

Ofsted Registration Number: 2759504



The Statement of Purpose

(Regulation 9)

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We have replaced 'children' with the term 'young people and adults' throughout Next Step Care Management Ltd Statement of Purpose and all Policies & Procedures.

1. Ethos and vision

Respect: We treat everyone with the same respect and consideration we would want for ourselves.

Excellence: We are committed to continuous improvement and innovation to exceed expectations.

Integrity: We uphold strong ethical principles and always strive to do the right thing, no matter the cost.

Pride: We take pride in our work and strive to be part of something bigger than ourselves.

Our vision is for a society where every person has access to positive people, a purpose, and a safe place to call home.

At Next Step Care Management Ltd:

- We value our relationships with young people and adults and believe in their inherent resourcefulness, regardless of their age or background.
- We empower young people and adults by equipping them with essential life skills to make informed choices and create their path to success.
- We provide an environment that is judgment-free, supporting young people and adults to be themselves and achieve their full potential.

2. Purpose

Next Step Care Management Ltd provides supported accommodation, which also includes outreach floating support, to young people 16+ Care Leavers, Looked-After and adults at risk enabling them to achieve positive outcomes. We provide flexible, responsive and needs led packages that promote life skills and transition to independence.

We support young people and adults to prepare for adult living by enabling / supporting them to manage their:

- Relationships with family, peers, neighbours, staff, and other multi-agency professionals.
- Accommodation.
- Budgeting.
- Cooking nutritious and balance meals.
- Personal and domestic hygiene.
- Physical and emotional wellbeing
- Health & wellbeing.
- Education and training
- Leisure and community recreation
- Employment opportunities.

3. Core aims

To achieve these aims we:

- Tailor the supported accommodation to meet individual needs.
- Provide real life experience and high-quality independence training which builds resilience and self-belief.
- Support young people and adults to restore and maintain the highest standards of personal, physical, mental health and hygiene.

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- Enable young people and adults to challenge and overcome issues associated with rejection, discrimination, frustration, and persecution on any grounds (i.e., gender, age, sexual orientation, race).
- Provide chances for young people and adults to make informed choices about their lives.
- Help young people and adults to understand the consequences of and refrain from unproductive, offending, and antisocial behaviour.
- Enhance and develop moral, cultural, social, emotional, religious, and healthy wellbeing.
- Ensure adult role models are available to give information, advice, and guidance.
- Tailor support for young people and adults using assessment, planning and review.
- Listen to the voice, wishes and feelings of young people and adults, working together to achieve the desired outcomes.
- Produce contact sheets and detailed monthly/quarterly reports.
- Attend regular meetings with referring agencies.
- Offer 24-hour telephone access to support.
- Employ staff with skills and training to meet young people and adults needs.

4. Function

To provide safe and secure supported accommodation to young people 16+ care leavers, looked after children and adults at risk with the right conditions to enable them to develop their independent living skills. Within an environment that builds their confidence and resilience, enabling them to achieve positive outcomes and transition to independence.

5. Categories of supported accommodation

- **Single Occupancy:** Includes bedsits under a licence agreement and self-contained accommodation, which may be at the same location, or within the same building.
- **Shared Accommodation in a shared or group living premises which are not limited to accommodating looked after young people and care leavers:** The provision may accommodate 16/17-year-olds and 18+ care leavers, and young people and adults who are not looked after or care leavers.

6. Services

6.1. Accommodation

Single occupancy accommodation are in areas that are suited to young people and adult's individual needs, in terms of location, accessibility to services including education and health care, maintaining relationships, away from known areas of crime and identified risks.

Shared accommodation premises are located in accessible areas with bus routes, close to amenities, services including education and health care and away from known areas of crime.

The accommodation provided is comfortable and a secure living environment with;

- All furniture and white goods.
- Carbon monoxide detectors (where necessary).
- First aid kit.

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- Financial Support (arranged at time of referral if required).
- Practical support.
- Financial and practical support (arranged at time of referral if required).
- Good quality, appropriately sized accommodation in chosen area.
- Help to identify temporary and permanent accommodation.
- Landlord/tenant liaison.
- Payment of water bills.
- Smoke alarms.
- Essential items / starter pack as required.
- TV licence.

We ensure that all our accommodation meets the DofE accommodation standard and Government Decent Homes Standard.

6.2. Outreach floating support

Outreach floating support sessions provide experiential learning opportunities for young people and adults to understand and develop life skills and routines. Staff continually observe, role model, shadow and assess young people and adults' achievements and give constructive feedback. This enables young people and adults to make the changes they need to become self-sufficient, confident adults and successfully live independently.

7. Preparing for adult living

Equipping young people and adults with the necessary skills is an essential aspect of young people and adults' life education, this includes:

- Developing young people and adults social, emotional, and cognitive abilities.
- Support young people and adults to learn personal and domestic hygiene skills, and the skills to manage a budget, using public transport, manage their time and make informed decisions.
- Nurturing young people and adults' character and values to become responsible individuals.
- Support young people and adults to contribute positively to their community and society.
- Tenancy awareness, being a good tenant and neighbour.
- Supporting young people and adults to deal with utility service providers, as agreed, complete forms (benefits and entitlements etc).
- Support young people and adults to obtain National Insurance (NI) details and birth certificate.
- Outreach floating support sessions based on the young people and adults needs.

8. Health & wellbeing

Supporting the health & wellbeing of young people and adults is crucial for their overall development, this includes supporting young people and adults to:

- Talk about their past experiences and expressing their wishes and feelings.
- Address physical, emotional and health needs holistically.
- Work on managing and preventing risky life activities.
- Make healthy life choices.
- Access health care, medical and support services.

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- Register with local services e.g., doctor, dentist, and opticians.
- Access safety advice and support.
- Access drugs and alcohol information.
- Support and advise with personal and domestic hygiene.
- Take ownership of their health and wellbeing.
- Make informed decisions.
- Signposting to appropriate local and national services.

We will ensure that we have all relevant health and wellbeing plans, including EHC plans where young people and adults have special educational needs. Staff have the skills, knowledge, and training to help young people and adults to understand and support them to change negative behaviours in areas of health and wellbeing.

