

York Cares Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

York Cares is committed to providing a safe environment for **children and young people under 18 and adults at risk** who may engage in York Cares activities, including online.

York Cares does not have the same statutory duty to promote the safety and welfare of children as schools and colleges do, but York Cares does have a broader duty of care to all its staff and volunteers, and to those who are taking part in York Cares organised activities.

This document details York Cares' approach to Safeguarding.

Immediate risk

If you are concerned that someone is in immediate risk of imminent harm you should contact emergency services on 999.

If you are concerned about a non-emergency safeguarding issue, speak to your Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

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Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to set out our responsibilities, processes and procedures and outline how we will:

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for our staff and volunteers in the course of our work and York Cares led activities.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for children and adults at risk who engage with our staff and volunteers in the course of our work and York Cares led activities.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers facilitating or supporting programmes and activities working with children and adults at risk have defined responsibilities.

- Ensure that staff and volunteers engaging with children and adults at risk receive relevant safeguarding training and understand their role and responsibilities.
- Ensure that there is a clear reporting and escalation route should staff or volunteers become aware of a Safeguarding concern.

Scope

York Cares recognises that its Safeguarding responsibilities may arise in relation to a wide range of groups. This includes:

- All current staff
- All current volunteers
- Children and young people under 18 and adults at risk engaged in York Cares activities, including online.

York Cares interacts with partners who will hold the primary Safeguarding responsibilities e.g. Schools, Health and Social Care settings, Partner institutions. In these instances where other institutions hold the primary Safeguarding responsibility their procedures will take precedence. However, this does not preclude York Cares taking action under this policy and procedure if it sees fit to do so.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and if staff or volunteers are unsure how, or whether, to raise a concern the flowchart in Appendix A provides guidance.

Definitions

Legal safeguarding duties apply to all children and young people under 18. Where this policy mentions young people, this should be read as being under the age of 18 years. Legal safeguarding duties further apply to an adult at risk. An adult at risk is someone aged 18 years or over 'who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental ill health or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.¹

Recognising an adult at risk can be difficult. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to consider these three questions;

1. Does the adult have need for specific care and support?
2. Is the adult experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, abuse or neglect?
3. As a result of their support needs, are they unable to protect themselves from the risk of abuse or neglect?

¹ Safeguarding Adults NHS England
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>

Types of Safeguarding concerns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical abuse ● Domestic violence or abuse ● Sexual abuse ● Psychological or emotional abuse ● Financial or material abuse ● Risk of radicalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modern slavery ● Discriminatory abuse ● Organisational or institutional abuse ● Neglect or acts of omission ● Self-neglect
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Annex D provides more details.

Principles

York Cares will follow the six safeguarding principles set out in the Care Act 2014;

- Empowerment. People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention. It is better to act before harm occurs.
- Proportionality. The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection. To support and protect those in greatest need.
- Partnership. Working collaboratively with other agencies
- Accountability. To be transparent about, and responsible for, our safeguarding practices.

York Cares will;

- Provide clear leadership and lines of accountability for safeguarding.
- Provide appropriate training.
- Provide supervision and support for staff and volunteers.
- Implement procedures for minimising risk including risk assessment and safer recruitment practices.
- Establish clear reporting mechanisms including arrangements for sharing information with external Safeguarding partners.
- Implement whistleblowing procedures and a culture which enables issues about Safeguarding to be discussed.

York Cares seeks to safeguard children and adults at risk by:

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, including, where appropriate, taking up references and ensuring that staff and volunteers undertake Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks at the appropriate level.
- Producing safeguarding guidance for staff and volunteers visiting schools or delivering sessions for children and adults at risk.
- Undertaking a risk assessment for organised activities to ensure the safety of children and adults at risk.

- Helping staff recognise their responsibilities and ensuring they are aware of the procedure they should follow if they suspect a child or adult at risk is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm.
- Sharing information, when appropriate, about concerns with relevant external agencies.

