

Trax policy

Safeguarding Children and Young People

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This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or sooner should a review of safeguarding procedures be required. Trax reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

The Named person/s responsible for safeguarding:

Safeguarding Lead: Olivia Davies – Charity Director

Second Safeguarding leads: Roby Taylor – In-reach worker (CAMHS) and Steph Dass – administration manager

Date of last review: June 2018 Date of next review: June 2019

1. Summary

We believe that every young person deserves the chance to get on in life - no matter what. Key to this approach is our commitment and perseverance to ensuring that all children and young people who access our services are protected from harm and/or further harm; and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

2. What is the policy about?

This policy provides details about safeguarding responsibilities and arrangements in place, to address concerns and allegations about abuse and neglect affecting children and young people.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all children and young people who are receiving services from us or who are in contact with the organisation for any reason are protected from all forms of abuse.
- Acknowledge that all staff and volunteer members of Trax (including third party providers) have a responsibility to act where there is cause for concern about children's safety and wellbeing.
- Promote best practice and a positive organisational culture which encourages the promotion of welfare of children and ensures their safety.
- Ensure that we encourage working together with children, young people, their parents/carers and advocates as much as possible, in situations where there is cause for concern.
- Provide mandatory procedures, which must be adopted in any situation where there is cause to be concerned that a child or young person has experienced or is at risk of some form of abuse.

The policy will also, clarify the roles and responsibilities of Trax and other agencies, especially those with a statutory responsibility. It will promote awareness that young people who are in contact with Trax may have experienced a range of abuse. It is comparable with other Trax Policies (see section 7).

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'children' refers to children and young people under the age of 18 and young people under the age of 25 with additional needs.

3. Who is the policy for?

All Trax's trustees, staff, associates, third party providers and volunteers have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Everyone working with children and everyone working with parents/carers of children should be familiar with these procedures and have a duty to report any safeguarding concern to the relevant local authority and Trax.

4. Policy statement

We are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional harm. The development and implementation of this policy and procedures are to be seen as an integral part of Trax's determination to provide high quality responsive services, which meet the needs of our customers and service users.

Our approach to safeguarding and child protection is based on principles recognised in UK legislation and international agreements.¹ The welfare and protection of children is paramount. All children regardless of age, disability, racial heritage, religious belief and sexual orientation or identify have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse. We recognise the importance in working in partnership with parents, carers and agencies in the prevention and response to incidents or allegation of harm and abuse to children.

5. Definitions

It might be difficult to accept, but every child can be hurt, put at risk of harm or abused, regardless of their needs, status or circumstances. Safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that safeguarding means:

- **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; and**
- **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes²**

¹ The Children Act 1989 and 2004, The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, The UN Convention on the Right of the child UK ratified 1991, The Human Rights Act 1998, The Data protection Act 1984, and 1998, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

² Working Together to Safeguard Children (1.20 HM Government 2013)

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse: neglect, emotional, physical and sexual. These categories of abuse are those generally used by Children's Social Care, and the Police. Working Together 2013 provides clear definitions of these forms of abuse.⁵ **(See Appendix A)**

6. Reporting concerns

6.1 Responsibility to report concerns

It is not the responsibility of Trax to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. It is the responsibility of staff at Trax to act if there is cause for concern in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take necessary action to protect a child.

Trax staff **do not** investigate but do make the judgement **“if this incident or situation were true, is this cause for concern?”**

6.2 Responding to concerns

A child protection concern may come to your attention in a number of ways. In all circumstances the child's immediate health and safety must take priority. In relation to any injury that comes to your attention you must consider the need for:

- Immediate medical attention
- Immediate action to protect.

In these circumstances, you may need to make immediate contact with emergency health services, the Police or Children's Social Care. Trax reporting procedures will subsequently apply to any immediate action taken to safeguard a child.

Disclosures of abuse can be frightening and difficult for the child. If a child confides in you that they are being hurt or have been abused they have placed, you in a position of trust.

They trust you to help them but you must make it clear that you cannot keep the disclosure 'a secret.' You should:

- **React calmly and in an encouraging manner**
- **Advise them that they are right to tell**
- **Emphasise that they are not to blame**
- **Take what is being said seriously and communicate this to them**
- **Keep questions to the minimum necessary for ensuring a clear and accurate picture of what is being said to you. Remember you are not to investigate.**
- **Be clear that there are certain people that you will have to tell in order to make sure that necessary action is taken. Stress it is part of your job to keep children safe.**
- **Make a full record of what is communicated as soon as possible. This should include exact words used, behaviour and other forms of communication.**
- **Do not delay in passing the information on to your line manager**

6.3 Recording of concerns

It is crucial that all concerns are properly recorded. The records may be needed later to contribute to a report on the child and their family by Children's Social Care or in some cases as part of civil court proceedings under the Children Act 1989.

