

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

# Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures

### NOTE

Accuro works within the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures (May 22) produced by the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board. The procedures outlined in this document are intended as a supplement to, not replacement for the SET procedures.

The SET Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures (May 22) can be accessed and downloaded at <https://www.escb.co.uk/working-with-children/safeguarding-policies-procedures/>

Supporting this policy is the Accuro (Care Services)  
The Confidentiality Policy  
Recruitment of Staff Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy  
e-Safety Policy

**Date of Review:** September 2023

**Date of Next Review:** September 2024

**Operations Manager signature:** ..... 

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees working or participating in any services in connection with Accuro (Care Services).

### 2. Introduction

*“Everyone who works with children or has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner (or individual) can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right, time everyone who come into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.”*

*[Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government, July 2018, page 10]*

Accuro believes that that all children and young people should be protected from abuse. (The term children or young people refers to a person who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday). We have a duty of care to promote the welfare of all children, young people and young volunteers who access Accuro projects. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them so that everyone who is involved with Accuro is kept safe.

- 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
- Taking action to enable all children to have best outcomes

Accuro’s approach to safeguarding seeks to keep children & young people safe from harm by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting safeguarding children practices through procedures and the Code of Conduct
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Sharing information about safeguarding children and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Ensuring that safeguarding information is available for people that use services and family members, setting out what to do if they have a concern.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.

### Children and Young People with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Accuro provides services to children and young people who have Special Educational Needs and disabilities, any child who has a disability is a ‘child in need’ under s17 of the Children Act 1989.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 defines a disabled person as someone who has, “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal or day to day activities”.

The available UK evidence on the extent of abuse among children with a disability suggests that they are at more risk of harm/abuse and that the presence of multiple disabilities increases this risk of abuse and neglect.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

They are especially vulnerable for the following reasons;

Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons:

- Many disabled children are at an increased likelihood of being socially isolated with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children.
- Their dependency on parents and carers for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate personal care, increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour •
- They have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse.
- They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.
- They often do not have access to someone they can trust to disclose that they have been abused.
- They are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation.

Due to their vulnerability they can be a victim of forms of exploitation see page 8 as many other children or young people but they will not be able to recognise the nature of the coercive relationship that they are being drawn into.

Concerns raised about the welfare of a child/young person with a disability should be acted on in the same way as any other child. [Set Part B3,18]

### Concept of Significant Harm [Set Procedures, May 2022, [Part A 1.2]

Some children are in need because they are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries (section 47) 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.

In addition, harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. This definition was clarified in section 12- of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include “impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another” for example, where there are concerns of domestic abuse.

Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them, it is the corrosiveness of long-term neglect, Emotional, physical and physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm.

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g., a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning). More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Significant harm may also refer to harm caused by one child to another (which may be a single event or a range of ill treatment) and which is generally referred to as ‘peer on peer abuse’ or ‘

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extend of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe impacts on the child, and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the maltreatment.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Early Help [Set Procedures, May 22 Part A 1.3]

Accuro staff should be mindful that they, along with other professionals, have a role in identifying emerging problems affecting the children, young people and families they support and a responsibility to share information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.

By doing so, this will enable the provision of targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child/children and their family, which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child(ren).

It should also help to prevent issues from escalating and ensure that children and families receive the right help at the right time.

Further information and guidance about Early Help and Effective Support for Children and Families, and the thresholds for support, is available via the ESCB website: <https://www.escb.co.uk/2414>  
<https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2701/escb-effectivesupportbooklet2021v7.pdf>

### Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect [SET Procedures May 22, Part A, 1.4]

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by other. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

#### Abuse is;

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

#### Types of Abuse

##### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, harm can be caused by an adult or through a child/children harming another child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child, Fabricated or induced illness.

##### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may be inflicted on a child by an adult or another child/children and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations 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
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g., where there is domestic violence and abuse
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, including online
- Exploiting and corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- Bullying face to face and online.

### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g., rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including online). Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males do not solely perpetrate Sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse.

Children may be abused by an adult/adults or by another child/children through Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) which is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive.

Peer on Peer abuse is a form of HSB where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.

Bullying, racism and other types of discrimination are also forms of child abuse. Like other kinds of abuse, they can harm a child physically and emotionally.