York Cares Safeguarding Structure

While Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and anybody can report a Safeguarding concern to local authorities, York Cares has a process in place to support staff and volunteers to report concerns. Following this process will also help York Cares maintain accurate records and act when it sees any Safeguarding trends. Where appropriate York Cares will work in partnership with all relevant agencies to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from harm. When staff or volunteers become aware that there is, or may be, a Safeguarding issue then their role is to escalate this to their Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the School, Health and Social Care setting or Partner institution who will then follow their own Safeguarding policy.

- The DSO for York Cares is the York Cares Manager who is the point of contact for staff and volunteers to seek advice, and to be signposted to reporting mechanisms. The DSO will then refer the concern to the appropriate external agencies. York Cares is based at the University of York and as such follows the University of York's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and, in cases of internal concern, will therefore refer to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) at the University of York. The DDSL is the operational lead for Safeguarding and can provide advice, guidance and has the authority to escalate to external agencies.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the strategic lead for safeguarding. They will ensure that the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and general activities comply with current legislation and the organisation's Safeguarding Policy.

How to report a Safeguarding concern

If you are concerned that someone is in immediate risk of imminent harm you should contact emergency services on 999.

If you are concerned about a non-emergency safeguarding issue speak to your Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If you are unsure whether there is a safeguarding issue then you should discuss this with a Designated Safeguarding Officer who can provide advice and guidance.

The flowchart in Appendix A should be used to help you follow the correct process.

You should not assume that someone else will take action. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. You should be aware that early sharing of information is

often vital to enable an effective intervention that might keep a young person or adult at risk safe.

- Any Safeguarding concerns about abusive behaviour by a member of staff or volunteer against a child or an adult at risk should be reported directly to the DSO.
- Any Safeguarding concerns about the DSO or a DDSL should be taken directly to the DSL for the organisation (in the case of York Cares this is the University of York).

Prevent Duty

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on universities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The University has documented its response to this statutory duty to support the Safeguarding of students and staff from radicalisation in its Prevent Duty response. As an organisation housed within the University of York, York Cares supports the deterrence of individuals being drawn into terrorism. York Cares provides Prevent training to staff through the university's programme of workshops and online material to help staff better understand the Prevent strategy and enhance their ability to recognise vulnerable individuals who may need support.

Concerns about radicalisation should be reported in the same way as other Safeguarding concerns.

Appendices

Appendix A - How to report a Safeguarding Concern

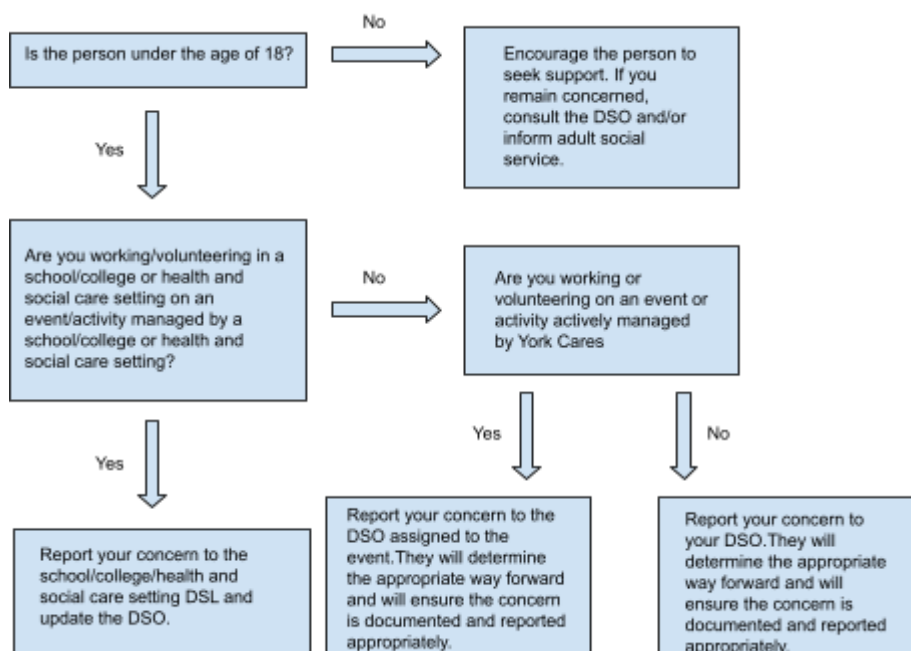
If you are concerned that someone is in immediate risk of imminent harm you should contact emergency services on 999.