The following information, if available, should be recorded:

- **Name and address of the child**
- **Age and date of birth**
- **Ethnic origin**
- **Religion, if any**
- **Disability, if any**
- **Preferred communication method and language**
- **Name and address of adults involved in the incident/concern/allegation**

- **Date and time of the alleged incident**
- **Nature of injury, behaviour or concern**
- **When the behaviour or injury was first noticed.**
- **The child's explanation in his/her own words as verbatim as possible**
- **The child's developmental needs and the capacity of the child's parents or carers to meet those needs (through the provision of facts or identified professional opinion)**
- **Date and time of the recording**
- **Any questions that were asked**
- **Signature of the person recording the concern**

Some of this information may not be available to you. Do not pursue the questioning of a child. It is important that they freely volunteer whatever information they wish you to have.

When recording, you need to ensure you separate fact from opinion by setting out the facts first. Having an opinion is entirely valid and may be crucial but it must not be confused with factual information.

All written records about a child must be retained securely and confidentially, and marked as sensitive within the relevant service recording system.

6.3.1 Confidentiality

It is very important that children are, at all times, aware of their right to confidentiality. It is good practice to ensure that children (and their families) are aware of this right from the start of their involvement with Trax services (**see appendix B**). This is to ensure that, if a staff member or volunteer ever has to break that confidentiality due to a safeguarding matter that the individual will understand this and will not feel betrayed or let down. No safeguarding matter can be kept confidential and this must be made clear to all children (and where appropriate), their families, accessing our services.

6.4 Reporting concerns

6.4.1 Line Management:

Every staff member must ensure that disclosures are reported to their line manager immediately. In their absence, a more senior manager must be contacted immediately. In consultation with the staff member the line manager will decide as to whether a referral to Children's Social Care is necessary/ will take place.

6.4.2 Children's Social Care

If the child has a named social worker, s/he should be contacted immediately via telephone and advised that you intend to make a formal safeguarding referral. If the social worker is not available, ask to speak to the team duty social worker and advise them that you intend to make a formal safeguarding referral. You will be required to provide details of the referral over the telephone including the name, date of birth and address of the child as well as details of the disclosure.

If the child does not have a named social worker you must contact the Social Care access team or out of hours emergency duty team (EDT) stating that you wish to make a formal safeguarding referral. Again, you will be required to provide details of the referral over the telephone including the name, date of birth and address of the child as well as details of the disclosure.

Telephone referrals to Children's Social Care must be followed up in writing within 48 hours of the telephone referral taking place. Some Local Authorities have their own referral format which must be completed. For those that do not, a written referral must be made on Trax letter headed paper including as the letter reference the child/young person's name, date of birth and address. The letter must indicate who you are and how you have come to be involved with the child, the details of the disclosure, and what you have said to them. In accordance with 'Working Together' 2013 you may also stipulate the requirement for a response from Children's Social Care as to how they intend to respond, within 24 hours of them receiving the letter.

Referrals in writing must be delivered by hand to the relevant Social Care office, securely emailed or faxed with a delivery and read receipt or sent first class recorded delivery.

Social Care departments have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to decide on a course of action within one working day of receiving a referral. If they decide to proceed to an initial assessment of the child/young person and their family, this must be completed within 45 days of receipt of the initial referral (Working Together 2013:32)

6.4.3. Parents/Carers

It is important in the case of children making disclosures to communicate this to the child's parent/carer. It is they who have primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the child. This should be done in consultation and with support of the child. If however sharing the allegation with the parent/carer would impede any subsequent investigation or place the child at greater risk, the matter may be referred without notifying the parent/carer, and this must be made clear to Children's Social Care. All decisions must be made in consultation with a line manager.

6.4.4. Trax Internal Reporting

All reported disclosures to Social Care, regardless of outcome must also be reported internally within Trax through the completion of the 'Safeguarding Incident form' available through the shared drive.

All staff are required to complete the Safeguarding Incident form in conjunction with the written referral to Social Care. The form has 3 parts: Part 1 outlines the basic details of the referral and part 2 the details of the incident being reported. Both part 1 and 2 must be completed at the same time following the disclosure. The form must then be anonymised by removing the child's personal details and password protected³ and sent by email to:

- Your Line Manager
- Your Assistant Director
- The designated Director for Safeguarding and their Executive Assistant
- A nominated Trax Safeguarding Board representative

Part 3 of the form must be completed within 7 days subsequent to the submission of Parts 1 and 2 once the outcome of the referral is known and resubmitted as detailed above.

See appendix C: Flowchart of Trax safeguarding referral procedures

7. Allegations against Trax staff/volunteers

Any allegation of abuse against a Trax staff member or volunteer must be taken seriously, both for the sake of the child and the member of staff/volunteer.

Staff receiving the allegation will follow the same process for **responding to concerns** (see 6.2 above). In relation to **reporting concerns** however, the receiving staff member will contact the manager of the staff member against whom the allegation has been made. The staff member who is the subject of the allegation must NOT be informed of the allegation at this point.

The manager of the staff member who is the subject of the allegation should refer the matter immediately to their Director or in his/her absence the person acting for him/her.

The Director will then decide whether the incident is serious enough to be considered as a potential safeguarding matter OR whether the allegation is less serious, in which case it should be dealt with under Trax Complaints Policy and if appropriate Disciplinary procedures.

³ To password protect a document go to 'Tools', 'Options', 'Security', 'Password to Open', Type in Password and confirm. Remember to resave the document after security protection.

