

Wren Music Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Revision Summary		
Version	Action	Date
1	Initial policy	11/05/2020
2	Approval – Staff Team	15/05/2020
3	Approval – Board of Trustees	10/08/2020
4	Policy Review – Staff Team	26/04/2021
5	Policy Review – Board of Trustees	10/11/2021
6		

Policy Statement

Wren Music is committed to ensuring we provide a safe environment for the children with whom we work and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children participating in activities run by Wren Music or using Wren Music’s facilities.

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Wren Music. For the purpose of this policy the above people will be referred to as staff. A child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of 18 and will be referred to as ‘child’ or ‘children’.

The purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidance on Wren Music’s expected standards of behaviour to safeguard children and what to do if there is a suspected case of child abuse or where a child discloses that they have suffered abuse.

Roles and responsibilities within the Wren Music

Any adult working with or on behalf of Wren Music has the responsibility to protect children; however Wren Music has given specific responsibility to the following people.

Paul Tucker - The Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) - Telephone 01837 53754

In the event of a child protection issue, (or the suspicion of abuse) the Designated Child Protection Officer should be contacted in the first instance. They will determine the appropriate action to be taken, and notify the local authority if deemed appropriate with relevant issues.

Where the Designated Child Protection Officer cannot be contacted, all issues must be brought to the attention of one of the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officers (appointed as programmes/projects require) and they will determine the appropriate action to be taken, and notify the local authority if deemed appropriate with relevant issues:

Devon County Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 0345 155 1071 / Email: mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Plymouth Gateway Service

Tel: 01752 668000 (Select Children's Services - Option 1) /Email: gateway@plymouth.gov.uk

Torbay's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 01803 208100 / E-mail: mash@torbay.gov.uk

You can also contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

There are four main potential areas of abuse that a child or child may encounter.

Physical

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

Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Imposing inappropriate expectations e.g. interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, preventing the child from participation in normal social interaction
- Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic violence, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another
- Exploitation or corruption of a child including radicalisation.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

Sexual

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

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to protect a child from the exposure of any kind of danger and may include the failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

There are four key elements to Wren Music's Safeguarding strategy: Prevention, Protection, Guidance and Support

1. Prevention

Recruitment - know who we are working with

- Face to face interviews with prospective staff and volunteers
- Pre-employment checks - All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the most recent employer
- DBS checks (if the role requires it) at the start of employment and rechecked every 3 years

Training for staff

- Basic Safeguarding and Child Protection training will be delivered to all members of staff who do not directly work with children as part of the induction process and repeated annually.
- Advanced Child Protection training will be provided during the induction process to those who work with children. This will be delivered by the DCPO and will be repeated to ensure that staff have an annual update.
- Volunteers should be briefed on their first day of the basic safeguarding and child protection issues that they should be aware of, and if required may attend a basic or advanced training session.

Identifying risks

- Risk assessments will be carried out to identify areas of potential hazard and the steps that need to be put in place to reduce the risk. This will include health and safety hazards, codes of behaviour for staff and children, keeping the personal information of the children secure.
- In most circumstances, effective safeguarding can be ensured by training staff. A well-planned project is likely to create few circumstances where children are vulnerable.

2. Protection

Visibility

Risks are minimised for participants when staff working with children are in sight of another responsible adult.

Be publicly open when working with children and avoid situations where staff and individual children are completely unobserved. One-to-ones should take place in a room with a glass panel in the door; where this is not possible, the door should be left open. As a basic principle, when running activities with children, you should ensure that there is always another staff member, volunteer, or employee of a partner organisation in the building who is aware of the work that is taking place.

Physical contact

Physical contact between staff and children is likely to be inappropriate; even in the few circumstances where it can be justified, it is open to misinterpretation. Any form of physical punishment is forbidden, even if a parent, carer or guardian requests it, and staff must not engage in inappropriate touching of any form.

Staff should be aware of how and when physical contact might be appropriate and ensure that they are public at all times. Children must never be picked up or cuddled. Always ask permission and explain the reason for any need to touch. Do not engage in rough, sexually provocative games including horseplay.

Personal activities

Staff must ensure that they do not do things of a personal nature that a child can do for them self. In the event that there is a need for children to undress they should be encouraged to undress themselves as far as is possible and if they require assistance to help each other in groups. If help is necessary from a staff member, two members of staff should be present.

Wherever possible, if a child requires help with toileting, two members of staff must be present and parental permission obtained in writing. Male members of staff should not use urinals when there are children present.

Behaviour towards children

Adults should praise positive behaviour and any criticism should always be constructive - a verbal assault can be as damaging to a child as a physical one. Staff must ensure that they do not make sexually suggestive comments to children – even in fun.

If a member of staff accidentally hurts or distresses a child in any way, or if the child misunderstands something that the adult has said or done, then a senior staff member should be informed immediately (and if present the Designated Child Protection Officer – see end for definition), and an incident form (appendix 2) should be completed and the parents/carers contacted.

