



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Stowmarket Youth Theatre (SYT) is a project of The ERD Connection, a charitable incorporated organisation and registered charity. This policy has been prepared by the Trustees of The ERD Connection and refers to the activities of SYT.

STOWMARKET YOUTH THEATRE MISSION STATEMENT

All young people have a voice and a right to be heard and seen. Stowmarket Youth Theatre (SYT) nurtures and inspires young people through free participatory theatre activities, helping them to develop enduring and transferable skills that lead to increased life chances and long term well-being. We bring young people together from across the Stowmarket community to create outstanding theatre in an environment of high expectations and collaboration. We work from the core belief that artistic excellence is key to expanding young people's horizons and creating lasting transformation.

INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines our approach to safeguarding children, young people and adult participants under the age of 24. It is written in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Stowmarket Youth Theatre (SYT) recognises that our mission statement requires us to hold safeguarding at the heart of all our activities.

SYT embed safeguarding across our practice most importantly by valuing young people, listening to them and respecting them. The policy offers both general safety guidelines, and specific procedures to deal quickly with any concerns about young people suffering abuse, both in our care and in their lives outside SYT.

The policy must be applied whenever there is a concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult or about the behaviour of an adult. All those working and interacting with SYT have a duty to uphold and abide by the Safeguarding Policy. Trustees, staff, tutors, trainees and volunteers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and to support service users and other stakeholders to act in accordance with the policy principles.

This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years, and modified or supplemented in response to new legislation, changes to the working environment or on advice of SYT's staff or Board of Trustees.

All staff, workers and volunteers will receive the latest policy and will be trained to take responsibility for its implementation. SYT will be open to work in partnership with other organisations to support safeguarding of young people both within SYT and across organisations.

DEFINITIONS

Child: The Children Act 1989 defines a child as someone who is under the age of 18. As SYT works with individuals beyond this age we refer to our members as young people and consider this policy to cover all participants, including vulnerable volunteers.

Young Person/People: For the purposes of this policy, we will use the term young people to include all children and adult participants or volunteers (whether or not deemed 'vulnerable') under the age of 24.

Vulnerable Adult: The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Tutors: All session leaders, whether freelance practitioners or staff, including paid work experience or trainees

Volunteers: All volunteers aged 18+, regardless of role, including those who may take part in other SYT projects as a participant.

Workers: For the purposes of this policy, 'workers' is used as a generic term for all employees, freelancers, volunteers, trainees, placements and any other representative of SYT deemed to have responsibility to implement safeguarding procedure.

Child Abuse and Neglect: A generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development. More detailed definitions of different types of abuse and guidance on recognising signs of abuse is included in Appendix A: Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees: The Charity Commission is clear that Trustees have primary responsibility for safeguarding in their charity. The Trustees of The ERD Connection and thereby SYT's trustees will fulfil their duty of care to safeguard young people with whom SYT works by:

- acting in their best interests
- taking all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them
- assessing and managing risk
- putting safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- undertaking ongoing monitoring and reviewing to ensure that safeguards are being implemented and are effective
- responding appropriately to allegations of abuse
- informing the Charity Commission of any serious incidents.

The designated trustee for safeguarding matters (named at the end of the document) will take the lead in overseeing safeguarding practice and responding to allegations of abuse, in consultation with fellow trustees.

The Lead Producer: The Lead Producer of The ERD Connection and thereby SYT is responsible for promoting and implementing safeguarding practices across SYT, including informing all staff, workers and volunteers about safeguarding procedures and ensuring they receive appropriate training to implement these practices across the organisation.

The Lead Producer takes on responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

DSL Deputy: If the Lead Producer is not available, the project tutor will take on responsibilities as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

As the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Lead Producer will take the lead responsibility for:

- Monitoring and review of this Policy, in collaboration with the Board of Trustees
- Providing safeguarding advice across programmes
- Ensuring that all procedures (including risk assessments) align with safeguarding practices
- Responding in a timely manner to any suspected abuse allegations
- Updating the Board of Trustees in regards to any incidents where a safeguarding process had to be implemented (eg referral to social services)
- Keeping written records in line with SYT's Data Protection Policy
- Referring a case on to social services where necessary
- Reporting the case to Stowmarket Council's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) when necessary
- Reporting any case where an allegation is made against a worker (including volunteers) to the Local Area Designated Officer.