*(Definitions of child abuse and neglect as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021) [SET May 2022 Part A 1.4] and (NSPCC <https://nspcc.org.uk/>)*

### Children Affected by Domestic Abuse & Violence [SET Procedures, Part B3, 17]

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as: When both parties are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive, if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

The issue of children living with domestic abuse and violence is now recognised as a matter for concern in its own right by both government and key children's services agencies. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 explicitly states that children are victims of domestic abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and the child is related to either the victim or the abuser.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

All the outcomes for children can be adversely affected for a child living with domestic abuse - the impact is usually on every aspect of a child's life. The impact of domestic abuse on an individual child will vary according to the child's resilience and the strengths and weaknesses of their particular circumstances. Unborn children may also be affected [SET B3, 17.4]

The three central imperatives of any intervention for children living with domestic abuse are:

- To protect the child/ren
- To support the carer (non-abusive partner) to protect themselves and their child/ren
- To hold the abusive partner accountable for their violence and provide them with opportunities to change.

**Links between domestic abuse & violence, and forced marriage & 'honour-based' abuse/violence** [SET Procedures Part B3, 17.2.3, and SET Procedures Part B3, 39.1 & 39.2]

Children and young people can be subjected to domestic abuses perpetrated in order to force them into marriage or to 'punish' him/her for 'bringing dishonour on the family'. Whilst honour-based violence can culminate in the death of the victim; this is not always the case. The child or young person may be subjected over a long period to a variety of different abusive and controlling behaviours ranging in severity. The abuse is often carried out by several members of a family including female relatives/ community members and may, therefore, increase the child's sense of powerlessness and be harder for professionals to identify and respond to.

**Child Abuse linked to Faith or Culture** [Set B3, 39.6.5 & 39.6.6]

A child may suffer emotional abuse if they are labelled and treated as being possessed with an evil spirit. Significant harm can happen to a child when an attempt is made to exorcise or deliver the evil spirit from the child.

Abuse could be physical resulting in beatings, burning, cutting, stabbing, semi-strangulation, tying up the child or rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's genitals or eyes. The child may be emotionally abused by being isolated from the family by not being allowed to eat with them/share rooms or scapegoated. Neglect can happen when their care needs are not being met and they are vulnerable to sexual abuse within the family or community and be particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

If a child is born with a disability their families can rationalise this as misfortune and attributing any epilepsy, Autism, mental health, bedwetting, disobedience or nightmares to spiritual possession.

Changes within families can make a child more vulnerable e.g. a parent having a new partner or transient or several partners. This may mean that a child is living with extended family or in a private fostering arrangement. This can make family structures complex and the child's relationship within the family may not be apparent.

A parent's mental ill health can be attributed to a child being possessed in a significant minority of cases. Illnesses typically involved include post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and schizophrenia.

**Other types, causes and increased risk factors for harm and abuse**

For full descriptions on types/sub types of abuse/significant harm and how to recognise them, please also refer to Part A.1.4 (Definitions of child abuse and neglect) and Part B3 (Safeguarding Children Practice Guidance) in the current SET Procedures.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Online harm and abuse [SET Procedures, Part B3, 25]

Information Communication Technology can be used to facilitate a wide range of abuse and exploitation. Online based forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse can include bullying via mobile phones, the internet through verbal and visual messages.

In relation to online sexual abuse in particular, those working with children, adults and families should be alert to the possibility that;

- A child may already have been/is being. Abused and the images distributed on the internet or by mobile phone.
- An adult or older child may be grooming a child for sexual abuse, including for involvement in making abusive images. This process can involve the child being shown abusive images.

Those working with children and young people should be aware that, the child/young person may not want to acknowledge their involvement or admit it abusive nature and may resist efforts to offer protection. This should not be a deterrent and agencies will need to work together closely in order to continue to monitor and assess the nature and degree of any risk to the child/young person.

**e-Safety Policy:** Accuro have a separate e-Safety to help protect the children and young people who use our services and who make use of information technology and reduce the risk of online harm.

### Risk from Outside of the Home [SET May 2022 Part A 1.4.17]

As well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at education settings, from within peer groups, or more from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines, trafficking, online abuse, teenage relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Extremist groups make use of the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered.