9. Choice of expression

Supporting young people and adults' choice of expression is an essential part of fostering their personal development and self-identity, this involves staff:

- Creating a safe and supportive environment.
- Supporting young people and adults to stay safe online and sign post them to additional online safety materials.
- Enabling and encouraging young people and adults to express themselves authentically and creatively without fear of judgement or ridicule.
- Support young people and adults' choice of artistic, cultural, religions & beliefs and social expression, cultivating their own identity.
- Encouraging young people and adults to promote their own sense of autonomy, self-confidence, and self-awareness.

10. Education and training

- We are committed to promoting and supporting young people and adults to access education and training for their personal and professional development, this involves:
- Identifying opportunities for young people and adults to access education and training programmes.
- Supporting young people and adults' academic pursuits, through schools, colleges, teachers, and resources.
- Supporting young people and adults vocational training through apprenticeships and job training programmes.
- Supporting young people and adults to use public transport confidently and safely to attend school, college, or other educational provision.
- Supporting young people and adults to use IT to connect to online learning opportunities.
- Promoting lifelong learning and encouraging young people and adults to pursue their interests, whether it be through academic subjects or more vocational routes.
- Support with employment applications and support with CV and covering letter writing.
- Supporting and encouraging young people and adults who are unaccompanied asylum -seekers to access English language lessons where needed to aid them in integrating into the community.

11. Leisure and community

Leisure, community, and recreational activities are essential components of a healthy lifestyle and important for young people and adults mental and physical wellbeing, to this end young people and adults are encouraged and supported to:

- Engage in leisure activities outside of home, education, and work. Examples: of leisure activities include but are not limited to exercise, sports, listening to music, spending time with family and friends.
- Design an individual leisure plan with confidence.
- Engage in community events and activities for example social, cultural and beliefs connections.
- Encourage community involvement such as volunteering, taking part in local events.
- Connect with others and build relationships.
- Expand their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Next Step Care Management Ltd believe that opportunities for leisure, community, and recreational activities contribute to young people and adults:

- Overall happiness and wellbeing.
- Develop new skills.
- Learn about other cultures and beliefs.

12. Hours

Supported accommodation is part of the *continuum of care and support* for young people and adults, as they are ready for increased independence. The packages detailing the supported accommodation will be agreed with the placing authority and young people and adults.

Staff are onsite 24 hours a day at our shared accommodation provision.

Young people / adults under 18 moving on from residential provision may be offered 1:1 staff support for up to 12 weeks, according to individual needs, as part of a 'stepdown' reduction plan. This involves staff being available onsite, sleeping nights, gradually increasing independence, enabling them to move on to semi-independent living and reducing staff support in an agreed and planned way. When on a stepdown reduction plan young people / adults retain full responsibility for their own decisions, wellbeing, and independence, and go out unsupervised.

Where young people / adults do not successfully stepdown into semi-independent living, the placing authority and young people / adults will make decisions about the most appropriate moving on placement, subject to individual assessed needs. Staff will work with young people/ adults and the placing authority to ensure a smooth transition onto the young person/ adults next placement.

When young people / adults successfully stepdown into semi-independent living staff will visit on a regular basis, providing floating support hours, agreed to meet the individuals needs each week.

For some young people and adults, support packages begin with semi-independent living, where outreach worker/s visit on a regular basis, providing the agreed hours each week, according to assessed needs, until they are achieving their outcomes and ready to move on to the next stage of their independent living plan.

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In instances where the needs of the young person or adult intensify or a crisis arises, additional outreach floating support will be provided based on their needs and a thorough risk assessment conducted in collaboration with relevant professionals.

This approach ensures that the young people and adults needs are met while maintaining continuity and promoting progress towards independence.

Next Step Care Management Ltd also provided outreach floating support, without accommodation as part of its supported accommodation package.

13. Staff**13.1. What Next Step Care Management Ltd staff will do;**

- Build honest and trusting relationships with young people and adults and multi-agency professionals.
- Provide telephone access to outreach workers assigned to young people and adults' during office hours.
- Provide telephone access to 24 hours out of hours advisory line.
- Record all visits and contacts on the young people and adults' file.
- Complete assessments, planning and review documents as specified in the young people and adults' plan.
- Attend regular meetings with referring agencies to discuss young people and adults' placement and progression.
- Provide verbal and written updates and reports to social workers / PAs according to requests and relevant plans.

13.2. Experience and qualifications

- Staff have experience of working with young people 16+ care leavers, looked-after and adults at risk.
- Staff with relevant experience and working towards Level 3 in Health and Social Care or equivalent.
- Staff qualified to NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social care or equivalent.
- Registered Service Manager and Regional Managers qualified to Level 5 Leadership & Management Health & Social Care, Children and Young people Services or equivalent.
- Regional Managers Level 4 Designated safeguarding training.
- Next Step Care Management Ltd Lead Designated Safeguarding officer, Level 5 Award for Safeguarding for managers.
- Qualified social worker/s, registered with Social Work England.
- Health & Safety Consultant, National General Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health.

14. Young people and adults' characteristics

We provide supported accommodation which includes outreach floating support to young people 16+ care leavers, looked after children and adults at risk.

We provide single sexed shared accommodation.

We provide solo accommodation for both male and female young people and adults.

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We accommodate and tailor intervention packages for young people and adults' who have been referred by the placing authority and/or NHS trusts.

We support young people and adults who are known to MAPPA, at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficked, unaccompanied asylum seekers, teenage parents, young people / adults with learning needs, young people and adults in care, refugees, young offenders, challenging behaviour, and sexually inappropriate behaviour.

This is not an exhaustive list, and referrers should contact Next Step Care Management Ltd to discuss the individual needs of young people and adults.

15. Facilities

NSCM source studio, 1,2, 3, or 5 -bedroom properties in the private rental sector. Properties may be in a block of flats, maisonettes or converted houses.

Solo properties have one young person / adult residing. Young people and adults have their own bedroom, living room and bathroom. Some properties have their own or communal gardens.

Young people and adults have their own private bedrooms within NSCM Shared Accommodation. Bedrooms vary, with some offering an ensuite and others sharing bathroom facilities. Each property includes a dedicated staff area, along with shared communal spaces such as the kitchen and living room.

16. Accommodation

We consult with young people and adults, and social workers / PAs to agree if the placement is for solo occupancy or shared supported accommodation.

We source properties in the private rental sector or use existing furnished accommodation to satisfy the geographical requirements of the placement in terms of location, accessibility, maintaining relationships, away from known crime hotspots and identified risks.

