.

6. What do we mean by digital safeguarding?

Digital safeguarding means: 'the protection from harm in the online environment through the implementation of effective technical solutions, advice and support and procedures for managing incidents'.

IYC is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all participants, volunteers, staff and users of our digital services and social media channels, and we apply the same safeguarding principles to IYC's activities whether they are offline or online.

This means protecting our participants, volunteers, and staff from online harms such as:

- Online bullying and harassment.
- Sexual exploitation and grooming online.
- Discrimination and abuse on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
- Sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery.
- Cyberstalking.
- Impersonation and hacking.
- Disinformation and misinformation.
- The oversharing of personal information.

The 4 C's to online-safety risks: they do not stand in isolation, however, and it is important to understand the interplay between all three.

The main areas of risk for IYC community can be summarised as follows:

Content

- Exposure to inappropriate content, including pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism, ignoring age ratings in games (exposure to violence and other age-inappropriate material), substance abuse.
- Lifestyle websites, for example pro-anorexia/self-harm/suicide sites

Contact

- Grooming (sexual exploitation, radicalisation etc.)
- Online bullying in all forms
- Social or commercial identity theft, including passwords

Conduct

- Aggressive or harassing behaviours (bullying, trolling, etc)
- Privacy issues, including disclosure of personal information
- Digital footprint and online reputation
- Health and wellbeing (amount of time spent online (Internet or gaming), gambling, body image, etc)
- Sexting (sending and receiving of personally intimate images) also referred to as SGII (self-generated indecent images)
- Copyright (little care or consideration for intellectual property and ownership – such as music and film)

Commerce

- Risk of online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams.

More detail is given below.

a. What is online bullying and harassment?

Online bullying can be offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting behaviour and abuse of power which humiliates or denigrates the other person. It can involve one or more people. This can be known as 'trolling' when the user deliberately starts quarrels or upsets people by posting inflammatory messages in an online community.

Online harassment can come in the form of unwanted verbal conduct online which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be related to personal characteristics of an individual, such as age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief or nationality.

Online examples of this abuse include abusive messages, exclusion from groups, malicious or insulting comments and sharing offensive imagery.

b. What is sexual exploitation and grooming online?

Sexual exploitation and grooming online is the act of developing a relationship with a child with the intention of abusing them. Offenders use emotional and psychological tricks to build relationships. The abuse can take place online or offline.

Non-contact abuse is where a child is encouraged to share live or still images of themselves of a sexual nature. They can be forced to commit sex acts or to perform on web cams or built-in cameras in phones and other devices.

c. What is discriminatory abuse online?

It can be an offence to stir up hatred – known as inciting hatred – on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and maternity

The content of a website can also be illegal when it threatens or harasses a person or a group of people. If this is posted because of hostility based on protected characteristics, it can be considered a hate crime. Illegal material could be in words, pictures, videos, and even music and can include:

- Messages calling for racial or religious violence
- Web pages with pictures, videos or descriptions that glorify violence against anyone due to a protected characteristic, for example their race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or because they are transgender
- Chat forums where people ask other people to commit hate crimes

d. What is the sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery online?

The sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery online (sometimes known as sexting) can fall into two categories: illegal and inappropriate.

‘Illegal’ is child sexual abuse imagery and imagery that incites violence, hate or terrorism.

‘Inappropriate’ in this context could mean the sharing of pornography, violent content, racist content and LGBTQI+ phobic content.

It is an offence to share inappropriate imagery of anyone under the age of 18 and this could result in a conviction.

e. What is cyberstalking online?

Cyberstalking is the repeated use of electronic communications to harass or frighten someone, for example by sending threatening communications.

f. What is impersonation and hacking online?

Impersonation and hacking online is where a user pretends to be somebody else, and they may hack into their profile and share information, imagery, or posts for example, on behalf of that person.

g. What is disinformation and misinformation online?

Misinformation and disinformation are the acts of spreading knowledge that is incorrect. Disinformation is the deliberate intent to spread information which is known to be incorrect. Misinformation is where an individual may not know they are sharing inaccurate information, for example they share information or content that they believe to be true.

h. What is the sharing of personal information online?

Personal information includes information that makes an individual personally identifiable. This can include name, date of birth, address, phone number, email address and social media profile name. It may also include identifying details based on an individual's protected characteristic.

7. The law

IYC adheres to all relevant UK laws relating to users of our digital platforms, third party social media and the use of our ICT equipment. Relevant laws include:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- The Equality Act 2010
- Criminal Justice Act 2003
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018

This list is not exhaustive. We review any changes in legislation to make sure we are compliant.

8. How will breaches in this policy be managed?

Any breach of this policy by staff or volunteers will be managed under the relevant disciplinary procedures. Any participant or the general public can make a complaint following IYC's Complaints & Compliments Policy.