### Exploitation of children and young people (Safeguarding children from exploitation and trafficking), including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), 'County Lines' [SET Procedures, Part B3, 24]

Children and young people may be abused and neglected by adults and other children for the purposes of exploitation and various forms of modern slavery. This includes 'county lines' (\*see below) and through online technologies. Such abuse may also include trafficking children into, within, and out of the UK for the purposes of exploitation.

Exploitation includes sexual, physical, and emotional abuse and, in some cases, neglect, and covers a range of offences which will need differing responses from a range of agencies. Children and young people may be used for:

- sexual abuse
- domestic servitude
- labour exploitation - Nail bars, car washes, factories, etc.
- drug dealing - most often linked to 'county lines' (\*see below)
- drug cultivation – most often linked to Vietnamese criminality
- credit card fraud, begging or pickpocketing.
- benefit fraud
- drug mules or decoys for adult drug traffickers
- forced marriage.
- trade in human organs; and in some cases, ritual killings.
- radicalisation
- and other forms of slavery

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

Exploited children and young people should be treated as victims of abuse, not as offenders. They do not make informed choices to enter or remain in exploitative circumstances, but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation. They have been groomed and threatened and might not recognise that they are being exploited, so those who support them must not give up on them or their families. Both are in danger and need their help, support and protection - with a co-ordinated multi-agency response.

### County Lines [SET Procedures, Part B3, 24.6.4]

'County lines' is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line.' They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. (Home Office, 2018)

### Gang Activity/Serious Youth Violence [SET Procedures, Part B3, 28]

Young people are put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence which can be in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved adult in their household or community. There may also be links between gangs and 'county lines.' Those affected by gang activity or serious youth violence may have suffered, or may be likely to suffer, significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect. There are also situations where a young person may be on the path to significant harm from serious youth violence and gangs but not yet reached that threshold. It is important to recognise this and utilise the services that are available for early intervention.

### Knives and Other Weapons [SET Procedures, Part B3, 28]

Fear and a need for self-protection is a key motivation for children and young people to carry a weapon - it affords a feeling of power. Neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation and social exclusion generally have the highest rates of gun and knife crime. Children and young people are more likely to carry knives, noxious substances and other weapons than guns. Those working with children and young people who may have reason to be fearful in their neighbourhood or education setting should be alert to the possibility that a child or young person may carry a weapon.

Violent extremism, radicalisation and the PREVENT Duty – [SET Procedures Part B3: 28.10.2 & 28.11, & the SET PREVENT Policy & Guidance]

<https://www.escb.co.uk/media/2151/set-prevent-policy-guidance-v7.pdf>

Please also refer to: The Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) 2018. This supersedes the Prevent Strategy (2011):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorismstrategy-contest-2018>

### Self-harming and Suicidal Behaviour [SET Procedures, Part B3, 34]

Self-harm can be described as a wide range of behaviours that someone does to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way. In the vast majority of cases self-harm remains a secretive behaviour that can go on for a long time without being discovered. Some people who self-harm are at high risk of ending their lives, either intentionally or unintentionally, although for many self-harm is a means of coping with the emotional distress. Indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of taking actions to harm themselves or attempt suicide can cover a wide range of life events such as bereavement, bullying at school or a variety of forms of cyber bullying, often via mobile phones, homophobic bullying, mental health problems including eating disorders, family problems such as domestic abuse or any form of child abuse as well as conflict between the child and parents. Any child or young person, who self-harms or expresses thoughts about this or about suicide, must be taken seriously, and appropriate help and intervention should be offered at the earliest point.



# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Female genital mutilation (FGM) [SET Procedures Part B3, 39.3]

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines female genital mutilation (FGM) as: "all procedures (not operations) which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons" (WHO, 1996).

FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985 was passed. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 extended the prohibition making it also illegal to take a child abroad to undergo FGM, whether or not it is lawful in that country.

It is illegal to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM. A child for whom FGM is planned is likely to suffer significant harm through physical abuse and emotional abuse, which is categorised by some also as sexual abuse. Any information or concern that a child is at immediate risk of, or has undergone, female genital mutilation should result in a child protection referral to local authority children's social care.

### Safeguarding children where there are specific or multiple issues relating to parents [see SET Procedures Part B3, 40]

Other underlying issues and problems in family lives may give rise to safeguarding and/or welfare concerns, which may require onward referral/reporting to ensure that appropriate multi-agency involvement is in place. Potential concerns relating to any of the following issues should be discussed in confidence with Accuro's Safeguarding Lead, or with the Deputy Lead.

