

**SORREL YOUTH CAFE
Safeguarding Policy**

Policy History	
V1	Agreed Committee Meeting 8 Feb 10
V2	Agreed Committee Meeting 28 Sept 10
Next Review	Sept 2011

Introduction

1. The Sorrel Youth Cafe Management Committee recognise that every child, has a right to protection from any kind of abuse be it physical, emotional or sexual. It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers working in this Cafe to be aware of the correct procedures for dealing with any suggested incidences of abuse. Safeguarding is not an isolated issue and we will work in partnership with other organizations to update procedures and adopt current legislation.
2. The definition of a child is an individual under the age of 18.

Responsibilities

3. All members of the Management Committee are aware that it is not their responsibility to investigate matters of abuse but to refer suspicions or allegations of abuse to the designated Person whose responsibility it is then to refer on to the Area Social Work Office or the Police.

Definitions

4. The formal definition of child abuse is:

Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or carer(s)'.

- 4.1 The categories commonly used to describe the areas of abuse are:

Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or being unresponsive to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. Physical abuse may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as Induced/Fabricated Illness by carer or Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware or not of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatments of a child, though it may occur alone.

Procedures

5. Dealing with an incident

Upon receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to:

- listen to the child and take what they are saying seriously
- inform them that if they continue to tell you information that you cannot keep secret that you will have to pass this on to others who can help
- reassure them that they are doing the right thing by telling you
- remain calm and neutral, no matter what they are telling you
- clarify anything you are unsure of but do not interrogate
- allow them the time they need to speak — it may be very difficult for them to

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tell you some things and you must let them say it in their own words

remember, they must trust you very much at this moment

- write down accurately everything that was said or seen and what action you took
- treat everything said as confidential between you, the child and the designated person and tell the child this
- pass on all information to the designated person and allow them to deal with it

6. Dealing with urgent cases

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or you have serious doubts about the child's safety, contact Social Work Services or the Police immediately.

7. Selection of volunteers

Those who subject children to abuse look just like any other adult and may seek employment either paid or unpaid in roles which bring them into contact with young people. It is the responsibility of the Management Committee and Cafe Manager (appointed Youth Worker), where appropriate, to ensure that all possible steps are taken to check the suitability of employees and volunteers.

This will be done in the following way:

- All employees and volunteers with regular access to children will have a police (CRB) check carried out.
- At any event there will be a minimum of 2 Police CRB checked employees / volunteers.
- All relevant previous experience of employees or volunteers will be noted.

8. Training of employees and volunteers

All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the contents of this policy and guidance and will be given a copy of this document. They will be made familiar with reporting procedures and the identity of the designated person. All employees and volunteers will be consulted on the appropriateness of this document and stated procedures at appropriate intervals.

9. The role of the designated person

The designated person is responsible for ensuring that this policy is up to date, that it is made freely available and that employees and volunteers are

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aware of its content, have read, understood and have a copy of it. The designated person will keep up to date with current guidelines and each member of the team, both employees and volunteers should be aware of who the designated social worker is for our area, have to hand at all times the telephone numbers of our social worker and the police; and as appropriate contact them for advice and guidance and remember that all referrals are discussed thoroughly by the statutory agencies prior to any action being taken.

All members of the team should:

- Remember that some issues are confidential
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others
- Remember, someone might misinterpret your actions even if they are well-intentioned
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy
- Provide time for children to talk to you
- Encourage children to respect and care for others
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- Remember to REFER not INVESTIGATE any suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Only discuss these concerns with the necessary and appropriate volunteers
- It will be the designated adult who will be responsible for dealing with concerns around Safeguarding.

10. The designated person may consider that complaints of a lesser nature may be handled internally without outside involvement. It must be emphasized however, that each case will be thoroughly investigated and remedied to the satisfaction of the young person/reporting person concerned.