



Northumberland
County Council

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

2022

www.northumberland.gov.uk

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and adults. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.

What is Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting a child, young person or vulnerable adult's, wellbeing and human rights; supporting them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

It is everyone's responsibility

What is abuse ?

"Child abuse is when a child is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action.

It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect" NSPCC 2021

Making Professional Judgements

- We cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff.
- It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. If in a rare situation which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a child/ vulnerable adult seek guidance and report
- You should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and are fair and in an impartial manner.



CODE OF CONDUCT

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1

- You are the driver of a bus transporting 28 pupils to secondary school.
- One young girl aged 15 is standing up in the bus aisle and refusing to sit down.
- *Question – do you stop the bus to speak to her about her behaviour and refuse to move the bus until she sits on her seat.*
- *Is there anything else you could do?*

CASE STUDY 2

You are transporting two unaccompanied boys to school. Both are in the back seat of the taxi.

They ask you to stop at the nearest shop.

Question – what do you do?

They ask you to go into the shop to buy them cigarettes as they are under 16.

Question - what do you do?

How would you deal with this situation?

CASE STUDY 3

You transport a vulnerable young person with learning difficulties to day centre each day. Parent is elderly and is struggling to get the young person to the taxi stop.

She asks you to call at the house and escort the person to the taxi.

Question - Do you do as she asks?

Are there any risks for you and the individual in doing this?

'YOUR' Responsibilities

YOU are responsible for the way in which you react to and manage situations whilst driving on behalf of
NCC

All of you have a responsibility to keep children, young people and adults safe and to protect them from abuse. They have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity.

DO'S & DON'T'S

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2oTuSqXGsM>

The Designated Officer (DO)

The Designated Officer (DO) works within Children's Services and provides advice and guidance to employers, organisations and other individuals who have concerns about the behaviours of an adult who works with children and young people. Included in this group are volunteers, agency staff and foster carers as well as people who are in a position of authority and have regular contact with children, such as religious leaders or school governors.

The DESIGNATED OFFICER should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

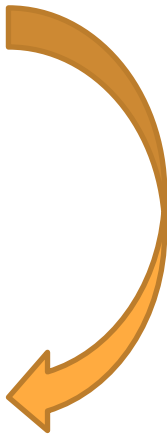
- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Response to an Allegation

Make the situation safe, Then contact The LADO



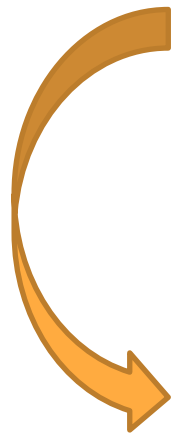
Discussion about the next steps and possible discussion with the police



Allegations Management Meeting



Possibility of a suspension without prejudices



Investigation by police or employer.



CONCLUSION

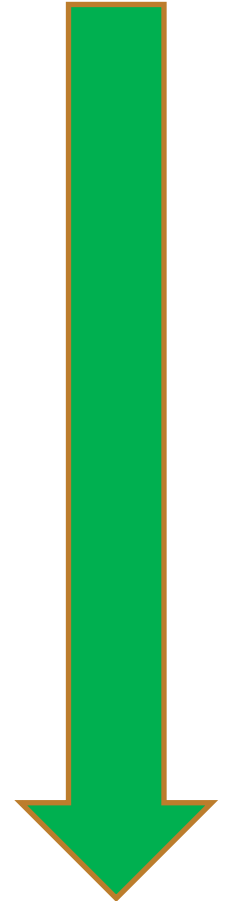
Allegations can be true!





Reducing Allegations

- Personal space and use of touch
- Behaviour management
- Technology and social media
- Guidelines for safe practice



Personal Space – Use of Touch

- How close is too close?
- Is touch ever appropriate / necessary?
- If so, where and when?

Physical contact

WHEN IS PHYSICAL CONTACT OK?

Physical contact

- DON'T DO IT – under 'normal' circumstances unless medical emergency
- Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority.

How to deal with behaviours of concern?

- Patiently
- Politely
- Calmly
- Report immediately - don't allow to develop further

- What experiences have you had?

How to keep everyone safe

- Don't react – act by reporting facts
- Understanding safeguarding process
- Do not place anyone at risk including yourself
- Proportionate response – what is proportionate ?
- Example – if a child does not want to wear a mask during journey what would you do?

What's in a Word?

- Appropriate language
- Humour or sarcasm?
- Politeness



ROLE
model



What does e-safety mean to you ?

- Mobile phones / texts / email
- Facebook (friends and settings)
- Photographs / Instagram / Snapchat
- Online discussions relating to school/pupils / parents



Discussion

A child/ young person wants to share images/
message with driver.

What do you do ?

Social media

- Do not share any information on social media regarding your role
- Do not share contact details with child/ young person or adult
- Photographs – Do not under any circumstances have photos taken with child/ young person or adult
- Do not accept friend request
- Best practice not to accept 'gifts' from child/ young person

COUNTY LINES

County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks which move illegal drugs across different counties/ areas using dedicated mobile phone lines.

They can exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and often use intimidation and violence.

There are currently 2,000 recognised County Lines operating in England and Wales, including the north-east region.

The term "county lines" refers to **the phone numbers, or lines**, dedicated to this activity. The practice is also known by those involved as "going country" (County lines drug trafficking, 2021)

You could be unwittingly couriating by transporting 'victims' of County Lines and therefore possibly be implicit in the crime

IF IN DOUBT - ASK

- Direct manager



- One call 01670 536400



Remember!

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is our main priority
- You are responsible for your own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct which could lead to questions about your intentions.
- You should work, and be seen to work in an open and honest way regardless of child/ adult age, gender or sexuality.
- You should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident
- **Staff should be aware that actions which breach the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.**