Where parent(s) have enduring and/or severe problems, children in the household are more vulnerable to significant harm, through abuse and/or neglect. In some situations, the child/children may also not be well protected from physical and/or sexual abuse by others.

#### A. Parents who Misuse Substances [SET Procedures Part B3, 40.1]

Although there are some parents who are able to care for and safeguard their child/children despite their dependence on drugs or alcohol, parental substance misuse can cause significant harm to children at all stages of development, including harm to unborn children.

#### B. Parenting Capacity and Mental Illness [SET Procedures Part B3, 40.2]

Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess its implications for each child in the family. Many children whose parents have mental ill health may be seen as children with additional needs requiring professional support, and in these circumstances the need for a common assessment should be considered.

#### C. Parenting capacity and learning disabilities [SET Procedures Part B3, 40.3]

Parental learning disabilities do not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess the implications for each child in the family. Learning disabled parents may need support to develop the understanding, resources, skills and experience to meet the needs of their children. Such support is particularly necessary where the parent/s experience the additional stressors of:

- Social exclusion
- Having a disabled child
- Experiencing domestic abuse
- Having poor mental health
- Having substance misuse problems
- Having grown up in care

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

In most cases it is these additional stressors, when combined with a parent's learning disability, that are most likely to lead to concerns about the care their child/children may receive.

### LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning) children and young people

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. This term covers a broad range of people who have different lived experiences and may be at different stages in exploring their identity. It includes people who are asexual or have differences in sex development (sometimes known as being intersex). (NSPCC)

LGBTQ+ children and young people face the same risks as all children and young people, but they are at greater risk of some types of abuse. For example:

- homophobic, biphobic, hate crime or transphobic bullying.
- using adult dating apps
- might have been groomed or coerced into a sexual relationship.
- might be experiencing sexual abuse or exploitation.
- they are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness because their family are unsupportive of their gender identity or sexuality.

(Stonewall, 2022 – NSPCC)

### Accuro – Safeguarding Training

The training provided to frontline staff/volunteers beginning with Level 1/2 online training during induction. In addition to this further training is provided to ensure staff and volunteers know who to contact at Accuro if they have any concerns, forms involved and the additional information regarding safeguarding vulnerabilities for children who have a disability which have been developed from ESCB/NSPCC training materials.

If you have any queries around training or further questions, staff or volunteers should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy and this information can be found under item 5 on page 20.

### 3. The Purpose of this Policy is:

- To protect all children and young people that access Accuro projects as Service Users or young volunteers
- To ensure all staff, volunteers and Trustees are aware of their obligation to adhere to the Safeguarding policy and procedure, thereby reducing the possibility that a child's welfare will suffer or that they are likely to suffer abuse
- To ensure that all Accuro staff, volunteers and trustees are aware that children with a disability may be more vulnerable to abuse than other children due to their dependency on others and in that they may have difficulties with communication.
- Awareness of the increased vulnerability of children with disabilities which could lead to safeguarding and everyone connected with Accuro should be conscious of this.
- To ensure everyone working with Accuro and anyone receiving support from the organisation, is aware of the responsibilities that they/ others have and they are fully aware of what to do if harm/injury is suspected or discovered.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

Accuro recognises that:

The welfare of children is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989.

All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of abuse or harm. Abuse includes neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and physical abuse.

This can also be related Risk from Outside of the Home including, Gang crime, child exploitation, County Lines, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Honour-Based violence, Child sexploitation, peer on peer abuse, online or mobile phone abuse and Radicalisation.

- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences and their level of dependency, communication needs and other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of the young people we support and work with.

#### 4. Policy Principles

- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be addressed, and information will be shared with relevant agencies including the Police in an emergency.
- Accuro as an agency cannot carry out a child protection investigation, this can only be completed by the local authority or NSPCC.
- It is the duty of all staff, volunteers and trustees to report any evidence of or concerns of possible abuse.
- Concerns should be relayed immediately in ways outlined in the safeguarding procedures. Failure to comply with this directive will lead to disciplinary action being taken against the individual(s) concerned and may lead to dismissal.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them and being aware of the Mental Capacity Act in relation those over the age of sixteen.
- Adopting safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and safeguarding training
- Ensuring that Safeguarding is a regular agenda item during supervision, Team Meetings and at every Board Meeting.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks and training is in place prior to them working with children
- Ensuring that staff know the procedures in light of any concerns
- All staff, volunteers and trustees will be made aware of this policy and their particular responsibilities that arise from it
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children/young people, parents, staff, and volunteers
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately.
- All staff, volunteers and trustees will be made aware of the Code of Conduct attached as Appendix 1.