If you are concerned about a non-emergency safeguarding issue speak to your Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If you are unsure whether there is a safeguarding issue then you should discuss this with a Designated Safeguarding Officer who can provide advice and guidance.

This flowchart shows the steps that should be taken if you have concerns that a child or an adult at risk is experiencing, or at risk of experiencing harm.

How to report a Safeguarding concern Flowchart



Process description

If the person is over the age of 18, you should encourage the person to seek support. If you remain concerned, consult your DSO and/or inform adult social services.

If the person is under the age of 18 and you are working or volunteering in a school/college/ health and social care setting on an event or activity managed by a school/college/ health and social care setting, report your concern to their DSL. Once you've done this, update your DSO who will ensure the concern is documented and reported appropriately.

If you are working or volunteering at an event actively managed by York Cares, report your concern to the DSO assigned to the event. They will determine the appropriate way forward and will ensure the event is documented and reported appropriately.

If you are not working or volunteering at an actively managed York Cares, you can still report your concern to the DSO assigned to the event. They will determine the appropriate way forward and will ensure the event is documented and reported appropriately.

Other important information

- Safeguarding trumps data protection/privacy. You do not need to consent to share information about a safeguarding matter.
- Any concerns about abusive behaviour by a member of staff or student against a person under 18 or an adult at risk needs to be reported promptly to the DSO, or the DDSL.
- Any staff or volunteer may also report safeguarding concerns to an external body such as Social Services or the police. In such a case, the responsibilities set out in the safeguarding policy still apply.
- It is not the responsibility of staff to investigate, make judgements or provide a response to safeguarding matters. They simply have to follow the reporting procedure if they have concerns.
- The DSO/DDSL will take appropriate steps. These may include one or more of the following:
 - Make a referral to the local social services
 - Contact the police
 - Take steps to initiate the appropriate disciplinary procedure
 - Arrange for the young person/adult at risk to be given appropriate support

Appendix C - Safeguarding Contacts

If you are unsure who to raise a Safeguarding query with, please email info@yorkcares.co.uk

Your Designated Safeguarding Officer is Holly Hennell - holly.hennell@york.ac.uk

External Safeguarding Contacts

- City of York Council Children's Social Care 01904 613161
- City of York Council Safeguarding Children Board 01904 555650
www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk
- York Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01904 551900 and select option 3 or email MASH@york.gov.uk.
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for North Yorkshire and City of York contact via the Customer Service Centre 01609 780780
- City of York Safeguarding Adults Board 01904 555111
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000
- Prevent Lead within the City of York Council: Name: Jane Mowat Tel: 01904 555742- 07984 496352 Email: jane.mowat@york.gov.uk
- Police Prevent advice line 0800 011 3764 to call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a child or young person

Appendix C – Additional safeguarding guidance for working with young people under 18

All staff and volunteers involved in events for children and young people under the age of 18, must be committed to the health and safety of all participants and be aware of safeguarding issues and procedures. It is the staff or volunteers responsibility to understand the requirements of the event or venue. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 guidance requires York Cares when working with school children to both safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental or physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children have the best outcomes

All staff and volunteers who are involved in activities with children and young people will be assessed based on the responsibilities of the role, using government guidelines, to ensure appropriate checks, references, "[Certificate of Good Conduct](#)"² and DBS checks are carried out. Staff and volunteers without satisfactory disclosure from the DBS should not be given

² This is essentially an overseas police record check. Safer Recruitment practices state that they should be obtained for individuals who have lived abroad for 3+ months in the last 5 years.

unsupervised access to children and it is the responsibility of programme organisers to ensure that procedure is followed. Some children have an increased risk of abuse and face additional barriers to recognising or disclosing it. These children may benefit from early help. We give special consideration to children that may be deemed as higher risk who may benefit from early help. This may include a child or young person who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental illness
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child, and is persistently absent from education