All Workers/Volunteers: All workers including staff, freelancers, trainees, work experience placements and volunteers are responsible for following the Safeguarding policy and procedures, particularly by:

- Understanding their responsibility in safeguarding
- Following the safeguarding arrangements set out in this policy
- Reporting any suspicions of abuse or neglect to a manager/designated person
- Reporting any concerns about the behaviour of any members of staff, volunteers or contractors towards young people

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Awareness, vigilance and peer support are key in providing a secure environment, both in relation to drama practice and the general welfare of young people. This awareness and vigilance in relation to suspected abuse extends to the young people's lives beyond the time they spend in our care.

Creating a Safer Environment: SYT aims to create a psychologically and physically safer working environment by fostering a culture of respect and care.

All project groups complete a group contract and the SYT's Terms and Conditions include an inclusion statement. Workers should immediately challenge any behaviour

that might be seen as bullying or discriminatory, or that might develop into bullying by referring to standards of behaviours expected of all.

Phrases that might be useful include: “We don’t act like that here at SYT”; “Everyone works together at SYT”; “We don’t talk about people who aren’t in the room”.

Workers should report any concerning language, including gesture or body language, to the Lead Producer at post-session debriefs. The Lead Producer and tutors will create a plan of action, as appropriate, to address the behaviour. This may include talking to a parent/carer or further conversations with the individual or the group.

Workers should be aware of using appropriate language and talking about appropriate topics when young people are present.

All disclosures or allegations must be addressed in a timely manner. No one should feel discouraged from reporting concerns for fear of not being believed.

Safer Worker Recruitment: All staff, volunteers and trustees are required to attend interview and provide references. During interview all candidates will be questioned regarding their understanding of safeguarding and how that might be a consideration in the role they are applying for.

DBS Checks: All trustees, staff, freelancers, tutors and volunteers with regular direct contact with young people will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. DBS checks will be considered valid for 2 years. SYT will accept DBS checks undertaken at other organisations if they were undertaken within 2 years prior to the end of the contracted project. SYT will pay for worker and volunteer DBS checks, and help facilitate the application process through an online system.

Training: All workers and volunteers will receive and be asked to familiarise themselves with SYT’s policies, including Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Data Protection and Health & Safety Policies.

Workers will also be expected to familiarise themselves with SYT’s codes of practice including through our Terms and Conditions and Risk Assessments.

All hired/placed workers and volunteers will be provided an induction at the beginning of their engagement, with specific training in safeguarding, health & safety, equal opportunities and data protection.

Employees will be expected to undergo external safeguarding training as appropriate for their role every 3 years. If the individual has not had previous safeguarding training, they will be expected to take a Level 1 course within their probation period. Refresher courses may include training for safeguarding concerns of marginalised groups.

Communication with Participants and Emergency Contacts: All participants in SYT’s activities return a registration form, including any particular needs they may have, emergency contact names and numbers.

Parent/guardian consent is required for young people under 18 to take part in an activity. In occasional circumstances, staff may accept initial verbal consent, followed up by signed paperwork.

If a child (under 18) is registered for an activity but doesn't arrive, SYT will contact the emergency contact to inform them of the absence.

SYT collects consent for participants to either be collected or make their own way home at the end of a session. SYT staff may accept verbal consent from parent/carers to alter these arrangements.

Participant and emergency contact details are stored on SYT's mobile phone. Workers should ensure they have access to the mobile telephone during activity, as per risk assessments.

No staff, tutors or volunteers should retain participant details on personal devices or in written form outside SYT. Workers must not give their personal details to young people. As per SYT's Data Protection Policy, communication with young people should remain within SYT.

Workers should not communicate with participants outside SYT, 'friend' or follow participants on social media, or promote other opportunities directly to participants without the approval of the SYT Lead Producer.

Worker to Participant Ratios: SYT activities are led by 2 tutors and supported by volunteers (usually 2 per session). The aim is for the adult/child ratio to be at least 1 to 8 (if under 14) and 1 to 10 (if 14+).

SYT aims for staff, tutors and volunteers to not be left alone with individuals or groups of young people. However, there may be times when one worker must work with a small group in a separate space or hold confidential one-to-one sessions. In these instances, the following procedures the worker should follow the following procedures:

- Where possible, work within sight or hearing distance of other adults
- Ensure that other adults are present in the building
- Tell other adults present where you will be working and for how long.
- If left alone with a young person while waiting for parents/carers to collect the young person, notify a fellow tutor or the Lead Producer about the situation. When the young person is collected, report that the child is no longer in your care, and make a note of the time of collection.