Accuro's has Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure that there is always one person who is available during holiday/sickness periods. The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Leads will include:

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

- Ensuring the organisation operates within this policy and guidelines and that these procedures and guidelines remain compatible with the SET Child Protection Procedures adopted by Essex County Council and the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)
- Ensuring that any verbal and telephone referrals are made to Children's Social Care in writing within 48 hours
- Resolving any inter-agency issues that arise
- Acting as a link with the Children and Families Hub
- Acting as the person to whom all allegations/concerns should be reported (except in the case of concerns/allegations relating to the designated Safeguarding Lead. Such concerns should be addressed to the Accuro Chair of Trustees.
- Reporting and consulting with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to each individual concern/allegation

All allegations of abuse must be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently to provide effective care for the child and at the same time support the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Confidentiality will be an important issue and all enquiries will be conducted in the strictest confidence; information being restricted to those who have a need to know. Accuro also operates a Confidentiality Policy that reflects current legislation and provides guidance on sharing of information (including guidance on consent to the sharing of information).

Accuro will maintain and operate a Safer Recruitment Policy that will specify the need for all staff and volunteers to be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check prior to appointment.

Accuro has a Whistleblowing Policy in place which provides the procedures for unsafe/poor practice to be reported. Staff and volunteers who work at Accuro have an individual responsibility to raise concerns about poor practice and a right to know that they will be supported by their employer as they are acting in good faith.

The Chair of Trustees (Matthew Punshon) and the Safeguarding Trustee (Annette Burns) must be made aware of any safeguarding issues that arise by Accuro's Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer who is:

Alison McKeown – Senior Operations Manager

or in her absence

Rhiannon Blake – Operations and Projects Manager

All staff and volunteers will receive support and advice through regular supervision sessions conducted by a designated Line Manager. Safeguarding issues, including awareness of this policy, will be an essential component of such supervision.

Safeguarding is an item on the agenda for every team-meeting and Board meeting to ensure safeguarding remains at the forefront of Accuro's services.

Accuro will operate an 'Internal Safeguarding Group' which will meet on an 8 weekly basis (or sooner if needs require this) to consider any incidents in which a safeguarding concern has arisen, its primary purpose being to review the effectiveness of Accuro's policies, procedures and practices in dealing with the specific incident and to make recommendations for changes as appropriate.

### SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

Your primary responsibility is to protect any child in your care as every child has a right to be protected from harm.

### 1. The Responsibilities of Volunteers and Staff

What should you do if you have noticed something that has concerned you about a particular child? Perhaps it is something that you cannot quite put into words or several small things that have built up to give a picture that makes you uneasy for some reason or perhaps a child comes into your care with worrying bruises or marks.

#### *The Things You Must Do Are:*

- a) **Report your concerns** (see section 2)
- b) Record everything that has given you cause for concern and say why it has concerned you. (Please see appendix 2 & 3) It is essential that these records are kept confidential
- c) Ensure all information recorded is factual and does not contain personal comments and assumptions
- d) Write down the words/language that the child has used to describe anything.
- e) Record all the dates and times when these things happened
- f) Include any explanation of any injuries or behaviour given at the time. This will give you and us a clearer picture of what has taken place and why you are concerned. Whether or not you are sure, do contact Accuro's Designated Safeguarding Leads without delay.