We have a number of Ofsted registered, supported accommodation, solo occupancy properties for 16 - 17-year-olds. These properties consist of a variety of one- and two-bedroom properties, some with gardens or shared gardens, a maisonette, and two- and three-bedroom houses, in the following areas: the South Coast and Midlands & North of England, with opportunities for securing accommodation in London & Southeast and Southwest regions according to demand.

Accommodation for young people and adults is safe and secure, furnished and equipped to a good standard and can be adapted to meet their individual needs by taking account of factors such as their age, gender, disability, cultural background, and any needs they may have. Accommodation is comfortable, providing a positive and nurturing environment, whilst also respecting young people and adults' privacy.

Young people and adults in our shared accommodation have their own secure (lockable) private bedroom with ensuite (in some) or shared bathroom room and shared access to a kitchen, laundry room and communal living room.

Staff will:

- Complete a location risk assessment for all premises and review annually.

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- Lease accommodation which is licenced to provide stability to young people and adults.
- Discuss and provide young people and adults with their signed licence agreement and placement acceptance.
- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, homely, safe, and comfortable.
- Carbon monoxide detectors (where necessary).
- Smoke detectors are fitted and in working order.
- Arrange for the installation of Deafgard where young people and adults are deaf and hard of hearing.
- Ensure there is adequate privacy and personal space.
- Install, by agreement, security systems such as CCTV where this is deemed to be a requirement for young people and adults' safety.
- Ensure CCTV cameras are installed in communal areas or outside facing the front door, where required.
- Ensure young people and adults have access to Wifi.
- The accommodation is of good quality, secure, stable, and safe to effectively protect young people and adults from harm and review this annually.
- Young people and adults can access local services by a short bus ride or walking.
- Furnish accommodation for under 18s.
- Provide bedding, towels, personal hygiene products and kitchen equipment where a under 18s do not have access to them.
- Accommodation is accessible, safe, secure, and well-maintained, which also includes a quiet space for study.
- Maintenance issues reported during weekly inspection for U18s and monthly over 18s, or as reported by young people and adults to remove hazards and remedial work carried out in a timely manner and in a way which takes account of the vulnerability of the young people and adults.
- Front entrance doors, rear doors and individual self-contained bedsits / properties will have locking doors.

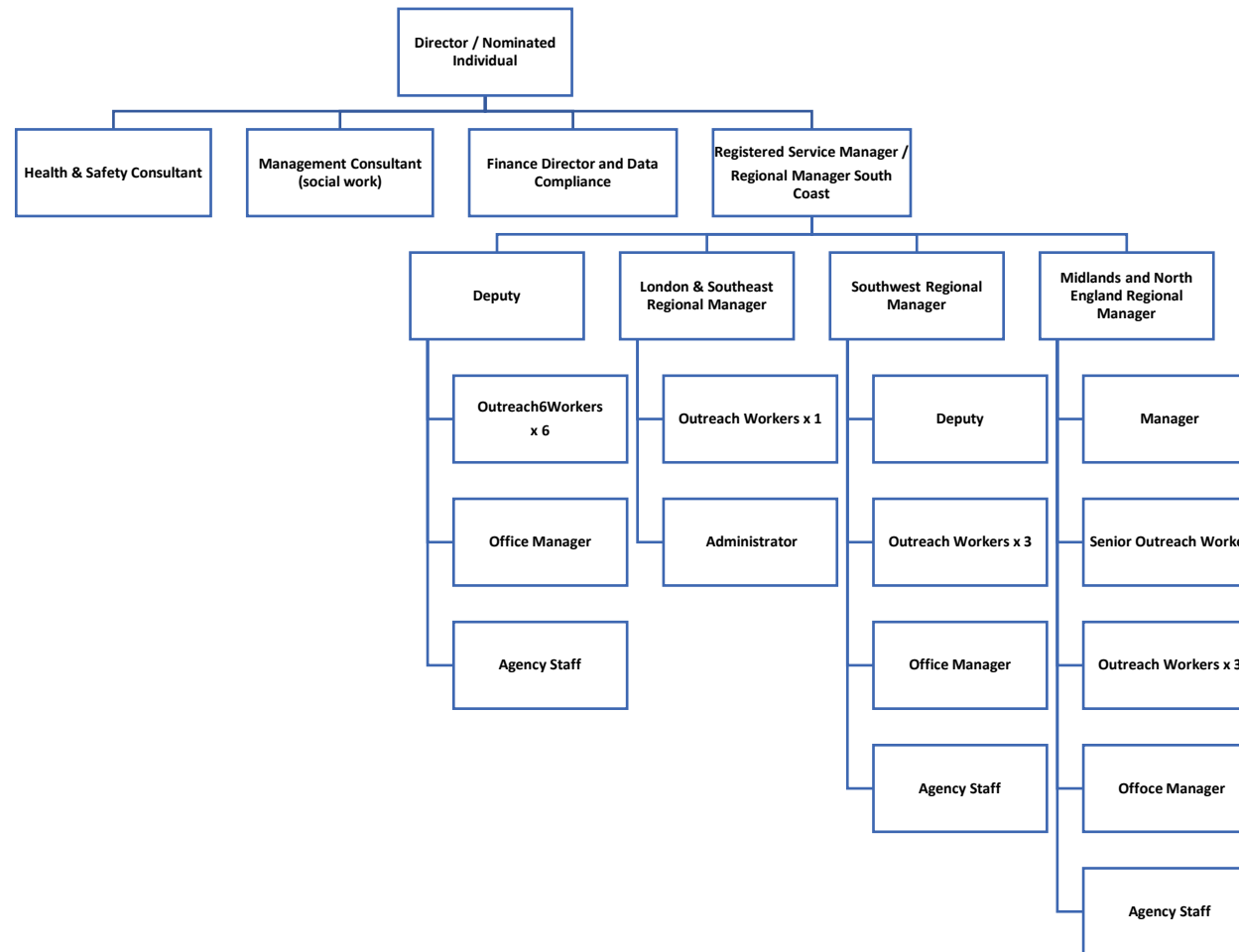
17. Office addresses and contact details.**Principal Office**

- **Head Office** Katherine House, 11 Wyllyotts Place, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 2JD.
Tel: 020 8211 3663, Email: info@nscm.co.uk

Local Offices

- **London and Southeast** 11 Wyllyotts Place, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 2JD.
Tel: 020 8692 1222 Email: london@nscm.co.uk
- **Midlands and North of England** Suite 1 Longdon House, St. Georges Court, St Georges Road, Telford, TF2 7AS.
Tel: 01952 872780 Email: admin.telford@nscm.co.uk
- **South Coast** Next Step Care Management Ltd South Coast Office: Unit 3a Spur Road, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 8PR Phone:
Tel: 01243 696040 Email: southcoast@nscm.co.uk.
- **Southwest** Unit 44 Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Bristol, BS5 0HE
Tel: 0117 941 5328. Email: southwest@nscm.co.uk.