IYC's Digital Safeguarding Procedures

The above was IYC's Digital Safeguarding Policy. What follows below are the procedures for putting the policy into practice. This is not a definitive list. IYC will provide appropriate training to accompany this policy and procedures. The online space is an increasingly important area for IYC, and we recognise the opportunities and challenges that this brings.

IYC supports our participants in developing their digital skills, through a wide range of programmes and activities. We use third party social media channels like Instagram, X, Facebook, and digital platforms such as the IYC website to engage with our participants, their parents/carers, volunteers, and other stakeholders. We use WhatsApp as a messaging platform to communicate with participants and parents/carers. Staff and volunteers also use social media and the internet to communicate with one another, and with young members and their parents/carers.

We want to continue to provide a safe space for participants to explore and communicate online, so it's important that we understand the risks and issues that the online space brings and have the appropriate procedures in place. These procedures are for participants, staff and volunteers and should be read alongside IYC's Digital Safeguarding policy (see above).

9. Mitigations – how does IYC try to manage risk?

A range of measures are in place to mitigate and manage online risks:

- Minimising the personal information that is shared on third party social media channels.
- Seeking permission to share information about participants and volunteers where appropriate.
- Supporting volunteers in setting up social media channels effectively.
- Removing and blocking offensive posts, comments, and imagery.
- Supporting and advising participants, volunteers, and staff about how to block, and remove offensive posts, comments, and imagery.
- Supporting participants, volunteers, and staff to block and report online bullying.
- Supporting participants, volunteers, and staff to remove users who break these rules.
- Encouraging the reporting of abuse.
- Supporting participants and volunteers if and when an online bullying incident occurs.
- Reporting allegations to the police and supporting others to report to the police.
- Signposting users to additional support services.
- Referring victims of online abuse to additional support.

10. What is acceptable use of ICT, the internet, social media, mobile phones, and digital technologies?

As staff and volunteers, you must understand what's acceptable, and you need to make sure participants know what is acceptable and unacceptable when using digital technology.

You must follow the procedures in the In Your Corner IT Acceptable Use Policy.

11. Use of IYC equipment by participants, staff, and volunteers

Where devices are owned by IYC and/or access to devices is given by IYC, there must be necessary mitigations in place to protect members, staff, and volunteers. These include:

- Technical solutions to reduce access to inappropriate content. These could be filtering or monitoring software, for example parental controls or up to date security software.

- Signed agreement to use the equipment safely, securely, and responsibly.

Users of IYC's equipment should never:

- Share, download, print or distribute any content that is defamatory, obscene, indecent, pornographic, offensive, discriminatory, sexual, or violent or any other content that may cause harassment, alarm, or distress.
- Use any IYC equipment to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to others.

IYC does not provide access to their equipment to participants. However, staff and volunteers should always make sure that where access is offered / managed by IYC to participants there is age-appropriate supervision and quality assurance including security and safety settings in place.

12. Use of mobile phones by IYC staff and volunteers

Where appropriate IYC staff are provided a work mobile phone. They should not use their personal devices. As an IYC staff or volunteer you may use your work mobile phones in any activities and sessions. This includes taking photos and films. However, permission must be obtained from parents/carers and/or young people (if they are able to consent for themselves) via a consent form before photos and films are taken and images shared.

Staff and volunteers should always:

- Gain permission before taking pictures or films.
- Delete pictures from your device once they have been used for the purpose that they were taken. You must check personal cloud backups and make sure that pictures are deleted from here as well.
- Make sure that phones and other electronic devices that hold IYC data are encrypted and/or password protected.

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Take photos of participants using your mobile phones without the explicit permission of parents or carers.
- Share imagery or personal information about young members or vulnerable adults on social media or the internet without consent of parent or carers and/or young person (if they are able to consent for themselves)
- Take pictures or videos on their personal phones.

13. Use of mobile phones by participants

Participants may bring their mobile devices to activities and sessions, but each IYC group must decide ground rules on this beforehand.

Participants should always:

- Use their mobile phone appropriately and responsibly.
- Seek permission to share photos/imagery and videos.

Participants should never:

- Use their device to bully, harass, alarm, distress or harm another young member or a volunteer.
- Share images or videos on social media without permission.
- Access, download, view or distribute inappropriate, pornographic, discriminatory or hate material.
- Contact staff or volunteers directly without their parents/carer's permission and awareness, except in an emergency.

14. Personal Use of social media

During Work Hours:

Personal use of social media is not permitted during working hours or by means of our computers, work phones, networks and other IT resources and communications systems. The only time a staff member should be accessing personal social media accounts at work is if they choose to share a work post through a personal account to the benefit of the organisation (e.g. sharing a job vacancy on Facebook).

Personal social media can be used during lunchtime and breaks so long as it does not involve unprofessional or inappropriate content, does not interfere with your employment responsibilities, and complies with this policy.

Restrictions & Prohibitions:

You must avoid making any social media communications that could damage our business interests or reputation, even indirectly. You must not use social media to defame or disparage our staff, any third party or us; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.

You must not express opinions on our behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by your manager or the marketing lead. You may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation. If you are unsure whether a comment is allowed, please speak to a manager before posting.

You must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as our performance, or do anything to jeopardise our trade secrets, confidential information, and intellectual property. You should not include our logos or other trademarks in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media without permission from the Director. It is expected that this would only be considered appropriate on professional sites such as Linked In.

Staff must never contact IYC young people through their own personal social media accounts. Friend requests or messages from IYC young people, whether current or previous, must be blocked or deleted. Any misuse of social media should be reported immediately to the CEO.

Guidelines for Responsible Use:

You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf and write in the first person. Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications that will be published on the internet for anyone to see. If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your employer (unless you have been authorised to speak on our behalf). You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to clients and colleagues.

If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with a manager.

If you see social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, please report this to the Director.

Breach of this Policy:

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

You may be required to remove any social media content that we consider to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

15. Social Media Accounts

IYC operates social media platforms for both promotion of our organisation and to provide content for our young people. This includes accounts on Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Linked In. Oversight of these accounts is the responsibility of the CEO.

Access to IYC Accounts:

IYC staff should have access to the organisation's social media accounts where appropriate for their job role. Log in and password details will be set by the Business and Marketing Support and updated regularly and when required for security purposes (e.g. if a staff member leaves). Passwords must be kept confidential and not shared with anyone outside the charity or anyone who does not have permission to access our social media platforms.

Posting on IYC Accounts:

The CEO should approve all posts to IYC social media accounts. Only content that is relevant to our organisation and purpose and which reflects the values of IYC should be posted. Staff should avoid posting anything that may bring the reputation of the charity into disrepute; influence our neutrality (e.g. political statements); could cause offence or be classed as discriminatory; or which breaches confidentiality or copyright.

It is good practice to ask a colleague to check content before it is published.

Responding to messages on IYC Accounts:

All staff with access to IYC accounts are responsible for checking regularly for messages and bringing them to the attention of the most appropriate staff member. Messages from young people should always be responded to by a member of the delivery team. See below for further guidance on communicating with young people through social media channels. This applies to both direct messages (DMs) and comments. Responses should always be through the official IYC account and should be visible to all staff using the platform. Messages should not be concealed or deleted.

16. Communication With Young People on social media

Young people have the option to contact us online, whether or not they are currently registered with a IYC project.

All communication with young people at IYC relies on staff accountability, transparency, and cooperation to ensure safeguarding principles are upheld and that we are GDPR compliant.

Posting Content for Young People:

Wherever possible, content for young people will be posted on private accounts to ensure that we are providing the safest space possible. Posts on public accounts should be for promotional purposes and should not encourage young people to share personal information or engage in sensitive discussions. The delivery team, with support from the Business and Marketing Support, oversees content posted to private young people accounts.

This content should use approved templates and follow the rules for public posting as well as being generally appropriate for our young people and in line with the usual content of IYC groups.

When posting, be aware that IYC does not police the age of young people following our account and content should therefore be appropriate for our full age range.

It is also important that staff are mindful when promoting our social media accounts that we do not encourage young people under the age of 16, who might otherwise have not had an account, to sign up in order to follow us. All support provided through social media accounts should also be available in other formats for young people who prefer not to access it online.

Responding to DMs:

Delivery staff should check for messages from young people regularly as part of their usual working day. Replies should only be sent within your working hours.

When communicating with a young person online, always remind them of our confidentiality policy and that any information they disclose may be passed on if we have safeguarding concerns. Any messages (DMs) that contain content of a safeguarding nature across all platforms should be reported immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with our Safeguarding Children Policy. Messages should be copied and used as part of the safeguarding report.

Staff members without relevant clinical experience or training are NOT to respond to messages from young people.

WhatsApp:

WhatsApp is a free instant messaging service owned by Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook). It allows users to send text and voice messages, make voice and video calls and share images, documents, user location and other content. The minimum age to use WhatsApp in the UK is 13 years old, however, despite this, WhatsApp is widely used by young people across a younger age range. Many young people are more comfortable messaging via WhatsApp than regular text messages and use this service to avoid charges.

IYC is committed to providing a service that is accessible to all young people. We want to meet young people on their own terms and encourage them to be open and honest in engaging with us. We therefore allow staff to use WhatsApp to communicate with young people who are accessing our services and, in some circumstances, to facilitate group chats on WhatsApp between young people at IYC groups (with consent).