Should a child disclose information to you relating to possible harm or abuse in any form, you should:

- 1) Listen** – carefully to the what the child/young person tells you. Tell him/her that in order to keep them safe we need to share the information with the people who deal with Safeguarding at Accuro, so they decide what further action needs to take place. This may include a duty to form Social Care and/or the police.
- 2) Do not ask leading questions** – It is not your role to investigate and leading questions may prejudice any subsequent investigation.
- 3) Clarify the concerns** - Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.
- 4) Reassure** – the young person that you will respond in a way which is intended to safeguard their welfare and protect him/her or others from further harm
- 5) Do not share anything disclosed to you, or any other concerns about possible non-accidental injuries with the parent as this is something that will be dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**
- 6) Where possible, and where it is safe to do so, what happens next will be talked through with the young person with the Co-ordinator of the project that they attend and the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in her absence the Deputy.**

Accuro staff and volunteers should ensure that any disclosures/concerns/worries are passed on to the appropriate Co-ordinator and then directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible so the concern can be dealt with and reported in the relevant timescales for doing this;

- Sensitive information should be sent electronically and **Password protected**.
- All written reports are stored securely in **Password protected** files which can only be accessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

### 2. What Happens When Abuse is Reported?

Your primary responsibility is to protect the child in your care because each child has a right to be protected from harm.

If you have any suspicions:

# **ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)**

## **Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children**

---

Individually any of the signs and symptoms may or may not be a true indication that harm has occurred. It is not always easy to identify child abuse; therefore, if you have any suspicions at all, for the child's sake, you should always seek further advice immediately from the project Co-ordinator and ensure that all your concerns are passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **What Should You Do?**

If a child has told you something which gives you cause for concern or if you suspect that child abuse either is taking place or has taken place, then contact an Accuro Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. They will then advise you of what further action needs to be taken. In the very unlikely event that the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy are not available; you should contact Essex Social Care through the contact details in Section 5.

### **Accidents**

It is possible that children may hurt themselves whilst attending an Accuro project, should this be the case First Aid should be administered if required, an Accident/Incident form completed and the session Co-ordinator advised at the earliest opportunity. The Co-ordinator will then talk through what happened with the parent at the end of the session and request that they sign the Accident/Incident Form. Should the child have banged their head, the parent must be advised and given details of "Symptoms to monitor after a head injury."

Should a child injure themselves and an ambulance is required, the parent/carer should be advised of the situation immediately and the details of the Accident/Incident shared with them without delay.

If a parent is not happy with the details given regarding an injury or they expect that the child's injury was not accidental, the Co-ordinator should request that the parent record any concerns and contact the Designated Lead (Alison McKeown or in her absence the Deputy (Rhiannon Blake) so the matter can be addressed and if required Social Care will be involved.

Accuro do have in place a Comments, Compliments and Complaints leaflet and a Complaints Policy which is available and give details of how to complain and how it will be actioned.

All Accident and Incident Forms will be kept securely on a child/young person's file.

### **Bruises**

If a child arrives at a project with a visible bruise/injury the Co-ordinator should be professionally curious and talk to the parent and note the reason given. The bruise/injury should be recorded on the body map and reason given recorded and the Designated Safeguarding Lead advised.

In the event of reoccurring bruises of various ages or injuries and any changes in the child's usual personality, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Social Care via the Children and Families Hub.

### **3. Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers**

For the purposes of this policy and guidance, a 'worker' is defined as any person whose work brings them into contact with children. As such this definition includes:

- Employees of Accuro, both temporary and permanent
- Individuals working in a voluntary capacity
- Contract workers.
- Accuro does not employ agency workers.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

A complaint or allegation against a worker could be because;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child/children in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children.
- Behaviour within their personal life e.g. perpetrators of domestic violence or abuse within their own family may indicate that they could be a risk/harm to when working with children.

Any allegations against a worker must be reported to Accuro's Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is implicated in the allegation the concern should instead be reported to the Chair of Trustees for Accuro – Matthew Punshon.

In either of the above two situations, the person receiving the allegation will compile a written record outlining the details of the allegation. This report should be timed, dated and signed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 03330 139797 who will advise what to do next. This will lead to the allegation being investigated in line with the SET procedures. Failure to pass on the concern by the person receiving it is prohibited and such a failure is likely to lead to disciplinary action being taken against the person responsible.

Any member of staff who believes allegations or suspicions which have been reported to the relevant person are not being dealt with appropriately has a responsibility to inform a more senior person within Accuro or to report it to the LADO.

The LADO must be informed immediately of **all allegations** and always **within one** working day.

If, for any reason, there are any difficulties in following the above procedures a referral should be made directly to Children and Families Hub and/or to the Police.

If a concern is raised outside office hours and a referral to Social Care is required, the Designated Lead/Deputy will contact the emergency Duty Team out of hours – 0345 6061212 and inform either Children's Safeguarding or the Local Authority Designated Officer at the first available opportunity during working hours.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should inform the worker (who is the subject of the allegation) as soon as possible after consulting with the LADO.