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18. Next Step Care Management Ltd**Organisational and Management Structure**

19. Young people's and adults' rights and views

We are committed to ensuring that the rights and views of young people and adults are at the centre of support and service delivery, and planning involves a person-centred approach that prioritises the needs and perspectives of young people and adults. This helps to create an environment that builds young people and adults' self-esteem and sense of belonging, as well as promoting positive outcomes. Staff achieve this by:

- Providing information and resources that young people and adults to make informed decisions and exercise their rights.
- Listening and valuing young people and adults' opinions, including their preferences, wishes, and feelings. Staff seek young people and adults' views and take these into account when making a decision that may affect them or when advocating for them.
- Involving young people and adults in planning, delivery, and evaluation of the service.
- Treating young people and adults with respect and dignity in all aspects of service delivery and support.
- Advocating and representing young people and adults in order that they can effectively express their views and needs.
- Being transparent and accountable in their decision-making processes and are able to explain the rationale behind decisions taken.

20. Making young people and adults aware of their entitlements

To be able to successfully live independently young people and adults 'must understand their entitlements and how to access what they need. Staff ensure that young people and adults are fully aware of their entitlements by

- Putting in place clear and accessible communication channels that enable young people and adults to access information, options, guidance, and support.
- Providing a detailed written agreement that outlines their responsibilities, as well as the terms and conditions of the placement.
- Planning regular meetings to discuss any issues or concerns.
- Sign posting young people and adults during support sessions to ensure they are fully aware of their rights and entitlements.
- Encouraging young people and adults to access educational and training opportunities which we believe helps to empower young people and adults to develop the skills and knowledge to navigate the system and assert their rights.
- Understanding Next Step Care Management Ltd Quality Assurance system, complaints, and feedback mechanisms to raise any issues or grievances.
- Sign posting young people and adults to complaints and feedback mechanisms of organisations they work with to raise any issues or grievances.

21. Achieving positive outcomes

Achieving positive outcomes for young people and adults requires a coordinated and collaborative approach that recognises and tailors' young people and adults support package to their individual unique needs, challenges, and aspirations. Building a supportive, inclusive, and empowering environment that builds on young people and adults' strengths and potential and provides them with the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Staff will work with young people and adults:

- To develop independent living skills.
- To increase self- esteem and sense of self-worth.
- To assist in personal development.
- To develop positive peer group relations and appropriate relationships with authority.
- To decrease a negative and destructive mindset and behaviour.
- To increase and diversify young people and adults recreational and leisure activities.

- To encourage young people and adults to use their spare time in a more constructive manner.
- To develop young people and adults' sense of responsibility and accountability for their own behaviour.
- To increase young people and adults' social skills, problem solving skills, communication skills and self-care skills.
- To decrease impulsive, out of control behaviour in young people and adults and increase their ability to manage themselves and to make positive decisions about their behaviour.
- To develop appropriate expressions of sexuality in young people and adults.
- To explore, enhance and develop moral, cultural, social, emotional, religions, beliefs, and wellbeing.

We believe that by adopting this approach, staff can help young people and adults to build the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to achieve their goals, develop positive relationships, and participate in society, thereby promoting their overall well-being.

22. Independent living skills

To support the development of young people and adults independent living skills in line with their identified individual needs staff will:

- Assess young people and adults' individual needs and capabilities to identify support needs and guidance required.
- Role model, shadow and observe young people and adults during support sessions.
- Regularly review, track, and measure young people and adults progress and work with young people and adults on areas identified to build independence and resilience.
- Work with other professional working with young people and adults to gain a comprehensive understanding of young people and adults' strengths, challenges, and aspirations.
- Tailor the support package to meet young people and adults' individual needs and preferences.
- Ensure the aims and objectives are realistic, measurable, and achievable and reviewed regularly.
- Explore with young people and adults' activities such as training and education, practical exercises, mentoring and role modelling.
- Provide opportunities to practice and apply the skills learned in real life situations.
- Give ongoing feedback, reassurance, guidance, monitoring, and adjusting the plan as needed.

23. Promoting young people and adults' education, training, or employment

To promote young people and adults' involvement and progress in education, training, or employment staff will put in place arrangements tailored to young people and adults' individual needs and interests.

Staff will:

- Signpost to education and training opportunities relevant to young people and adults' skills, interests, and aspirations, as well as additional guidance to help young people and adults to succeed.
- Work closely with young people and adults to identify their strengths, challenges, and aspirations.
- Support young people and adults to identify apprenticeship programmes.
- Provide help and guidance to develop essential employability skills, such as writing a CV, interview skills, communication, teamwork, problem solving and time management.

- Support young people and adults to attend interviews and assessments.
- Reflect and record this effectively by expanding on young people and adults independent living skills assessment.

24. Protecting and promoting the mental and physical health needs of young people and adults

To protect and promote the mental and physical health needs of young people and adults, we have policies and procedures in place to ensure safe and effective handling of medication as well as the recording and safe keeping of health-related information.

Young people and adults are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for meeting their own day to day health needs.

We will put arrangements in place, to help, protect and promote the mental and physical health needs of young people and adults.

Staff will

- Support young people and adults with good self-care, healthy eating, and strategies for supporting good mental health.
- Create a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes good mental and physical health, encouraging young people and adults to engage in activities that support their wellbeing.
- Ensure young people and adults are registered with a Doctor, Dentist and Optician,
- Signpost young people and adults to appropriate agencies regarding mental and physical health.
- Work closely with the young people and adults and medical professionals at the request of young people and adults.
- Support young people and adults to implement treatment plans.
- Support young people and adults to store and self-administer medication at the required times as directed by a medical professional (GP, hospital doctor) who is the prescriber or, the pharmacist.
- Support young people and adults to put routines / timetables in place or prompt young people and adults to take their medication.
- Do not administer prescribed or any other forms of medication.
- Where necessary, will remind young people and adults to collect their medication and be able to identify when their medication requires replenishing.