Occasionally members of staff may experience inappropriate behaviour from children, including approaches of a sexual or provocative nature. These can be addressed by a response which is clearly discouraging without being insensitive, supported by strict adherence to the principles of openness outlined above, and by behaviour which consistently and visibly treats all children equally. Any instances of such inappropriate behaviour should immediately be reported to the Designated Child

Protection Officer or a Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer, who will record the details, ensure that the staff member is never left unsupported in a vulnerable situation, and address the issue with the child and/or their parent/carer where necessary.

Social Networking sites

It is essential that Wren Music staff do not befriend or connect with children who are participants in projects within the organisation and where a professional relationship exists, on social networking sites such as Facebook. This is to ensure both the protection of staff and the safeguarding of children. Wren Music understands that on occasion there will be staff that are friends with children due to long standing relationships, outside the working context. Where the personal relationship pre-dates the professional relationship the DCPO should be made aware of the nature of the relationship as soon as the staff member begins working for the organisation or the child becomes a participant – whichever is the sooner.

Vulnerability to other children

Children should be given a clear code of behaviour which emphasises that the health, safety and welfare of participants in a project is everyone's responsibility; in an extended project, children should be expected to sign up to an agreed code of behaviour, or ideally be supported to co-create their own code.

Bullying is a common form of abuse and it can take many forms. It includes name calling, mocking, kicking, taking belongings, gossiping, excluding people from groups, and threatening others. This is not an exhaustive list. Any behaviour by one child which affects the well-being of another can be a form of abuse, and should be addressed firmly and in most cases publicly; inaction through fear of making things worse is almost never justified.

In circumstances (such as a residential) where participants spend time unsupervised, staff need to be particularly vigilant, and the children need to feel able to report unacceptable behaviour.

When dealing with an incident of bullying, staff need to consider, in conjunction with the Designated Child Protection Officer, how they will inform the parents/carers of the children involved. It must be remembered that parents/carers have a right to be kept informed of issues affecting their children, and how these issues have been dealt with.

Vulnerability to third parties

It is essential to have clear lines of communication with parents/carers, in order to communicate essential information quickly, especially for:

- emergencies
- missing children
- cancellation of activities
- any other unforeseen problem

The beginning and end of sessions can be a time when children are at risk. Regular sessions must adhere to the following guidelines to ensure risks are minimised:

- A member of staff must take responsibility for the signing-in of children (i.e. a register)
- No child should leave the session unaccompanied by an adult without written consent

- Where children are sharing taxis or travelling on public transport consent must be obtained from their parent/carer/guardian giving them permission to do this
- Procedures need to be in place for parents to communicate changes to normal arrangements, for example when a different adult is collecting.
- Staff need to be able to identify any children who are absent, other than for drop-in sessions, with procedures for checking immediately for unexpected absences. There should be clear expectations of children's levels of commitment and the need to inform staff of unavoidable absences in advance.
- There must be clear procedures and lines of responsibility in the case of the unavoidable delay or cancellation of a session, or the absence of staff. The duty of care towards children cannot be compromised by such circumstances.

Online considerations:

Specific considerations for protecting children in online sessions are outlined more comprehensively in appendix 3. Some key things to remember are:

- Written permission from the parent/carer must be obtained before a session takes place
- Children should be in a room with an open door, on premises with a responsible adult
- Contact with children must only be through Wren Music official platforms, and using Wren Music email addresses
- Online sessions featuring children must not be recorded or live streamed except in exceptional circumstances
- A disclosure must be treated in the same way

3. Guidance

Staff will be given suitable training in accordance with their role in the organisation. This policy and process should be read in conjunction with the training and should be regularly re-read as necessary.

What to do

All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse should be treated seriously and with sensitivity. Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, it is essential that the disclosure is dealt with in the following way:

Listen – let the individual explain what they are feeling. Do not comment upon what has been said, or make suggest alternative explanations.

The child should feel that they are being believed

- Do not pass judgement
- Do not ask leading questions i.e. questions that need a "yes" or "no" answer. Ask open questions to establish what was done and who did it, for example "what happened next?".
- Ask questions of clarification to ensure a common understanding of what is being said, using the child's words and terminology where possible.
- Do not promise that any particular course of action will be taken.

- Do not promise confidentiality to any child who discloses abuse. Where a child or child asks for secrecy they should be told sensitively that the staff member has a duty to refer allegations of abuse to the appropriate agency. As an organisation Wren Music and its staff are legally obliged to inform the relevant authorities if they are aware of any abuse towards a child, and for this reason confidentiality can never be assured.
- Do not rush the child – it may have taken them a great deal of thought and courage to make the disclosure

Inform the participant that you have a legal responsibility to inform the Designated Child Protection Officer who has experience of dealing with similar cases

What to do after a disclosure has been made to you

- Make an immediate detailed and careful note of what has been described, using the child's words wherever possible.
- Immediately inform the Designated Child Protection Officer. They will decide a course of action based upon the evidence and information provided to them, and where appropriate a further discussion with the child. Once a disclosure has been made a referral form (appendix 1) must be completed within 24 hours and submitted to social services.
- Record and maintain a record of the fact that you have made a referral to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I suspect a child is being abused?

