



SAFEGUARDING

CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURE

Hetty's is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Hetty's acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. Staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults in implementing this child protection policy.

Hetty's also champions the rights of all children and young people not to be abused, neglected or exploited and be happy, healthy, safe and productive in their contribution to society.

Hetty's is committed to all policies, procedures, practice guidance and practice, which safeguards children and promotes their welfare. Hetty's aim to provide services which ensure equality of access to children and young people affected by somebody else's substance use, regardless of:

- Race, religion, first language or ethnicity
- Gender or sexuality
- Age
- Health status or disability
- Political or immigration status

Hetty's will:

- Communicate to all workers their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Communicate to all workers and volunteers their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the Local* Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures and the need to work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice in protection of children.
- Ensure that all workers have undertaken as a minimum basic child protection training provided by the local Safeguarding Children Board (or other recognised

provider with appropriate experience). Individual workers confirming their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection.

- Ensure that the named person has undertaken basic training (as above) and level two training (Working Together to Safeguard Children) provided by the local Safeguarding Children Board and that they understand his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. MASH, Police and/or Children's Social Care).
- Provide appropriate Clinical Supervision (1-1 and group) for all clinical workers.
- Ensure **all** workers and volunteers, have undergone, safe recruitment procedures. To include DBS checks, gaps in employment history and follow up on reference requests before starting work with children and young people.
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner. Provide opportunities for all workers to further develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Ensure that all staff working for Hetty's are able to operate in a safe environment in terms of premises, equipment, transport arrangements; co-working arrangements (see Health & Safety Policy).
- Facilitate involvement of parents or carers in the work of the organisation and to make child protection policies and procedures available to them. Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people. Child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.
- The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, July 2018).

This policy will be implemented through Hetty's actual procedures.

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Hetty's is a Charity that supports parents, carers or anyone affected by somebody else's drug or alcohol use.

The Charity was set up in 1996 and at that time was to support and add value to the Nottinghamshire Community Health Service, which is funded to provide a service across Nottinghamshire.

In 2010 Hetty's became an employer in its own right and is currently responsible for delivering services in Nottinghamshire to parents, carers or anyone affected by somebody else's drug or alcohol use.

Hetty's Trustees and volunteers work across the seven districts of Nottinghamshire. Hetty's staff will work specifically in the area that their contract has been designed. Boundaries are only significant in reporting structures beyond Hetty's, for geographical areas; the response to safeguarding and child protection has no such boundaries.

SECTION 2. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

Definitions of Abuse as cited in, Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018, p.102106):

- **CHILDREN:** Anyone who has not yet 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 or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
- **SAFEGUARDING:** Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
 - a. protecting children from maltreatment
 - b. preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - c. ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - d. taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- **CHILD PROTECTION:** Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **ABUSE:** A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
- **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** A form of abuse, which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **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 (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION:** Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- **NEGLECT:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
 - b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger

- c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

- **EXTREMISM:** Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities based on race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.
- **COUNTY LINES:** As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.
- **CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION:** As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity
 - (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
 - (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
 - (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- **INJURIES TO BABIES/YOUNG INFANTS:** There is good evidence that babies less than 9 months of age rarely have bruises related to accidental injury. Based on this evidence there should be a heightened awareness of non-accidental injury in babies less than nine months of age who are found to have bruising. This is particularly true of those less than 6 months of age. Accidental injuries rarely occur in children who are not yet mobile and so it will be essential to establish information about the child's gross motor skills. When there are unexplained or suspicious marks or bruising on a baby less than 9 months old, further assessment will need to be undertaken. Bruising or marks in this age group, even if the bruising or injury is apparently small in size, is highly likely to

be indicative of non-accidental injury. Workers observing such bruises or marks should refer into social care.

- **PREGNANCY**

A referral to Children's Social Care should be made as soon as any agency identifies a concern or need that may place the baby at risk of significant harm when born. Social Care will accept the referral at the point that it is made. Agencies will not be asked to refer when the pregnancy has progressed to a certain point as such practice increases potential confusion and reduces the opportunity to ensure that clear plans are agreed and in place well before a child is born. In addition, any issues that raise concern about the health and well-being of the baby whilst in utero should also be discussed with the appropriate health practitioner and referred where appropriate. Where an existing child in the household is the subject of a Child Protection Plan then an ICPC in respect of the unborn child must be held. A referral for unborn should always be made were:

1. A parent or other adult in the household has been identified as posing a risk to children
2. A sibling in the household is or has been the subject of a Child Protection Plan
3. Another child has previously been removed from the care of either parent (or parents partner), either temporarily or permanently, by a voluntary arrangement or by Court Order. Where the parent, their partner or any other member of the household has previously had a child removed, this will always lead to a Core Assessment. It is highly likely in such circumstances that an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) will be appropriate.
4. The degree of parental substance misuse is likely to significantly impact on the baby's safety or development
5. The degree of parental mental illness / impairment is likely to significantly impact on the baby's safety or development
6. There are significant concerns about parental ability to self-care and / or to care
7. A parent previously suspected of fabricating or inducing illness in a child
8. There is evidence of domestic violence that has been assessed as 'high risk' using the NSCB/NCSCB assessment tool.