#### 4. The person who is the subject of the allegation should be:

- Advised at the outset to contact her/his Union or Professional association or to seek other relevant advice e.g., from the CAB or a solicitor
- Treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed, processes involved and the possible outcomes
- Kept informed of the progress of the case and of the investigation
- Clearly informed of the outcome of any investigation and the implications for disciplinary or related processes
- Provided with appropriate support during the case (via occupational health or employee welfare arrangements where these exist)
- Be kept informed about workplace developments if suspended.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Suspension

A decision to suspend or temporarily re-deploy staff or volunteers is made without prejudice and is at the discretion of Accuro.

Suspension will not be automatic, but it will be considered in every case where:

- Not to suspend may continue or increase the risk of significant harm for any child
- Not to suspend may hamper investigations
- The allegation warrants investigation by the Police
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

If a suspended person is to return to work, Accuro will consider and provide appropriate help/support e.g., phased return and/or provision of a mentor and how to manage the person's contact with any children who made the allegation.

### Resignations & Compromise/Settlement Agreements

All investigations into allegations should be completed and the outcome recorded, regardless of whether the person involved resigns her/his post, responsibilities or position of trust, even if the person refuses to co-operate with the process.

'Compromise or settlement agreements', where a person agrees to resign without any disciplinary action and with an agreed future reference, must not be used in these cases. *[[SET Procedures 7.3.20, 7.3.21]]*

### Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy as part of procedures and good practice will be reviewed annually or sooner following any significant changes to SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding Adult Guidelines.

The policy will be reviewed/updated by the Operations Manager – Alison McKeown who is a Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead who is trained to Level 3, ESCB Safeguarding Children in line with SET and/or statutory guidance.

### Information Sharing

Accuro will share information where possible with consent, however under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 we may share information without consent if there is lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be a risk.

[[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1062969/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_practitioners\\_safeguarding](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1062969/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding)]



# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### 5. Contact Telephone Numbers

#### Designated Safeguarding Lead – Children

Senior Operations Manager (Alison McKeown)	07856 544543
--	--------------

#### Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Children

Operations and Projects Manager (Rhiannon Blake)	07708 068431
--	--------------

#### Accuro Designated Safeguarding Lead - Adults

Senior Operations Manager (Alison McKeown)	07856 544543
--	--------------

Operations and Projects Manager (Rhiannon Blake)	07708 068431
--	--------------

Accuro (Care Services) Head Office	01279 870297
------------------------------------	--------------

Out of Hours	07856544543
--------------	-------------

#### Chair of Trustees

Matthew Punshon	01279 870297
-----------------	--------------

#### Safeguarding Trustee

Annette Burns	01279 870297
---------------	--------------

#### Essex County Council

Children and Families Hub (For Referrals)	0345 6037627
---	--------------

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours)	0845 6061212
------------------------------------	--------------

LADO Local Authority Designated Officer	0330 139797
---	-------------

If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, contact the Police on 999

#### Other Agencies

NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of the Cruelty to Children)	0808 8005000
---	--------------

Childline (Children's Advice Line)	0800 1111
------------------------------------	-----------

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)	<a href="https://www.ceop.police.uk">https://www.ceop.police.uk</a>
--	---

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Read Receipt

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the **Accuro (Care Services) Safeguarding Children Policy** and confirm that I have read this policy and the appendices and agree to be bound by its conditions:

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

Please indicate in which role(s) you are involved with Accuro (Care Services) by deleting those which do not apply.

Trustee

Volunteer

Paid Employee

Once signed please detach this page and return it to the head office of Accuro (Care Services).

Thank you.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### APPENDIX 1 CODE OF CONDUCT

The following guidelines are intended to reduce opportunities for the abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults and helps to protect staff and volunteers from any false allegation. All staff and volunteers are required to take shared responsibility for the safeguarding and safety of any child, young person, or vulnerable adult they come into contact with.