Physical Contact: Theatre involves contact. SYT recognise that appropriate physical touch between young people, and between adults and young people, can be healthy and acceptable in public.

Workers must ensure that any physical contact is appropriate and consensual, and should not typically initiate physical contact.

Workers should be aware that what may be appropriate for one person may feel unsafe to another, and should aim to keep the other party feeling safe at all times.

Workers should also apply these principles to personal space boundaries.

Workers should be aware of inappropriate attachments forming between adults and children and should re-establish boundaries to ensure a professional working environment. For instance, if a child repeatedly initiates hugs with a particular worker, the worker can suggest giving high-fives instead.

Workers must not engage in physical contact if they are alone with a young person.

Use of Toilets: All workers should take care not to use the same toilets as those used by the young people. The Mix has single sex toilets at street level and at Underlands level as well as Disabled toilets. Workers should monitor use of the toilets during sessions to ensure single-sex use by appropriately sized groups.

Social Media, Technology and Online Use: Tutors must supervise young people when taking part in restricted online access related to project activities. Members are asked to switch off personal devices during sessions. Tutors should monitor the use of personal devices during break times to avoid photos/videos of members being shared inappropriately online, referring to the project's group contract as necessary in regards to the safety of the group.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES DUE TO COVID-19

SYT endeavours to apply the principles of this policy to all adaptations made to our delivery due to COVID and social distancing restrictions. During this time, SYT has delivered activities via Teams, and in-person while Government guidance has allowed socially-distanced in-person activities.

Safeguarding principles described in this policy have been bolstered by the following measures during the COVID period:

- Written code of conduct for online activity, agreed to by all new groups
- Update to permissions required for online activities, including filming and sharing of footage from online activity
- Increasing adult to child ratios to at least 1 adult to 6 children under 16 and at least 1 adult to 8 children if 16-18.
- Mandating at least 1 adult be present in all small group work ('breakout rooms' in Zoom) for groups under 18, with supervision requirements for those over 18. Mandating that adults cannot be in video calls alone with a participant, unless the participants' parent/carer is visible in the session.
- Managing Teams privacy settings, including waiting rooms and chat functions.

IN THE CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

If an accident occurs, workers should report the accident to the Lead Producer as soon as is possible within dealing with the emergency. The lead worker will take responsibility for following SYT's Health & Safety Policy by:

- Seeking medical attention, if necessary, and calling 999, following SYT's Emergency Plan in the case of an emergency
- Recording the accident in the accident book.

- Informing the parent/carer/emergency contact, unless there is concern for the safety of the young person.

The effects of any accident or incidence of abuse on the rest of the young people in the group should not be underestimated, and appropriate explanations given, bearing in mind the importance of confidentiality.

HOW TO RESPOND TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

There may be concerns about a person for a number of reasons:

- A young person may say (disclose) that they or someone else has been, is being or may be abused or harmed
- There may be concerns due to the person's behaviour or presentation
- Concerns may be raised about the behaviour of an adult, who may be a member of staff, volunteer, another professional or a member of the public
- A parent, carer, relative or member of the public might share their concerns about a young person

In all cases, if anyone representing SYT is concerned a young person has been, is being or may be harmed, they must report the concerns using the following procedures.

If a young person, member of the public or colleague makes an accusation of abuse:

- Stay calm; listen carefully to what is being said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others. Do not promise to keep secrets. Allow the person, especially in the case of a young person, to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Try to use the TED method, asking questions that start with "Tell", "Explain" or "Describe". Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Using the Safeguarding Report Form record in writing what was said using the person's own words, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Report with the form to SYT's Lead Producer at the earliest opportunity.
- If it is a young person reporting to you and you consider it unsafe for the young person to leave your care, the designated person should contact Social Services immediately to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Concerns (No Disclosure)

If you become concerned about a young person due to the young person's behaviour, presentation or other reason:

- Do not trivialise or dismiss your concerns - information that may seem trivial can frequently form the missing piece of the puzzle and lead to protective action being taken.
- If the behaviour may be sexually or psychologically harmful to other young people do not explain it away as 'normal teenage behaviour'.
- Report your concerns to the Lead Producer as soon as you can.
- If you feel a young person may be going to tell you about abuse, but then stops or tells you something else, let them know that you are always ready to listen to them and/or remind them of the Childline number: 0800 1111. You should report your suspicions to a supervisor or Designated Person as soon as possible.

Who You Should Report To:

Volunteers and any other non-paid workers should report their concerns to the project tutors for the activity. They will take lead responsibility for carrying out the Safeguarding Reporting.