Reporting

Staff members or volunteers who have any concern or suspicion about any child or young person involved in a York Cares event or programme, or an adult working on a York Cares event, programme or with a school should bring their concerns to the attention of:

- In the case of staff and volunteers working in school environments, on programmes or activities delivered and managed by the school, concerns should be raised with the schools DSL in the first instance and then reported to their DSO. The school's safeguarding policy should then be followed.
- In the case of staff and volunteers working on programmes, events or activities delivered or overseen by York Cares, concerns should be raised with the DSO. The DSO will determine the appropriate course of action and liaise with external Designated Safeguarding Leads where appropriate. The DSO will ensure that an accurate account of the disclosed incident is established, as quickly as possible, in order to determine the level of risk posed to an individual (or individuals) and to determine whether or not any form of action such as referral is required. The designated person reserves the right to suspend the staff member or volunteer from working on activities involving children or young people until the investigation is complete. All such reports should be recorded.

Conduct regarding Children and Young People

In order to ensure that their own behaviour is not misinterpreted staff and volunteers should adhere to the following:

- All conversations with children or young people must be conducted in a public place.
- Physical contact with children or young people must be avoided.
- Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, do not take a child or young person to the toilet unless either another staff member or volunteer is present.
- If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child or young person wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Avoid close personal relationships with a child or young person in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child or young person, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
- If a child or young person accuses a volunteer or member of staff of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, you should report this immediately to the relevant person.
- The duty to report applies equally to complaints or accusations of historic, and not just recent, abuse/inappropriate behaviour.
- If physical restraint of a child or young person is required for his or her own safety, or that of another child, the minimum force should be used for the least possible time. An incident report should be written and should include the names of staff and witnesses.
- If first aid is necessary and is administered by a trained professional, an incident report should be completed and the names of any staff and witnesses should be included. School procedures should be followed.
- You must not take a child or young person alone in a vehicle on journeys. If a child or young person makes a complaint, or if there are other reasons for suspecting abuse, you should not attempt to investigate this yourself, but should report your concerns to the designated person.
- It can be an abuse of trust for an adult in a protective relationship with a younger person to form a close, personal relationship with him or her. Staff and volunteers must avoid any suggestion that a close, personal relationship exists or is desired. Behaviour that could imply a special relationship, for example gifts or endearments, should also be avoided.
- Giving personal contact details to a child or requesting theirs is not permitted. This includes address, email, phone and mobile number. Contact should not take place through any social media site and this includes adding or accepting a young person as a “follower” on any social media site.
- It is important that staff and volunteers ensure that they have tight privacy settings on social media networks and if a student attempts to add you via social media please inform the designated person as soon as possible.
- Short-range wireless technologies such as Bluetooth and Airdrop should be turned off while working at events with children or young people or attending a school or college on behalf of York Cares.

In order to embed excellent safeguarding practices it is important that all staff fully understand and adhere to the Code of Conduct. The way we work has significantly changed in recent years and online events and websites are great tools to help us engage with children and young people. However, if misused, they can also pose potential safeguarding risks, and this may lead to abuse, both online and offline. The University of York has created some [practical guidance](#) for all staff involved in organising and taking part in online events to help ensure the safety of all children and young people involved.

Appendix D - Glossary

Safeguarding Children

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. In defining our approach towards children, the University draws on the definition used by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (KCSiE). While KCSiE only applies to Schools and Colleges, we will play our part in:

Protecting children from maltreatment. Preventing impairment of children's mental or physical 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 the best outcomes.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is someone aged 18 years or over 'who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental ill health or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'. While York Cares is not subject to the provisions of the Care Act 2014, York Cares draws broadly on this act to inform its policy on safeguarding Adults at Risk. We will play our part to:

Ensure that the rights of Adults at Risk are protected to enable them to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Ensure that the wellbeing of the Adult at Risk is promoted and that in deciding on any action to be taken we will take into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs, for example when considering whether to refer concerns to statutory bodies or when seeking support from charitable organisations.

