

Croydon Commitment Safeguarding Policy (children)



**Croydon
Commitment**

Linking Business with the Community

The purpose and scope of this policy statement.

Croydon Commitment works with children and young people as part of its activities. These include:

Lunchtime Literacy, Confidence and Employability workshops, Mock interview sessions, Business Open Door Week and other Education and Employment programmes.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who receive Croydon Commitment's services.
- To provide parents, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to children protection.
- To ensure that no harm may be caused from the design and implementation of Croydon Commitment programmes and activities

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuses of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Croydon Commitment including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, interns and students.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection/safeguarding lead, a deputy child protection/safeguarding lead and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- developing child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures which reflect best practice
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- ensuring that we have the necessary permission from parents and staff with regards to taking photographs and using them in the public domain

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from nspcc.org.uk/childprotection.

Croydon Commitment Responsibilities:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with [NGO]. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Croydon Commitment staff, associated personnel and volunteers will not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

The Designated Officers, advice and support numbers

The London Child Protection Procedures names the LEA as having a specific role in the Shared Responsibility for Child Protection Matters.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Croydon LEA is Steve Hall on 020 8726 6400 extension 84322.

The CC Designated Officer is: Melinda Ashford on 07786 438964
melinda.ashford@croydoncommitment.org.uk

All staff should know who the Designated Officer is and how to contact them, although this would normally be done through the worker responsible for the programme or project.

The Role of the Designated Officer is to:

- Be a source of advice and expertise of Safeguarding Children matters to all staff within the youth service.

- Promote good practice and effective communication within the youth service and with other agencies on all matters relating to safeguarding children and young people.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for the training and supervision of staff involved in the delivery of services to young people.
- Develop, monitor, and review the standards for safeguarding children practice.
- Ensure that appropriate records are kept of all safeguarding children cases.

The Designated Officer will ensure that there are clear lines of communication with staff, agencies, social services, and the police child protection unit.

All cases of abuse or suspected abuse involve very difficult decisions and often an element of risk for the professionals involved. The Designated Officer will help to share the element of risk and assist the worker to make decisions that safeguards the welfare of the young person. The Designated Officer will take overall responsibility for ensuring that a child protection referral is made.

Advice, Support and Emergency contact details

NSPCC 0800 800 222

Childline 0800 1111

Croydon Police 0208 667 1212

Social Services (including out of hours) 0208 686 4433

Confidentiality

A Common Law Duty of Confidence arises when a person shares information with another in circumstances where it might have been expected that the information would have been kept confidential. The Duty of Confidence is not absolute secrecy. It is a relationship of mutual trust and its only purpose is to benefit the young person. When a young person discloses abuse they do so in the probable expectation that help will result.

Responsibility for safeguarding children and young people must be shared because they can only be protected effectively when all the relevant agencies and individuals accept responsibility and cooperate with one another.

The person receiving information about abuse should always explain that in order to protect the young person it will be necessary to share the valuable information entrusted to him or her with other professionals such as the police or social services. The worker will not abandon the child to others but will accompany them through the process. Obtaining the consent of a young person under the age of 18 years of age is important, as long as the person has sufficient understanding to provide it. If a young person does not have the capacity or ability to consent himself or herself then consent should be received from the person who has parental responsibility unless doing so would place the young person at further risk. On occasions, the experience and knowledge of the adult involved in a disclosure of abuse will demand that he or she will need to seek outside help for the young person without their permission. Such cases are unlikely to be commonplace and should always be discussed with the Designated Officer. The primary duty of all staff, whatever their nominated role, is to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

Referring a young person who has been abused

Youth work staff must make a referral to the Designated Officer if there are any signs that a child or young person under the age of 18 years, or an unborn baby

- * Is experiencing or may have already experienced abuse or neglect?
- * Is likely to suffer neglect or harm in the future?

The Designated Officer will ensure that there are clear lines of communication within the organisation, through to the Social Services Department. Investigations regarding child abuse are made by The Social Services Department and or the Police Child Protection Unit.

The youth workers role in child protection issues need to be confined to:

- ☐ Clarifying and recording the issues of concern
- ☐ Supporting the young person and keeping them safe
- ☐ Explaining what action will be taken

Never wait to consult if urgent medical attention is needed

An allegation, or disclosure, of abuse must be taken seriously by youth work staff. It is not the role of the youth worker or other adult to investigate the allegations but to ensure that the matter is efficiently reported to the Designated Officer.

When a member of CC staff becomes aware that a child or young person has been abused, or that it is likely that she/he has been or will be so abused, the Designated Officer should be contacted as soon as possible. The Designated Officer will instigate the reporting process with the social services department. A full record of what has been said, who said it and to whom, must be made by the member of staff reporting.

If urgent medical assistance is needed dial 999, in doing so the member of staff concerned must tell the ambulance crew, doctor or hospital, that it is believed that the young person has been abused. Referral should preferably be with the young person's consent, but this may not be possible in every case and the urgent need to protect her or him may over ride other matters. All relevant information must be shared in making the referral.

Investigation

Investigations regarding child abuse are made by the Social Services Department or the Police Child Protection Unit: Once action is taken under the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and procedures the council's social services department becomes responsible for the co-ordination of the process.

The council's social service department has the responsibility to decide if and how to investigate. If an investigation is started the youth worker or other adult involved in the referral may be interviewed. If this is the case then it is essential that all relevant information is given, without it the young person may remain at risk and unprotected. If there is any suspicion that an offence has been committed the matter will be referred to the police for a criminal investigation to take place. Any investigation will be trying for all concerned and support throughout the process and afterwards is important. Part of the process instigated by the Social Services Department will identify the need to support for the young person.

The youth worker may be asked to allow the young person to be interviewed at the Trust or Project where the group meets if appropriate. This should be allowed, subject to the youth worker being assured of the authenticity of the interviewer. The Social Services Department may instigate a case conference. The youth worker involved may be asked to attend the conference. The case conference is a multi-disciplinary forum at which information is pooled and decisions about future action taken. It is chaired by Social Service Department Staff. A report of its conclusions is normally sent to all those invited to attend. The youth worker may become part of the action plan to help the young person, working alongside a social worker.

Youth Workers Paid or Voluntary or Other Adults Engaged in Youth Work

All organisations that work with children, young people and vulnerable adults need to ensure that their recruitment procedures check the suitability of people to work as volunteers or paid staff. Appropriate procedures need to be in place to ensure that checks are made regarding a person's background including a Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) – Enhanced Check,

marking that they work with children and vulnerable adults. All workers need to be aware that child abuse can and does take place and that safeguarding young people from harm has to be a role for all. If any member of staff, paid or voluntary, support or professional has reason to suspect that a member of staff from CC has abused a young person, that suspicion must be reported to the Designated Officer immediately who will instigate the reporting process with the education and social services department. If a young person or worker makes an allegation about a worker or person connected with CC, the Designated Officer will implement the grievance or complaints procedure. This may result in the person about whom the allegations have been made being removed from contact with children and young people whilst an investigation takes place. Even though an allegation or suspicion may seem improbable, any suspicion must be taken seriously and must not be dismissed without investigation.

Signatories:

Melinda Ashford – Partnership and Programmes Manager at Croydon Commitment