All concerns should be reported to SYT's Designated Safeguarding Lead (See roles and contact details below). The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Inform the Board of Trustees about any issues requiring an outside referral
- If the allegation is against a worker or other participant in the project, suspend him/her from the project pending investigation
- Report any allegations against a worker to the Local Area Designated Officer (LODA) and the the Board of Trustees
- Agree with the Board of Trustees a plan of action and make a note of this plan
- Keep records of disclosure secure and confidential
- Contact Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), as necessary
- Contact police if it is suspected that a crime has been committed or will be committed imminently
- Call 999 if a young person is in immediate threat of harm (including self-harm)
- In the case of suspecting that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place or will take place imminently, reporting to 101, asking for the FGM Protection Unit
- Contact emergency services if there is a need for immediate medical attention (including for mental health emergencies)
- Consult with Stowmarket Social Services and other partner organisations as necessary.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead should undertake the responsibilities described above.

Referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: In deciding on whether or not to refer a concern to MASH, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should first take further advice and seek consent from parents/carers before a referral, unless they feel seeking consent would put the child at further risk of harm or cause unnecessary delay.

If a child is in immediate threat of harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior worker present should call emergency services immediately.

Allegations Against Workers: It is VERY IMPORTANT you do not ignore or dismiss concerns or suspicions about another professional or colleague, however well or little you know them, or whatever position they may occupy in their organisation, including volunteers.

Concerns do not need to meet the threshold of suspected abuse to be reported.

If you are concerned that another worker is not abiding by SYT's safeguarding practices, whether intentionally or unintentionally, you must report this.

Any concerns regarding a worker should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will:

Assess the information quickly and carefully, seeking further information from tutors, staff, volunteers, young people, parents or carers as appropriate,
Ensure that the steps set out above have been taken, and take these steps if necessary;

- If the allegations are against a staff member, suspend the staff member whilst the matter is investigated;
- If, after investigation, the staff member is found to have seriously breached the safeguarding policy, dismissing the staff member under grounds of gross misconduct.

Further Concerns and Whistleblowing:

All staff, freelancers and volunteers should feel responsible for raising safeguarding concerns should they arise. Your role with SYT, whether paid or unpaid, will not be at risk because you have raised or escalated your concerns.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to any of your concerns above, raise these again with your Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Board of Trustees.

If you feel your concerns still haven't been appropriately addressed, you should report your concerns to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0345 606 1499.

If you have concerns about how Child Protection matters are being handled at SYT, and do not feel that your concerns have been or will be acted on appropriately, you can contact the NSPCC's Whistleblowing Advice Line to discuss your concerns: 0800 028 0285

CONTACTS FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Liz Downie (Lead Producer) 07775 778228 liz@erdconnection.org.uk

Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead: Karen Goddard, Trustee, 07789 933558
karengoddard@outlook.com

LOCAL SERVICES:

Suffolk Customer First Support Service – 0808 800 4005 or
<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marf#h1>

Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Email: LADO@suffolk.gov.uk Phone: 0300 123 2044

Suffolk Police – 01473 613500 and ask for the Child Protection Team for the Stowmarket area. In an emergency dial 999

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 0345 606 1499

To report a crime:

Dial 999 – to report a crime in progress or imminent, or if victim is injured.

Dial 101 – to report a crime or concern that has taken place previously.

Appendix A

Recognising Signs and Symptoms of Abuse & Definitions and Signs of Abuse.

“Child abuse and neglect” is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child’s health or development. Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse can occur in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator may or may not be known to the child.

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out definitions and examples of the four main categories of abuse (Physical abuse / Emotional abuse / Sexual abuse / Neglect). These categories can overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse. It is not the responsibility of SYT employees or workers to decide whether a child or young person has been abused or is at risk. But, all employees / workers have a responsibility to report any concerns to a Designated Person.

The following information is designed as a guide to help raise awareness of the different signs of abuse.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse may involve poking, pushing, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. It can also include “fabricated” or “induced” illness where a parent or carer simulates the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child.

Signs of physical abuse that could trigger concern may include:

- An unexplained injury
- An injury which is not consistent with the explanation given, or changing/differing accounts of how the injury occurred
- Bruising to the soft tissue area where there is no bony prominence, e.g. face, back, arms, buttocks, genitalia, ears and hands
- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape, including those that carry an imprint, for example of an implement, a hand or a cord
- Regular “accidental” bruising or injury (including burns, bite marks, scalds, etc.) with or without a history of how the injury occurred.