Staff and volunteers should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs⁶
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home⁷
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

SECTION 3. DESIGNATED LEAD FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Hetty's has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with. The named person(s) for Child Protection within Hetty's are:

Named Person for Child Protection: Tracey Crosby (Operational Team Lead)
Work telephone number: 01623 643476
Mobile number: 07963312979 **Emergency contact no:** 07963312979

Named Person for Child Protection: Craig Knowles (Kinship Care Lead)
Work telephone number: 01623 643476
Mobile number: 07813 757961 **Emergency contact no:** 07813 757961

Deputy Name of contact person: Debbie Knowles (Hetty's Chief Executive)
Work telephone number: 01623 643476
Mobile number: 07540806620 **Emergency contact no:** 01909 532181

The role and responsibilities of the Designated Lead are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect;
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed;
- The Designated Lead will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. These will be kept in a secure place in line with Hetty's confidentiality Policies and local procedures.

Our designated members of staff are fully trained and receive updated training every year.

SECTION 4. STAGES TO FOLLOW IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD

Hetty's recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However, Hetty's believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When

worrying behaviour is reported by individuals, or observed by staff or volunteers, staff and volunteers will, where possible:

Stage 1

- Initially talk to the individual about what they have observed. It is okay to ask questions, but never use leading questions;
- Listen carefully to what they have to say and take it seriously;
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation in which a disclosure, has been made;
- Always explain to the individual that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
- Notify Hetty's Designated Lead for Child Protection and/or Management.
- Record information as soon as possible after any disclosure; the person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated;
- Respect confidentiality and scan documents time, accurately and securely;

Stage 2

- The Designated Lead will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation, the Designated Lead will contact the MASH, police and/or Children's Social Care (see appendix 3).
- The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern via the relevant duty team at MASH/Children's Social Care or via the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on 0800 096 7719.

SECTION 5. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER

Hetty's will ensure that any allegations made against volunteers or a member of staff will be dealt with, swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The Designated Lead person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the Lead person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be the Chief Executive, Trustee, or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).

- The named person should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) MASH 0300 500 80 90 for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police should be contacted for discussion – out of hours:- **0300 456 4546**.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. If this is connected to Hetty's client to ensure, this is recorded on Lamplight without delay. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, Hetty's will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.

SECTION 6. RECORDING AND MANAGING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Good record keeping is an important part of a professional's task. Records should use clear, straightforward language, be concise, and accurate. They should clearly differentiate between facts, opinion, judgements and hypothesis. All safeguarding should be recorded on Hetty's Lamplight data system immediately upon referral or safeguarding information/disclosure received.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Safeguarding children requires information to be brought together from a number of sources, and careful professional judgements to be made based on this information. Records must be clear, accessible, and comprehensive.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Personal information about children and families held by professionals is subject to a duty of confidentiality. Information should normally, not be disclosed without the consent of the subject. **However, the law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child.**

Professionals can only work together effectively to safeguard children, if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others however, have regard to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained, before sharing personal information. In some

circumstances, consent may not be obtained, but the safety of the child dictates that the information should be shared.

The principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK’s implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), should be adhered to at all times. Hetty’s provides a confidential service offering information, advice and support to parents, carers or anyone affected by somebody else’s drug or alcohol use. Any information given by individuals to staff, volunteers or representatives remains confidential to the project and is not discussed or revealed to anyone outside the project. Written records of contact are held, securely and cannot be accessed by anyone outside of the service.

The only exception to this is when a member of staff, volunteer or representative of the service identifies a possible child or adult protection issue. In this case, the project follows Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures or, in relation to vulnerable adults, the local multi- agency agreed procedures.

SECTION 7. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

All Hetty’s Managers will ensure that ALL staff, trustees and volunteers have continued access to all up-to-date policy, procedures and guidelines regarding safeguarding training.

This policy will be subject to annual review and, if revised, all Hetty’s staff, Trustees, Volunteers will be alerted to the new version.

Signed November 2021

Chief Executive Debbie Knowles

Signed November 2021

Designated Lead for Child Protection Tracey Crosby

Signed.....

Designated Lead for Child Protection Craig Knowles

REFERENCES

Hetty’s Confidentiality Policy

Hetty’s Recruitment Employment Checks Policy

Hetty’s Health & Safety Policy

The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK’s implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board