NB: A list of national organisations and local organisation is available in the young people and adults guide.

25. Anti-discriminatory practices

Achieving anti-discriminatory practice in respect of young people and adults involves staff creating an inclusive environment that promotes equality, diversity, and respect for all. Staff

- Adopt a proactive and open approach, listening to the wishes, feelings, and experiences of young people and adults.
- Work collaboratively with young people and adults to identify and overcome any barriers to inclusion or participation.
- Attend ongoing training to help them understand and recognise their own biases and to further develop the knowledge and skills.

Our policies and procedures ensure that discrimination is identified and challenged, and that complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly.

The Director and RSMs review services on a regular basis to ensure that we do not discriminate against staff or young people and adults on the grounds of age, disability, LGBTQ+ status, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion & belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

26. Support the cultural, linguistic, and religious needs of young people and adults.

Regional managers will confirm with social worker / PA or young people and adults: During the referral process, their first and preferred language for verbal and written communication.

Next Step Care Management Ltd will facilitate in another language, BSL, brail or through an interpreter.

Next Step Care Management Ltd website www.nscm.co.uk is available in 76 languages. Young people and adults, parents or multi-agency professionals reviewing Next Step Care Management Ltd information can click on a tab on the website which automatically translate all Next Step Care Management Ltd information.

Staff support and encourage young people and adults.

- To be proud of who they are, follow their religious identity and beliefs, attend cultural events and places of worship.
- To explore and discuss wider cultures to promote a greater knowledge and respect towards others in society.

27. Complaints

Contact the local Registered Service Manager or the Nominated Individual at Head Office. Address and contact details are available in point 17 above and on Next Step Care Management Ltd website.

28. Children/Young People and Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy

A copy of our Children/Young People and Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy is attached Appendix 1. For further information or to report any concerns please contact NSCMs Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer email safeguarding@nscm.co.uk

A copy of YP/ A Safeguarding: Quick Read Guide for Young people / Adults (from NSCM Children/Young People and Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy) is in the young people and adults guide.

We have changed 'YP/A' (Young people/ adults) to 'you' in the guide which we hope makes our policy easier for young people and adults to understand.

Children/Young People and Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1.1. Introduction

NSCM is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people / adults (YP/A) who use our services, including:

- Young people aged 16–25
- Adults at risk aged 18+

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All NSCM staff, volunteers, agency workers, and contractors must work together to promote safe practice, prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation and respond effectively when concerns arise.

We adhere to the principle that "safeguarding is everyone's responsibility" and we all have a role to play. Safeguarding includes measures to prevent or minimise the potential for abuse to occur. Protection is a statutory responsibility in response to individual cases where risk of harm has been identified.

This policy applies to all staff, the term staff will be used throughout this policy and will include will staff working directly or indirectly with young people/adults and who are employed by NSCM and those working on behalf of NSCM such as agency workers and volunteers.

The aim of this policy is to ensure safeguarding issues are identified at the earliest opportunity and referred appropriately where necessary and that staff are competent and confident in contributing to multi-agency meetings, in the best interest of young people/adults.

Local authorities have Local Safeguarding Children Partnership to support effective interagency working, their responsibilities are set out in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023) .

The nature of NSCM business means we work with young people/adults who are moving towards independence. They may have been abused, neglected and / or exploited in the past or are at risk and their behaviour may be indicative of abuse and trauma suffered.

NSCM staff are trained and recruited via a safer recruitment process to work with young people/adults in line with our Statement of Purpose. Candidates are interviewed and recruited by a panel which includes at least one member who has undertaken Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCP) or nationally recognised safer recruitment training.

1.2. Legislation

This policy aligns with:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working together to safeguard Children 2023
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Online Safety Act 2023
- Sexual Offences Act 2023 (as amended 2022)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)

1.3. NSCMs safeguarding culture and ethos.

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We have developed a safeguarding culture and ethos across NSCM and to achieve and maintain a safeguarding culture and ethos staff will:

- Listen to, respect, and involve young people/adults in the decisions about their supported accommodation package and service development.
- Build positive, stable relationships with YP/A and listen to the concerns of YP/A on their safety and support them to be aware and manage their safety both inside and outside.
- Vigilant and notice when things are troubling YP/A.
- Encourage young people/adults to develop positive relationships with multi-agency professionals, outreach floating support staff.
- Support young people/adults to access advocacy services, Independent Reviewing Officers, placing authority, and Ofsted if they have concerns about their safety.
- Encourage open communication between young people/adults, staff, placing authority and multi-agency professional working with young people/adults promoting a culture of trust and support.
- Implement preventative measures to minimise risks, manage their own safety, and promote the well-being of young people/adults in supported accommodation.
- Build and maintain good professional relationships with multi agency organisations that can support and help young people/adults.
- Have access to and complete up to date training to enhance their skills in recognising signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as well as understanding the unique risks faced by young people/adults.
- Have regular supervision and are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and the steps required to protect and prevent harm
- Have clear reporting and follow up procedures for staff to follow when they suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation, including escalation process to NSCMs Lead Safeguarding Designated officer, placing authority and Ofsted without delay.
- Have clear policies and procedures that outline the responsibilities and expectations of staff regarding safeguarding and protection and that staff understand them.
- Have access to policies & procedures that are reviewed and updated annually to ensure they remain relevant and effective in addressing emerging risks and challenges.

1.4. Working Together

Regulation 5

Working together with multi-agency professionals is crucial in safeguarding and protecting young people/adults.

It is the responsibility of all professional agencies to work together to identify and address young people/adults needs and manage risks. The placing authority, health care professional, police and other relevant multi-agency professionals will ensure that there is a coordinated and effective response to safeguarding and protecting young people/adults.

By sharing information and expertise, we can work towards ensuring that young people/adults are supported, empowered, and able to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment.

Working together with multi-agency professionals is one of NSCMs core principles, it is embedded in our day-to-day practice, and this is referenced throughout our policies and procedures.

The duties and responsibilities of local authorities and others who deliver services to children and YP with regard to safeguarding, are set out in the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023).

1.5. NSCMs Responsibilities

NSCM acknowledges its responsibility and takes all reasonable steps to promote safe practice, to safeguard and protect young people/adults from harm, abuse, or exploitation.