#### You Should:

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect, and respect their right to personal privacy
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities or that you are within sight or hearing of others
- Exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Exercise caution in initiating any physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Operate within the guidance offered by this Code of Conduct, and Accuro's Safeguarding & related policies and procedures
- Only take children, young people and vulnerable adults alone in a car where explicit and informed consent has been received and recorded
- Challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
- Keep parents and / or guardians, and / or carers fully informed of all anticipated activities
- When working with children, young people, adults and their families maintain professional boundaries



#### You Should Not:

- Spend excessive time alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults away from others
- Take children, young people or vulnerable adults to your home
- Engage in physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Make over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments or approaches to a child, young person or vulnerable adult even as a joke
- Let allegations, over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Do things of a personal nature that children, young people or vulnerable adults can do for themselves
- Take photographs, videos or other images of a child, young person or vulnerable adult without the express permission of their parent, and / or guardian and / or carer.
- Use your personal phone/camera to take a photo of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

### APPENDIX 2

## Safeguarding Reporting Form



CHILD/YOUNG PERSON OR ADULTS FULL NAME	
DOB	
PROJECT	

STAFF/VOLUNTEER NAME:	
SIGNATURE:	
LOCATION OF INCIDENT/DISCLOSURE	
DATE /TIME RECORDED	

Please ensure any continuation forms and any additional information is attached to this form.

### DETAILS OF CONCERN

Provide details of the incident or concerns you have including times, dates, description of any injuries (use body diagram on the back of the form to indicate injury), witness details, what you have observed, heard or been told, if the information is first hand, fact or opinion and any other relevant details. Ensure you clearly record the voice of the child, recording the actual words they used. Please advise your project Co-ordinator of any concerns and complete this form as soon as possible and ensure it goes to the office for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Officer in relation to Safeguarding Children and Designated Lead Officer for Adult Safeguarding.

BOX BELOW IS TO BE COMPLETED BY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER/DESIGNATED LEAD OFFICER

### AGREED ACTIONS & ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Record all discussions, communications, referrals & decisions made, include any conversations with parents/other agencies and rationale and any key decisions made.

Name: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

### Appendix 3

#### Body Map

##### Body Map Guidance

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination.

**\*At no time should a member of staff or a volunteer take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, the body map below should be used. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to Co-ordinator of the project immediately and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.**

**When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:**

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

##### **Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record**

A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's concern/confidential file.

# ACCURO (CARE SERVICES)

## Policy & Procedure on Safeguarding Children

---

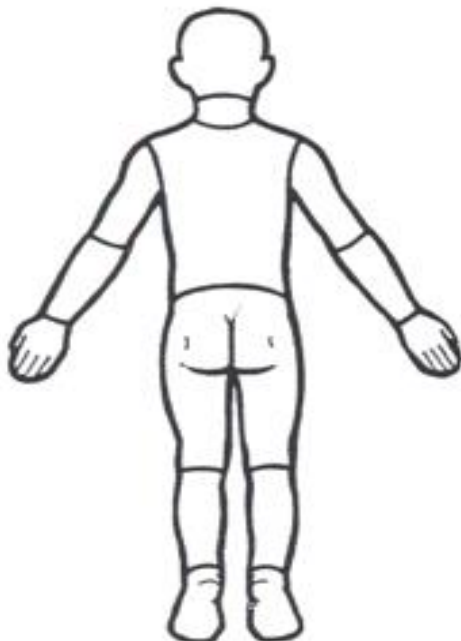
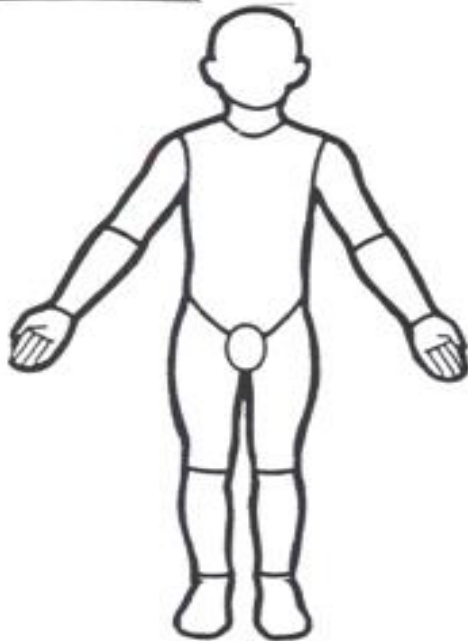
### Appendix 3 Body Map

Name of Staff Member:

Project:

Time:

Body Map



Name:

Date of Birth:

Date of Report:

