

North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry Safeguarding Children Policy

(Future reference to the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be made as The Chamber)

Statement of Purpose

The Chamber will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm children and young people, with whom the organisation has contact.

Every child and young person who participates in The Chamber's activities should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in the organisation. The Chamber recognises that child abuse can be an emotive subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved and not to allow them to interfere with judgment about any action that needs to be taken.

The Chamber recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders' Institution does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection.

The Chamber will ensure that;

- The welfare of the child remains paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to be protected from harm.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (paid/ unpaid) working in the organisation have a responsibility to report concerns to The Chief Executive.
- Anyone working regularly or on a one-to-one basis with children will be required by the Chamber to have enhanced CRB clearance. This applies both to Chamber staff and those working on behalf of the Chamber e.g. contractors. We can help to provide this if required.

Promoting good practice

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. All concerns regarding individuals' behaviour should be reported to The Chief Executive

What you should do if a young person reports abuse

If someone discloses that they are being abused, then upon receiving the information you should

- React calmly.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and

- take what the child says seriously.
- Be careful not to be deemed as putting words into the child's mouth, the easiest way of doing this is by asking questions.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Inform the child/ young person what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information.

The report should include :

- The child's known details including name, date of birth, address and contact numbers.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, specific factors and any other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or others injuries occurred.
- Accounts from others, including colleagues and parents.

Referral

Should The Chamber need to make a referral, the referral should be made to the local Children's Services. However if known the referrer should clearly state where the child is normally resident.

Have all the information at hand - details of the young person and any written concerns.

Emergency action:

In some cases you may need to protect a child immediately - in these situations dial 999. The Police are the only agency with statutory powers for the immediate protection of children.

It is not The Chamber's responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place or not, however we will pass on information to the appropriate authority immediately.

Further references

The relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Procedures.

Working Together to Safeguard Children- A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (DCSF 2006)

Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People (DCSF 2007)

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DCSF 2007)

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