To safeguard young people/adults NSCM will ensure:

- Safe recruitment standards are always applied, checking the suitability and experience of candidates to work with young people/adults.
- Checking candidates work and personal histories through Enhanced DBS checks and where applicable DBS update Service checks.
- All staff have an induction covering Safeguarding, Child Protection and ongoing training and refresher updates.
- All staff receive appropriate training from LSCP's or nationally recognised provider in Safeguarding and Child Protection as part of their induction programme.
- Support and supervise staff to identify ongoing and future Safeguarding and Child Protection training.
- Continue to develop procedures for identifying and to report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse in line with current legislation.

To properly safeguard and protect young people/adults, staff need to:

- Understand their role and responsibilities for safeguarding young people/adults.
- Be aware and recognise safeguarding, child protection and adult protection concerns.
- Know how to refer their concerns and be clear about arrangements that exist for seeking advice within NSCM.
- Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and protect young people/adults.
- Work co-operatively with placing authority and multi-agency professionals.
- Share information and data about safeguarding issues and concerns.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding issues and equip young people/adults with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Support young people/adults who have been abused to implement, his/her agreed plan.
- Establish a safe environment in which young people/adults can learn and develop.

Regional managers must notify the registered service manager (NSCM lead designated safeguarding officer) and refer safeguarding and child protection concerns, by phone and followed up in writing to the allocated placing authority or duty team and Ofsted without delay:

- If young people/adults are involved, suspected of or subject to being involved in, exploitation.
- Police involvement occurs which the regional manager considers to be serious.
- There is an allegation of abuse against staff.

- Any other incident relating to young people/adults which the regional manager considers to be serious.

Regional managers will contribute to whatever actions are needed and agreed, to safeguard and protect young people/adults in the care of NSCM.

NSCM recognise that because of the day-to-day contact with young people/adults' staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. We recognise that young people/adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse.

We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where young people/adults feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure young people/adults know where to go, or who to approach to disclose issues of abuse provide practical help and support for young people/adults to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- Work closely with other agencies involved in the care of young people/adults in ways which promote their own protection and safety whilst considering young people/adults human rights to dignity privacy and confidentiality.
- Notify placing authority if there are any unexplained absences.
- Notify placing authority if there are any significant changes in circumstance or behaviour which give cause for concern for the safety of the young person/adult or are deemed to be possible signs of abuse.
- If there are any significant changes in circumstance or behaviour which give cause for concern for the safety of young people/adults or are deemed to be possible signs of abuse.
- Developing effective links with relevant multi-professional agencies.
- Co-operate as required with enquiries regarding safeguarding and child or adult protection matters.
- Attend case conferences.
- Keep records of an allegation, and the action taken in response.
- Keep written records of concerns about young people/adults, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, in line with data storage procedures.
- Investigate where an allegation is made against a member of staff or contractor working on NSCM behalf.

1.6. **Good practice – safe care practice**

These guidelines have been developed to:

- Set out guidance, procedures and protocols ensuring that young people/adults and staff are aware of the boundaries within which staff work and young people/adults are supported.
- Provide advice which will help to protect young people/adults.
- Help identify any practices which are or may be interpreted as abuse.
- Help identify behaviours which may be a sign of abuse.
- Reduce the possibility of anyone using their role within NSCM to gain access to young people/adults to abuse them.
- Give clear procedures to adopt which do not jeopardise the investigation of abuse.

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for young people/adults to disclose issues of abuse.
- Staff should never engage in behaviour that could constitute a Position of Trust offence under the Sexual Offences act 2003'.

While it is not intended that this code should restrict staff's normal ways of working, e.g., comforting a distressed young person/adult, there is much that can be done to avoid situations which may give rise to misinterpretation, which will also work to protect young people/adults.

Staff should:

- Empower young people/adults to take positive risks by identifying the benefits and harm which could result from an activity, action, and choices being made.
- Consider how an action or activity may be perceived, as opposed to how it may be intended.
- Never enter a young person/adult's room without a co-worker present and only in an emergency or where this has been agreed by the young person/adult.
- Never agree to do things of a personal nature for young people/adult's such as toileting, bathing, personal care or changing nappies of for their baby/child. These must always remain the responsibility of young people/adults, though verbal support and encouragement should be given.
- Always listen to what young people/adults have to say if they are disclosing information.
- Listen to young people/adults' point of view when designing services to meet their needs, take account of their wishes and feelings in decision making.
- Develop a culture in which staff feel comfortable enough to point out inappropriate attitudes and behaviours to each other.
- Develop an open and honest working relationship with young people/adults where they feel able to stay in touch and check in with staff if they are out for the day.
- Not engage in or allow any sexually provocative games involving or observed by young people/adults, whether based on talking or touching.
- Never make suggestive remarks or discriminatory comments to young people/adults.
- Not engage in or tolerate any bullying of young people/adults, either by adults or other youths.
- Always treat young people/adults with respect, regardless of age, gender, sex, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, or sexual identity.
- Never trivialise abuse.
- Never let allegations by young people/adults go unreported; including any made against themselves.
- Report missing and unauthorised absences to the placing authority, and police. Notify Ofsted where this is deemed to be serious.
- Always bring all safeguarding and child/ young people protection issues / concerns to the attention of the regional manager.
- Read, understand, and follow NSCM staff Code of Conduct.

1.7. Legal Definition

(1) Child (includes young people) - Child Protection

A child is legally defined as any person under the age of 18. The fact that a child/YP has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young

person, does not change his or her status or entitlement to service or protection under the Children Act 1989.

Children are deemed to be in need protection if they have suffered or likely to suffer significant harm. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 gives Local Authorities the duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

The overarching statutory guidance is outlined in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2023) and for children in care in "Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked after Children" (2015).

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Domestic Abuse Act 2021: overarching factsheet defines domestic abuse as a range of abusive behaviours—physical, emotional, coercive, controlling, economic, or sexual—between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected, and recognises children who see, hear, or experience domestic abuse as victims in their own right.

(2) Adults – Safeguarding

An adult at risk is someone aged 18 years or over who 'is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards or other disability, age or illness' and 'is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Adult safeguarding is the process of protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect. The Care Act 2014 puts adult safeguarding on a legal footing and from April 2015 local authorities have specified responsibilities for the protection and welfare of adults at risk.