In order to mitigate the risks involved in using WhatsApp with young people, particularly those under the age of 13, all IYC staff are expected to follow the procedures laid down in this policy. These are intended to ensure that no underage young person is encouraged to start using WhatsApp through IYC's services and that all young people, whatever their age, who do use WhatsApp are doing so openly and safely.

- These restrictions also apply to any alternative instant messaging service that may be approved for use at IYC. WhatsApp should only ever be used on work phones and managers reserve the right to ask to see records of WhatsApp communications at any time. WhatsApp messages should not be deleted without permission.
- If a staff member ever becomes concerned about a young person's use of WhatsApp, or if a young person or their parent/guardian raises concerns, they should stop using WhatsApp for communication immediately and may need to log this as a safeguarding concern.
- WhatsApp group chats should only be used in very limited circumstances and are subject to additional restrictions:
 - Any under 16s wanting to be added to a WhatsApp group chat must have the explicit written permission of their parent/guardian.
 - IYC staff must take the time to show the young person how to use WhatsApp safely, including how to hide their number from others in the group.
 - The staff member leading the group must moderate the group - ensuring that content on the group chat remains respectful, age-appropriate, and relevant at all times. This should include setting explicit ground rules for use of the group chat.
 - WhatsApp must never be the sole form of communication with a group. Any important information should also be available to young people by text or email.

- No young person should ever feel excluded from an IYC group by choosing not to use WhatsApp. IYC staff are expected to use their judgement in monitoring this.
- The Director should always be aware of when/where WhatsApp group chats are in use and which staff member is responsible for their oversight.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and if any concerns are logged about the use of WhatsApp at IYC or if there changes to WhatsApp's Terms of Use or security.

Providing In Your Corner Services Online

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for IYC to provide individual or group support in an online environment (for example, during Covid-19 restrictions). Permission for this is sought explicitly as part of our consent form and online services will only be available to young people where consent has been given.

Video calls or group sessions should only ever be undertaken on a work device and using a specific work account. They should always be scheduled in advance and follow the same format and guidelines as an in-person individual or group session, including taking place within work hours 9am-7pm Monday to Friday and lasting no longer than 90 minutes for a group session, and 60 minutes for an individual session. Video calls should never be offered in response to online messages/enquiries or on an ad hoc basis.

We do not record video sessions unless this is requested by the participant. Clinical recordkeeping for video sessions is the same as for in person working. Video or voice calls using Google Meet, Zoom or another approved platform are preferred to regular phone conversations where possible due to the option to record where needed.

Safeguarding concerns arising on a video call should be referred to a DSL in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Reports should include links or attachments of recordings where appropriate.

17. Use of the internet and social media by participants

Participants should always:

- Use social media responsibly and safely.
- Use the appropriate privacy settings.

Participants should never:

- Send friend requests or follow staff or volunteers individually/personally without their parents or carers permission.
- Use social media inappropriately or if they are underage.
- Bully, harass, intimidate, alarm or cause distress to another person using social media.
- Share pornographic, sexually explicit, or inappropriate material.
- Post and share photos without the permission of other participants or volunteers.
- Attempt to record video sessions or group virtual sessions

18. Use of technology for virtual meetings (e.g. FaceTime, Google Meet, Zoom)

Staff and volunteers should always:

- Get written permission/consent from parents/carers for participants to join virtual meetings.
- Use the parent/carers online account unless the participant meets the age restriction for the platform you are using.

- Check meeting settings to ensure that the facility for participants to record is turned off.
- Be dressed appropriately. Everyone must be fully dressed in clothing that covers top and bottom halves of the body.
- Check the environment that you and participants are broadcasting from is suitable and is not a bedroom. It may be necessary to blur the background in some cases.
- Ensure that other members of the household remain out of the background.
- Make sure that an appropriate adult is in the room with a participant during the call if they are under 14, or that they are in the vicinity and aware that a call/session is happening.
- All adult staff/volunteers on the video call must hold a current DBS check as required for their role.
- Facilitators must stay online until all participants have safely left the meeting.
- Check the terms and conditions of social media sites to make sure they are suitable for the participants.
- Check that all materials shared are suitable and age appropriate.

19. Support organisations

These organisations offer additional support on a range of digital and safeguarding topics:

[Thinkuknow](#)

[Childline](#)

[Samaritans](#)

[True Vision](#)

[Safer Internet Centre](#), includes The Internet Watch Foundation

[Get Safe Online](#)

[Childnet](#)

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

[Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

The CEO will oversee the implementation of this policy.

Signed:



January Jones, Chief Executive Office

Date policy initially adopted: 29 December 2022

Policy reviewed and VF3.1 signed off by Board: 19 November 2025

Policy due for next review: October 2026