Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures
Pecan

Pecan exists to see an end to poverty in all its forms, we do this through tackling the root causes as well as the symptoms, through:

1. Southwark Foodbank
2. Peckham Pantry
3. Pathfinder and Southwark Voice
4. Employment Support
5. Women's Service
6. Together (community and life-skills activities)

These programmes are aimed at adults, and we do not work directly with children. However, we may work with clients from 16 years of age and families, vulnerable women and men who have children. Children also enter our premises accompanied by adults.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive Pecan's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

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

Our Commitment

PECAN is committed to making and keeping a safe and positive environment. 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.

PECAN's safeguarding children policy and procedures apply to all individuals involved in PECAN.

PECAN will encourage and support partner organisations, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this safeguarding children's policy and procedures.

We believe that:
- children and young people should never experience abuse 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.

We recognise that:
- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

Do you have concerns about a child?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All children have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice.

If you have concerns about a child's safety and/or wellbeing, you **must** act on these.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether a child or young person has been abused. It is, however, your responsibility to act on any concerns.

Role	Name	Contact Details
Safeguarding Officer	Deborah Hayman-Nkhoma	deborah.hayman-nkhoma@pecan.org.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Officer	Gbemisola Oguntuyo-Oloyede	Gbemisola.Oguntuyo-Oloyede@pecan.org.uk
Chief Executive Officer	Peter Edwards	Peter.edwards@pecan.org.uk
Safeguarding Lead Trustee	Jennifer Brown	gateway2education@yahoo.co.uk
Referrals		
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	020 7525 1921 020 7525 5000 (out of hours) - email mash@southwark.gov.uk	
Review date: Every year or sooner in the event of legislative changes or revised policies and best practice. {December 2024}		

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:
- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made

- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/]
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- 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
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

If an adult or child discloses a Safeguarding issue, please follow the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for recording and contact MASH.

Safeguarding-Adults-Policy-and-Procedures-December 2023.pdf

Definition of a child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines a child as everyone under 18 unless, "under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. The definition of a child varies in different legal contexts, but statutory guidance which supports the Children and Young People, includes all children and young people up to the age of 18. A child (pl. children) is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty or between the developmental period of infancy and puberty. It may also refer to an unborn human being, In English-speaking countries, the legal definition of child generally refers to a minor, in this case as a person younger than the local age of majority (there are exceptions like, for example, the consume and purchase of alcoholic beverage even after said age of majority, regardless of their physical, mental and sexual development as biological adults. Children generally have fewer rights and responsibilities than adults. They are generally classed as unable to make serious decisions.

Definitions of Abuse

Information and advice on the different types of abuse can be found on the NSPCC website: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/

- Bullying and cyberbullying,
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking

- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Below are definitions and signs for the following: Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Physical abuse, and Sexual abuse:

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse, which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.

Types of emotional abuse includes:

- Humiliating or constantly criticising a child
- Threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names
- Making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child
- Blaming and scapegoating
- Making a child perform degrading acts
- Not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives
- Pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- Exposing a child to upsetting events or situations, like domestic abuse or drug taking
- Failing to promote a child's social development
- Not allowing them to have friends
- Persistently ignoring them
- Being absent
- Manipulating a child
- Never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes
- Never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

Signs of emotional abuse:

There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point'. That's why it's important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- Seem unconfident or lack self-assurance
- Struggle to control their emotions
- Have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- Act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes: hitting with hands or objects, slapping and punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning and scalding, biting and scratching, breaking bones, drowning.

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also include making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Signs of physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include:

- Bruises
- Broken or fractured bones
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- Scarring
- The effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- Breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it's important to be aware of these. Visible signs include:

- Swelling
- Bruising
- Fractures
- Being extremely sleepy or unconscious
- Breathing problems

- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly.

Sexual Abuse:

When a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced, tricked or manipulated into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong for the abuser to do this to them. They might be afraid to tell someone or behave as though this is normal for them to experience; both are valid for the child to be displaying. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online.

It's never a child's fault they were sexually abused – it's important to make sure children know this.

Types of sexual abuse

There are two types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse. And sexual abuse can happen in person or online.

Contact abuse

Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child or forces the child to make physical contact with someone else. This includes:

- Sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they're clothed or not
- Using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Making a child undress or touch someone else.

Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.

Non-contact abuse

Non-contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:

- Exposing or flashing
- Showing pornography
- Exposing a child to sexual acts
- Making them masturbate
- Forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone.

Find out more about grooming and child sexual exploitation. Although their definitions are slightly different to sexual abuse, they are all forms of child abuse. The following links will give further information on these types of sexual abuse:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/

Signs of sexual abuse

Knowing the signs of sexual abuse can help give a voice to children and can get support for that child earlier on. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out. Some of the signs you might notice include:

Emotional and behavioural signs

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.
- Change in normal behaviour for the child, for example suddenly not attending education or avoiding wanting to go home/running away.

Physical signs

- If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:
- Spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- Behaving as though they have to be online at a certain time, or rushing to get on their phone
- Have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet
- Expressing the need for money, this may be used if they are being blackmailed.
- Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse.

Neglect:

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long-term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing,

Physical neglect
A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.

Educational neglect
A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.

Emotional neglect

A child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.

<u>Medical neglect</u>

A child isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

Signs of neglect

Poor appearance and hygiene

- Being smelly or dirty
- Being hungry or not given money for food
- Having unwashed clothes
- Having the wrong clothing such as no warm clothes in winter
- Having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants

Health and development problems

- Anaemia
- Body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- Medical or dental issues
- Missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- Not given the correct medicines
- Poor language or social skills
- Regular illness or infections
- Repeated accidental injuries, or caused by lack of supervision
- Skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- Thin or swollen tummy
- Tiredness
- Untreated injuries
- Weight or growth issues

Housing and family issues

- Living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- Being left alone for a long time
- Taking on the role of carer for other family members

Change in behaviour

- Becoming clingy
- Becoming aggressive
- Being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- Changes in eating habits
- Displaying obsessive behaviour
- Finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities

- Missing school
- Showing signs of self-harm
- Using drugs or alcohol

Recognizing the signs of these types of abuse is crucial for the protection and well-being of children. If you suspect a child is being abused, it's important to report it to the appropriate authorities to ensure the child receives the help they need.

Responding to Allegations

Pecan will act in a professional manner whenever an allegation of abuse is made and will take action when there is cause for concern. All allegations will be taken seriously. We are committed to implementing measures to support the individuals involved and to work in cooperation with the appropriate agencies, Social Care and Police.

We shall deal with all protection concerns and allegations of abuse as much as possible in a confidential manner; confidentiality cannot be maintained when safeguarding allegations are made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult. It may be necessary to share information with the local authority but service users will always be informed. Comprehensive records will be kept in relation to all concerns, allegations and investigations.

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or young person, this should be reported to **Safeguarding Officer** or, in her absence, **Deputy Safeguarding Officer,** in the absence of both the SO or DSO being absent the concerns should be report to the **Chief Executive Officer,** using the form in **Appendix 1.**

In brief

<div align="center">

You

↓

Line Manager

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Safeguarding Officer (SO) or Deputy Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

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Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

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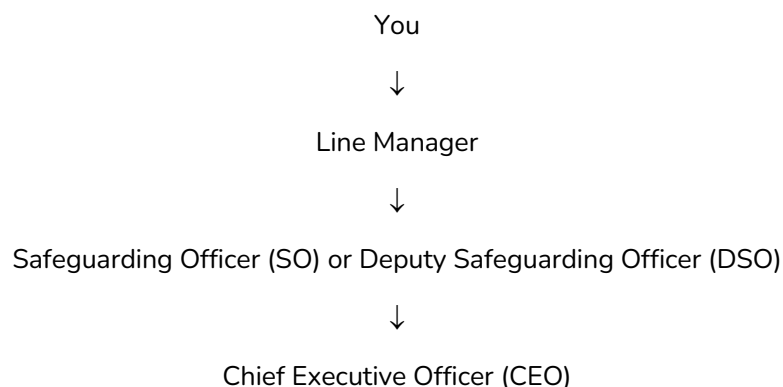
The general procedure for responding to reports of concern is as follows:

1. Concern received by Pecan Line Manager (LM)
2. Pecan LM immediately contacts SO or DSO
3. Pecan LM and SO or DSO discuss nature of concern and agree further action, and incident report is completed.