The statutory guidance enshrines the six principles of safeguarding:

- (a) Empowerment: presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- (b) Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- (c) Proportionality: proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- (d) Protection: support and representation for those in greatest need.
- (e) Partnerships: local solutions through services working with their communities.
- (f) Accountability: accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

This signals a major change in practice; a move away from the process-led, tick box culture to a person-centred approach which achieves the outcomes that people want. Staff must take a flexible approach and work with the adult all the way through the enquiry and beyond where necessary.

1.8. Definition of Abuse – Children and Young People

The following definitions are based on those from "Working Together to Safeguard Children". (2023)

Abuse: Mistreatment towards a child/YP can manifest in various ways. Someone might harm or neglect a child/YP through direct actions causing injury, or by neglecting to prevent harm. Harm is not only physical mistreatment but also

witnessing mistreatment inflicted on others. This becomes particularly pertinent in cases of domestic abuse affecting children/YP, where they may witness, hear, or experience its effects. Abuse can occur within a family, institutional setting, or beyond familial boundaries, perpetrated by individuals known to the child/YP or, less commonly, by strangers. The abuse might occur exclusively online, or technology may be employed to facilitate offline mistreatment. Children/YP can be mistreated by adults, a group of adults, or even by other children/YP.

Bullying: Bullying is not an official definition of child/YP abuse, but is damaging, harmful and oppressive.

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful, hostile, and aggressive behaviour towards another person. Usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The outcome is usually painful and distressing for the victim. Bullying can escalate rapidly and can damage the child/YP significantly.

Bullying may take many forms and may include:

- Physical bullying

Unprovoked assault on a child/YP or group which can range from a 'prod' to grievous bodily harm.

- Psychological

Reduction of a child/YP self-esteem or confidence through threatening behaviour, taunting, or teasing about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, family circumstances, appearance, or any other feature of their lives.

- Social Ostracism/rejection by peer group.

- Verbal

The use of language in a derogatory or offensive manner, such as swearing, racist or sexist abuse, homophobic abuse, sexual innuendo, spreading rumours, etc.

- Homophobic bullying

Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexuals or transgender or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

- Cyber bullying

The use of mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset someone else.

Child criminal exploitation is described as where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child/YP under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may be criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through using technology.

It is a statutory requirement for Criminal Exploitation to be considered within the Serious Violence Duty 2022 which requires councils and local services work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence
Serious Violence Duty.

Child sexual exploitation is described as where a child/YP is coerced, manipulated, or deceived into sexual activity by an individual or group, in exchange for something that the victim wants, financial advantage or status. The child/YP may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Sexual exploitation of a child/YP does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.

Controlling or coercive behaviour is described as a form of abuse using tactics which hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate the child/YP. Controlling or coercive behaviour is often accompanied by other forms of abuse such as physical, sexual, or economic abuse.

County lines describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into identified area, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of communication. Children/YP are often exploited to move and store the drugs and money. Gangs or gang members will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Domestic abuse directed towards a child/ YP 16 years of age or over, may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; and psychological, emotional, or other abuse. Children/YP can experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse may be referred to as teenage relationship abuse as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child/YP: such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child/YP emotional development. It may involve making a child/YP feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child/YP opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child/YP. It may also involve causing a child/YP to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child/YP. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child/YP, though it may occur alone.

Extra-familial harm is described as children/YP who may be at risk of / or experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and exploitation from outside of their families / homes. This may involve the child/YP being subject to harm and may include criminal exploitation (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, child-on-child (non-familial) sexual abuse and other forms of harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children/YP towards their peers, abuse, and/or coercive control, children/YP may experience in their own intimate relationships (sometimes called teenage relationship abuse), and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation.

Environments outside of the home may include college, and community/public spaces, including known places in the community where there are concerns about risks to children/YP (for example, parks, housing estates, shopping centres, takeaway restaurants, or transport hubs), as well as online, including social media or gaming platforms.

Extremism is described as a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs or death of members of the armed forces. Extremism is now considered in line with the Prevent Duty (Counter – Terrorism and Security Act 2015, updated 2023).

Financial exploitation can be described as exploitation which takes place for the purpose of Money laundering. This is when criminals target child/YP and adults

and power is used to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child/YP to move illegal funds. This can include physical cash and/or payments. Financial exploitation may also occur online.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child/YP basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child/YP health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance misuse. Once the child/YP is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food; shelter and clothing, leaving a child/YP "home alone" or the failure to ensure a child/child/ gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child/YP basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse may involve, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child/YP. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child/YP whom they are looking after.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/YP to take part in sexual activities, regardless of whether the child/YP is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery, or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling, masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving the child/YP in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children/YP to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child/YP in preparation for abuse (including via social media and the internet). Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/ or females, by adults and by other children/YP and by people from all different walks of life.

Grooming is the term used to describe the befriending of a child/YP with the purpose of sexually abusing or exploiting a child/YP.

Online abuse is any sort of abuse that occurs via the internet, via any device that is connected to the internet. This may include:

- Cyberbullying
- Emotional abuse
- Grooming
- Sexual abuse

1.9. Recognising signs of abuse

Bullying can take many forms and a child/YP may be reluctant or scared to discuss what is happening. The impact of bullying can have lasting and damaging effects and, in some case, extreme consequence including serious emotional distress and risk of harm.

The signs of bullying may include.

- Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body
- Self-harm.
- Fear of parent being approached regarding injuries or behaviour.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate bullying:

- Fear of being approached for an explanation.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g., becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Depression.
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Suddenly needing more money or stealing money.

Note: Registered Service Managers will, from time to time, issue new safeguarding documents, research material or legislative changes; these should be read in conjunction with NSCM Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Emotional Abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children/YP who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection, or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of a child/YP not being allowed to mix/play with other children/YP.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child/YP puts on weight in other circumstances e.g., in hospital or away from their parent's care.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g., sulking, hair twisting, rocking.
- Being unable to play.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Self-harm.
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Forced Marriage is when pressure is applied to a child/YP or adult marrying against their will. Pressure may be applied, for example emotionally, physically, or using violence or sexual violence. Warning signs that a child/YP has been forced into a marriage include:

- Absence or truancy.
- Health issues e.g., eating disorder, depression, and attempted suicide.
- Poor performance at school / college.
- Announcement of a sudden engagement to a stranger.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

World Health Organisation definition:

‘Comprises all procedures (not operations) that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.’ (WHO – 2008)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is child/YP abuse and constitute significant harm. The practice of FGM, has serious short and long term medical and psychological implications. We also recognise the practice of FGM in the UK is a criminal offence.