If there is insufficient information to make this decision, the Director will need to decide as a matter of urgency, what information is needed and how this should be obtained, so that a decision can then be taken as to whether or not this situation should be considered as a matter of potential abuse.

If the Director decides that the situation should be considered as potential abuse, s/he will consult with the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and request that an emergency strategy meeting be convened to plan the process of investigation. The Director will also need to decide whether for the duration of the investigation, the member of staff should continue in their work, be moved to other duties or be suspended in accordance with the terms of the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures. The LADO will be kept informed of all decisions taken by Trax in relation to the staff member.

If, the matter is to be investigated then the Director will advise the staff member that an allegation has been made against him/her and the matter has been referred to the Local Authority for investigation. To avoid prejudicing the investigation the details of the allegation should not be discussed prior to investigation and the staff member will be instructed not to discuss this with other colleagues. The staff member will be advised to take legal advice.

Once the investigation is completed, the Director will decide whether any further action is needed in relation to the information arising from the investigation. Depending on the outcome of the investigation it may be necessary to commence Trax's formal disciplinary policy and this must be conveyed to the staff member within seven days of the completion of the investigation.

8. Allegations against Third Party Providers

Regarding any allegation of abuse against a Trax third party provider, staff receiving the allegation will follow the same process for **responding to concerns** (see 6.2 above). In relation to **reporting concerns** the receiving staff member will contact their line manager, who in consultation with the Director will inform the line manager of the staff member subject to allegation within the providing organisation. The staff member belonging to the third party, who is the subject of the allegation, must NOT be informed of the allegation. The matter will be handed to the providing organisation to follow in accordance with their own safeguarding, complaints and disciplinary processes. It would be the responsibility of the providing agency to inform the LADO.

9. Training and Support

9.1 Training

All staff and volunteers commencing employment with Trax are required to complete the online training within 4 weeks and the OSCB face-to-face safeguarding training booked within 2 weeks as part of their induction training.

9.2 Support

Receiving and responding to disclosures of abuse by young people can have a strong emotional impact and you must not underestimate the potential impact of this. It is important that you are emotionally supported in dealing with safeguarding matters, initially through your line management chain.

10. Governance

All matters relating to safeguarding are overseen by Trax's organisational Safeguarding Group. The Safeguarding group is the formal mechanism by which Trax discharges its responsibilities and sets the strategic direction for Safeguarding within its services. This group ensures effective communication between the directorates and corporate departments and acts as the leadership group on safeguarding issues by:

- providing up to date knowledge on safeguarding matters
- ensuring that staff have access to appropriate safeguarding training
- reviewing how the safeguarding policies are working in practice

11. Related policies

Trax Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy must be read in conjunction with the following Trax policies:

- Anti-Bullying
- Capability Policy
- Codes of Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Data Management and Protection
- DBS Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Data Protection
- Employee Wellbeing
- Equal Opportunity and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Incident, Accident and Injury Reporting

- Independent Safeguarding Association
- Lone Working
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Supervision
- Recruitment and Selection (Oxfordshire's section 11 recruitment)
- Risk Assessment
- Volunteer
- Whistleblowing Policy

Extract starting at Page 85 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as 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, 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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:

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

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

Example Confidentiality Agreement

APPENDIX B

While working for the organisation you may deal with confidential information such as young people’s records and plans. It could be harmful to the organisation if this information were to get into the wrong hands.

Young people often trust us by telling us things they don’t want others to know about. Again, it could harm the organisation if such information were to leak out.

The following guidelines will help you avoid problems:

1. Only talk about a young person’s affairs with that young person or with your colleagues at work
2. Do not talk about one young person with another
3. Do not discuss young people with suppliers, or other people outside the organisation
4. Do not leave information lying about where it could be seen by visitors
5. If you have a desk or work area, keep it tidy and put paperwork away when you have finished using it
6. If you have to throw paperwork away, make sure it is shredded if it contains any information about the organisation or young people
7. Do not take any organisation or young person’s paperwork off site unless you have permission from your manager to do so

More details on this can be found in the Data Protection/Confidentiality policy.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

‘I understand my child’s right to confidentiality’

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Reporting Flowchart

APPENDIX C



Safeguarding Incident Form

APPENDIX D

Trax Safeguarding Incident Recording Form (Part 1 of 3)

Date of concern / incident being raised:	
Initials and DOB of service user and of any child dependants	
Name of project worker involved:	
Name and contact details of any other agency involved: <i>(if applicable)</i>	
Service/project name:	
Region/directorate:	
Please give a brief summary of the safeguarding concern:	

Trax Safeguarding Incident Recording Form (Part 2 of 3)

<p>Please give detailed information of safeguarding concern:</p>	
<p>Action taken:</p> <p><u>Note: if referred to Children 's services please include name and contact details</u></p>	
<p>Date information sent to regional or operational office.</p>	

Signed by:

Print Name

Signature & date

Trax Safeguarding Incident Recording Form (Part 3 of 3)

Name of service user	
Progress	
Conclusion	
If relevant, lessons learnt	

Signed by:

.....
Print Name

.....
Signature & date