4. SO or DSO liaise with the CEO
5. Investigate the concerns
6. Decide further Pecan response

When completing the form, you should provide as much information as possible. Leave blank those areas about which you have no knowledge. If you are raising a general concern about behaviour that you have observed then please make this clear. Use as many extra sheets of paper as you need to which must be dated and signed.

The responsibility for investigating allegations of child abuse in the UK rests with the Police and local social care department. The SO will seek the advice of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - see table below:

Referrals	
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	• 020 7525 1921 • 020 7525 5000 (out of hours) • email mash@southwark.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Incident Report Form for Adult, Children and Young person.

- If the adult/child/young person is thought to be in immediate danger, always call the police on 999 first.
- Fill in as fully as possible if you have concerns about the adult/child/young person
- Inform the adult/child/young person about your concerns and that you have a duty to pass the information onto the Safeguarding Officer.

- The Safeguarding Officer will then look at the information and start to plan a course of action,
  in conjunction with yourself, the adult involved, and if necessary, social care or other relevant organisations.

Section 1 – details of adult at risk	
Name of *adult/child/young person *delete as appropriate	
Address	

Date of Birth	
Age (if date of birth not known)	
GP practice (if known)	
Contact number	

Section 2 – your details

Name	
Contact phone number(s)	
Email address	
Line manager or alternative contact	
Name of project / team	
Your Role in organisation	

Section 3 – details of Concern

Detail what you have seen/been told/other that makes you believe the *adult/child/young person at risk is being abused or is at risk of abuse (include dates/times/evidence from records)

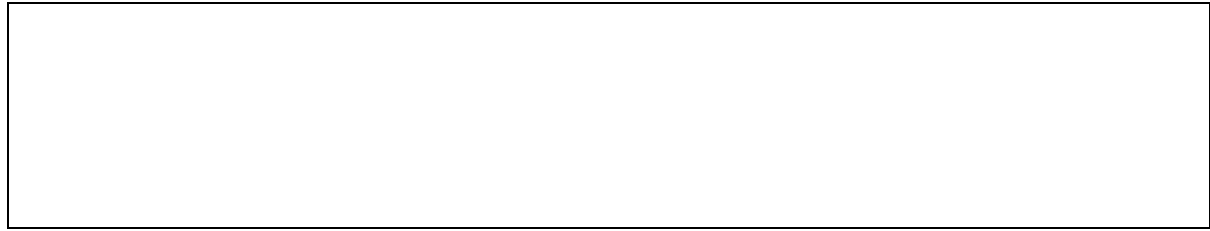| **Section 4 - Abuse type if know (leave blank if uncertain)**		
Physical	Psychological	Financial
Sexual	Discriminatory	Organisational/ institutional
Neglect	Hate incident/crime	Mate Crime
Internet abuse	Modern slavery	Female genital Mutilation (FGM)

Forced Marriage	Domestic abuse	Radicalisation
Self-Neglect	Emotional Abuse	Other

Section 5 - Have you discussed your concerns with the adult? What are their views? What outcomes have they stated they want (if any)?

Section 5B - Have you discussed your concerns with anyone else? E.g. their social worker What are their views?

Section 6 – What action have you taken /agreed with the adult to reduce the risks?

Information passed to Safeguarding Officer, confirm details:	**Referral to Social** **Care Confirm details:**
Contact with the police Confirm details:	**Referral to other agency –** **please confirm details:**

Other – please specify:

No action agreed – state why:

Section 7 – Risk to others

Are any other *adults/children/young people at risk? Yes/No – *delete as appropriate
If yes state, why and what actions have been taken to address these?
If yes state, why and what actions have been taken to address these?
Signed:
Date:

OFFICE USE ONLY
Section 8 – sharing the concerns (To be completed by Lead Safeguarding Officer)
Details of your contact with the adult at risk. Have they consented to information being shared outside of the organisation?
Details of contact with the Social Care Team where the adult at risk lives – advice can be still sought without giving personal details if you do not have consent for a referral
Details of any other agencies contacted:
Details of the outcome of this concern:

Find out more about:
Southwark Council
https://safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk/policies-procedures-guidance/policies-children/
https://safeguarding.southwark.gov.uk/southwark-safeguarding-board/sscp/

Community Southwark
https://communitysouthwark.org/vcs-support/safeguarding/

NSPCC
safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities
safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people
safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people
safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).