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child/YP abuse.

For more details please refer to the '[Multi agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#)'

Physical Abuse is described where children/YP will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees, and shins. Some children/YP, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained, or the explanation does not fit the injury or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g., on the cheeks or thighs. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be noticeable on a child/YP with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body.
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns.
- Bite marks.
- Broken bones.
- Scalds.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents/carers being approached for an explanation.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather.
- Depression.
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Running away from home.

Sexual Abuse is described when adults use children/YP to meet their own sexual needs, abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child/YP's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, a child/YP who tells about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Genital area - pain, itching, bruising, or bleeding near genital area.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g., becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares.
- Running away from home.
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level.
- Sexual drawings or language.
- Bedwetting.
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about.
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect can be difficult to recognise yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children/YP.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/YP.
- Constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.
- Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:
- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends, mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Online abuse is where a child/YP is experiencing online abuse, they may be:

- More secretive about when using the internet.
- Spend more time or less time than usual online.
- Appear upset, angry, or agitated after using the internet.

1.10. Definition of Abuse – Adults

An adult at risk is someone over 18 who may require community care services and may be being cared for by NSCM. Adults with care and support needs or adults with disabilities are more likely to be abused or neglected. They may be considered an easy target and can be less likely to identify or report abuse themselves. Adults with communication difficulties can be at risk particularly, because they may be unable to alert others. Sometimes they may not even be aware that they are being abused, and this is especially likely if they have a cognitive impairment. Abusers may try to prevent access to the adults they abuse.

Signs of abuse can often be difficult to detect. Staff who encounter adults with care and support needs should be aware and able to identify abuse and recognise possible indicators.

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may involve something that is done to the person, or something not done when it should have been.

Domestic Violence and Abuse includes 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. It also includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, psychological, emotional, and so called 'honour' -based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Coercive or controlling behaviour is a core part of domestic violence and behaviour may include:

- Acts of assault, threats, humiliation, and intimidation.
- Harming, punishing, or frightening the person.
- Isolating the person from sources of support.
- Exploitation of resources or money.
- Preventing the person from escaping abuse.
- Regulating everyday behaviour.

Financial or material abuse can be described when someone is stealing money or other valuables, or it might be appointed to look after money preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits, or assets. Using the money inappropriately or coercing the person into spending it in a way they are not happy with. Moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress.

Internet scams and doorstep crime are also common forms of financial abuse.

Modern slavery may involve:

- Human trafficking is considered a form of modern slavery. Trafficked YP/A are vulnerable to all types of abuse e.g., prostitution, forced marriage, criminal activity, domestic servitude.
- Forced labour.
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution, and pornography.
- Debt bondage - being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to.

Neglect is also a form of abuse. Neglect includes not being provided with enough food or the right kind of food, or not being taken proper care of. Leaving you without help to wash or change dirty or wet clothes, not getting you to a doctor when you need one, or not making sure you have the right medicines all count as neglect.

Physical Abuse can include being assaulted, hit, slapped, pushed, restrained, being forcibly fed, or withholding of food or not being helped to go to the bathroom when needed. It can also include misuse of medication.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse may include someone emotionally abusing or threatening to hurt or abandoning someone, humiliating, or blaming, controlling, intimidating or harassment. It also includes verbal abuse, cyber bullying, and isolation, or an unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of help, services, or support networks.

Sexual Abuse may include indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, as well as rape. Sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts. Non-consensual sexual acts that the adult has not agreed to or is pressured into consenting to all count as sexual abuse.

1.11. Recognising signs of abuse – Adults

These indicators are not definitive and only to serve as a guide to assist staff. It is important too, to remember that adults at risk will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. Staff should always be mindful that there may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour. This information should be assessed, where possible in conjunction with historical information, information provided by multi-agency professionals involved in the care and support of adults, promoting a multidisciplinary approach to adult protection issues.

The following information should help staff to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Domestic Abuse may include:

- Low self-esteem.
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not.
- Physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones.
- Verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others.
- Fear of outside intervention.
- Damage to home or property.
- Isolation - not seeing friends and family.
- Limited access to money.

Financial or material abuse may include:

- Missing personal possessions.
- Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle.
- Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts.
- Power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity.
- The person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative.
- The family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person.
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy or attorney.
- Recent changes in deeds or title to property.
- Rent arrears and eviction notices.
- A lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service.
- Failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person.
- Disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g., Insufficient food in the house.
- Unnecessary property repairs.

Modern slavery may include:

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse.

- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn.
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others.
- Living in dirty, cramped, or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address.
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents.
- Always wearing the same clothes.
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers.
- Fear of law enforcers.

Neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other YP/A.
- Constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends, mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Physical Abuse may include:

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened.
- Injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle.
- Bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps.
- Frequent injuries.
- Unexplained falls.
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person.
- Signs of malnutrition.
- Failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP.

Psychological and Emotional Abuse may include:

- An air of silence when a particular person is present.
- Withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person.
- Insomnia.
- Low self-esteem.
- Un-cooperative and aggressive behaviour.
- A change of appetite, weight loss/gain.
- Signs of distress: tearfulness, anger.
- Apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment.

Sexual Abuse may include:

- Bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck.
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing.
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area.
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Foreign bodies in genital or rectal openings.
- Infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse.
- The uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude.

- Incontinence not related to any medical diagnosis.
- Self-harming.
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance.
- Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships.
- Fear of receiving help with personal care.
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person.

1.9. **Consequence of child/young people and adult abuse**

Abuse has long-lasting consequences for the child /young person and adult concerned such as

- Alcohol misuse.
- Substance misuse.
- Mental ill- health.
- Physical ill-health.

Even if a child/YP or adult is not directly involved with the abuse, witnessing it can still have damaging consequences.

Long lasting, traumatic, negative effects, which may damage a child/young person's and adult's physical, social, and emotional development may be linked to

- Chronic health conditions.
- Low life potential.
- Early death.

Some children /young people and adults may go onto develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), leading to for example:

- Anxiety
- Bedwetting.
- Poor concentration.
- Eating disorders.
- Irritability.
- Nightmares

These may continue throughout their childhood and into their adult life.