However we recognise that Adults at Risk sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and may not fully appreciate potential risks to their safety or well-being and therefore it may not always be possible to fully defer to their wishes when seeking the best way forward.

Abuse

Abuse covers every form of 'abuse', including sexual, emotional, psychological, material, financial, physical, discriminatory, organisational abuse and any acts of omission.

Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 is a reformed law that is related to the support and care for carers and adults. This act came into force in April 2015. Clauses 42-45 of this Act gives the statutory framework for protecting adults from abuse and neglect.

Channel

Channel is an early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour. Channel works in a similar way to existing safeguarding partnerships aimed at protecting vulnerable people.

DBS

DBS is the acronym used for the Disclosure and Barring Service. The DBS is a governmental body that was established in 2012 through the Protection of Freedoms Act. It was the merger of two former organisations, the CRB and the ISA.

Discriminatory abuse

Treating a person less favourably, and therefore denying their human and/or civil rights, based solely on class or category, i.e. gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, preferred language, etc. Discriminatory behaviours take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection.

Domestic violence or abuse

Any violence or abuse between current or former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever violence occurs. The violence or abuse may include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse.

Financial or material abuse

The illegal or unauthorised theft or use of a person's property, money or other valuables. Crimes associated with this type of abuse include theft, undue influence and forgery.

Harm

Harm refers to any ill-treatment including sexual abuse and ill-treatment that isn't physical, the avoidable deterioration and or impairment in physical or mental health. of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Hate crime

Any crime that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic, transphobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability.

MARAC

MARAC is short for Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference and is a multi-agency forum of organisations. These organisations manage high-risk cases of honour-based violence, stalking and domestic abuse.

MASH

MASH stands for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This service is made up of Police, Adult Services, NHS and other organisations. MASH helps agencies to act quickly in a coordinated and consistent way. This means that the person at risk

Modern slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Neglect or acts of omission

The persistent failure to meet basic physical and psychological needs is likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. This may involve factors, such as, inappropriate clothing, food, inappropriate attention, lack of supervision, lack of safety or exposure to undue cold or unnecessary risk of injury. It may also include neglect of basic emotional needs.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and adults at risk may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children and adults at risk can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example, bullying or grooming) or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example, persuading children or adults at risk to take part in sexual activity online).

Organisational or institutional abuse

Occurs when an individual's wishes and needs are sacrificed to a smooth running of a group, service or organisation. It involves the mistreatment of people brought about by poor or inadequate care or support and is characterised by systematic poor practice including inappropriate use of rules, rituals, routines and/or restrictive practices. These may all damage a person's right to independence, respect, dignity or choice.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to an individual. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Prevent

Prevent is the Government's strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism or supporting terrorism, in all its forms. Prevent works within the non-criminal space, using early engagement to encourage individuals and communities to challenge violent extremist ideologies and behaviours

Psychological or emotional abuse

A form of abuse which may involve the persistent emotional maltreatment of an individual, such as, to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving a child or adult at risk the opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child or adult at risk's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the individual participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing individuals to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption.

Risk of radicalisation

Involves the exploitation of susceptible people who are drawn into violent extremism by radicalisers often using a persuasive rationale and charismatic individuals to attract people to their cause. The aim is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. The PREVENT Strategy, launched in 2007, seeks to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is the intentional, or unintentional, inability to maintain a socially and culturally accepted standard of self-care, that results in serious consequences to the health and well-being of the individual.

Sexting

Is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual

preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual abuse

A form of abuse involving forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Appendix E - Safeguarding risk assessment

Risk assessments should be conducted for organised activities which involve children and young people. The risk assessment should be approved by York Cares Manager. Risk assessments should include careful consideration of what could cause harm to children and young people, and an assessment of how risks can be mitigated or avoided where practicable to prevent harm. Safeguarding should be of the utmost importance during this assessment. Further information can be found on the NSPCC website ([Managing safeguarding risks when planning activities](#)). All those involved in the risk assessment process should understand that the risk assessment is not only a way to mitigate or remove any potential risks but may also be a prompt to consider alternative working practices. The risk assessment process should encompass all aspects of health and safety e.g. fire etc.