Any injury should be considered in the context of the child’s history and developmental stage, and any explanation given.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, including persistent criticism, denigration, rejection and scapegoating, such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development.

Emotional abuse may include:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children.

- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger - e.g. witnessing domestic violence
- Exploitation or corruption of children

Signs of emotional abuse may include:

- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer, e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Carer shows a persistently negative attitude towards the child
- A child with a very low self esteem and or who will consistently describe themselves in very negative ways such as “I am stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly”
- Older children may show evidence of mental health issues such as depression, self-harm or eating disorders, or may have behavioural or educational difficulties
- Acting out aggressive behaviour
- A child who is consistently reluctant to go home, or who runs away from home
- A child who struggles to engage in normal social activity and conversation with peers or adults
- A child who discloses living in an environment of domestic abuse, alcohol or substance misuse

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 of what is happening and includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation.

A significant proportion of sexual abuse is carried out by children and young people on their peers. This sexually harmful behaviour should always be taken as seriously as that perpetrated by an adult. The behaviour should not be dismissed as “normal”. A referral to social services should always be made.

Sexual abuse may also include:

- Organised Abuse - where more than one adult acts in agreement to abuse children and/or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for sexual abuse and
- Child Sexual Exploitation - exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive 'something' as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

Signs of Sexual Abuse may include:

- Extreme use of sexually explicit language and/or detailed descriptions or drawings of sexual activity
- Self harm

- Running away or regular absences from home or school (particularly in the case of organised abuse)
- Pregnancy
- A sexually transmitted infection
- Sexually abusive behaviour
- Sexually explicit play, continual open masturbation or aggressive sex play with peers (as distinct from normal sexual curiosity)

Signs of Child Sexual Exploitation may include:

- Being involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or antisocial groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- Being involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Spending time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- Not knowing where they are, because they have been moved around the country
- Going missing from home, care or education.

All members of staff and volunteers with SYT have a relationship of trust with the children and young people who use our services. It is an abuse of that trust, and could be a criminal offence to engage in any sexual activity with a young person aged under 18, or a vulnerable young person under the age of 25, irrespective of the age of consent and even if the relationship is consensual.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. *‘Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.’*

A range of support materials can be found at www.gov.uk/dh/fgm, and some of the risk factors and signs of potential FGM cases are included in Annex B. Section 5B of the 2003 Act places a statutory duty upon regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report ‘known’ cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police.

Neglect: Neglect involves 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 and development.

This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of a child’s basic emotional needs.

There are no specific features which indicate neglect, other than that the child’s basic needs are not adequately met.

Neglect is a pattern, not an event, so it is important to consider the standard of care the child received over time; a pattern of neglect may be missed if each individual event is considered in isolation.

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- Repeated lack of physical and developmental needs, eg persistent inappropriate clothing for the weather, persistent hunger/lack of food or lack of cleanliness
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- Poor supervision of young children resulting in frequent accidental bruising or injury, including child being left at home alone or with inappropriate carers
- Regularly not collected from care settings

County Lines: 'County Lines' and the supply of drugs is effectively a gang of at least three people who have established a drug market in a rural town, with origins to an urban city location.

For Suffolk, it is likely to be a gang from London with them moving into local towns, predominantly Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft although smaller market towns are being targeted - to transport/sell class A drugs (specifically crack cocaine and heroin). Gangs typically use vulnerable young people to deliver drugs to customers and this can include deception, intimidation, violence, and/or grooming. The nature of this activity causes disputes with other gang members or local drug dealers for the custom and hence many violent incidents occur because of this.

Where it is suspected that a young person is involved or at risk from County Lines involvement concerns should be reported via the safeguarding procedures.

Radicalisation and Extremism: 'Safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different from safeguarding them from other forms of harm' (Home Office, Prevent Strategy – June 2015).

There is no single way of identifying a young person who is likely to be susceptible to terrorist ideology. As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities staff should be alert to:

- Young people voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives, including use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture
- Disclosures by young people of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others, especially where the young person has not actively sought these out.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images
- Young people accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites
- Distributing extremist literature and documentation
- Use of extremist language.

If a member of staff has a concern that a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of being radicalised this should be raised to a designated person in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

This policy and attachments will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees of The ERD Connection on a two-yearly basis or before if necessary.

Policy Introduced: September 2023. **Date of next review:** September 2025.