A member of staff who suspects that a child participating in a Wren Music project is experiencing abuse will discuss this with the Designated Child Protection Officer or in their absence a Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer. A careful record will be made of any concerns or relevant incidents. Appropriate action will be discussed, and where there are reasonable grounds (e.g. behaviour, physical symptoms or signs) the DCPO will inform Social Services that there is a suspicion of abuse and on what grounds.

If you are working with or for a commissioning organisation on or off their premises (e.g. a school or community group) you should know the contact details of their DCPO and report any concerns to them.

What if I suspect that an adult has engaged in inappropriate behaviour?

As discussed, adults may innocently engage with a child and it be misinterpreted, therefore staff should be aware of making assumptions. If staff are concerned with a particular behaviour that they have witnessed, or the overall behaviour of a person, they should immediately inform the Designated Child Protection Officer who, in conjunction with the relevant colleagues, will decide on the appropriate action to take. This may range from having a discussion with the person in question to conducting an investigation, which may lead to external parties (such as Social Services and the Independent Safeguarding Authority) being informed of any issues.

Any reported issues will be dealt with in full and it will always be assumed that an issue reported has been done so in good faith and honesty. However, if it is established that a

malicious accusation has been made by a member of staff towards another it will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with Wren Music's Disciplinary and Grievance procedure.

If you are working with or for a commissioning organisation on or off their premises (e.g. a school or community group), please ensure you are familiar with and follow that organisation's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and report it immediately to their Designated Child Protection Officer, or other nominated person. You should not wait until you return to the Wren Music office to report it.

What will happen if allegations of abuse are made against members of staff?

Any allegation of abuse against a member of staff will be considered a disciplinary issue and dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. The staff member will be suspended from working with children whilst an investigation is carried out. This does not mean accusations are presumed true, but is imposed to protect the staff member during the investigation and is in line with Local Authority guidelines.

4. Support for staff

Any member of staff working with children may find themselves in the position of discovering or suspecting that a child they work with is or has been the victim of abuse. This can sometimes lead to difficult emotional pressures or apparent conflicts of interest.

Supervisors of staff who work with children should be aware of these pressures, and look for signs that their staff may need additional support. Increased contact, more frequent one-to-one supervision meetings or referral to a counselling service may be appropriate.

Appendix 1

Wren Music Child Protection - Referral Form

Complete as much as possible. To be sent to the Duty Social Worker within the Referral & Assessment team within 24 hours, and a copy to be retained on file at Wren Music.

Date		Time of referral	
Referral made to			
Child's surname		AKA other names	
Forename (s)		Gender	
DOB			
Home Address		Current Address <i>if different</i>	
Telephone number			
First language		Religion	
Does this child have any special requirements, special needs, or require an interpreter			

School and GP

	Address	Telephone
School		
G.P		

Siblings

Names	DOB	Gender	School
Sibling address or other information if different to above			

Parent /Carer

Name	Relationship to the child	
Consent	Yes	No
Has parental consent to this form been obtained?		
If no, is the parent/carer aware of this referral?		

Reason for Referral

Include significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child's or family's life. Cause of concern including details of allegations, their sources, timing and location

--

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Signed	
Name	
Date	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Phone Number	
Email	

Appendix 2

Incident Report Form

In the event of an incident during your session or on your project, please complete and submit this form immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer. Keep a note of the date and time that you submit the form to them. In cases where the Designated Child Protection Officer cannot be contacted, please ensure this information is received by a Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer.

Details of the child

Name	
Date of birth (if known)	
Name parent/carer	
Relationship to the child	
Address	
Phone	
Email	

Details of the person concerned (the person whom the complaint/concern is about):

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Email	
Role within the organisation or project (if applicable):	

Please provide any further details below regarding the incident in question or behaviour that is of concern.

Details of the person making this report

Name	
Today's Date	
Job title/role	
Telephone number	
Email address	

Appendix 3

Online Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Definition of online abuse

- Online abuse encompasses all the characteristics of the wider definition of child abuse as outlined above;
- The term 'online' refers to actions that take place through the internet including private messaging apps, websites and social networks;
- Online abuse has many characteristics, including bullying, and more serious offences such as creating and downloading images of sexually abused children or approaching children to engage in sexual conduct either online or offline;
- **This is known as grooming under The Sexual Offences Act 2003.**

Communication Online

- When leading a session online, all participants (staff, children and vulnerable adults) need to plan and prepare responsibly
- Consideration needs to be given to personal arrangements (e.g. childcare, ICT facilities, location of remote working) in order to maximise the safety and effectiveness of learning activity.
- All online lessons/sessions will be accessed through Wren Music's online learning platform(s) with students/participants invited onto these platforms;
- Teaching and engagement must not take place via any other platforms;
- Platforms will be secure, and students/participants will be invited to log in;
- Staff will only use Wren Music email addresses and not in any circumstances use their personal email addresses.

Ensuring best practice Music Leaders, must:

- Not share or allow access to any personal information;
- Not befriend children/vulnerable adults;
- Only use Wren Music's agreed online learning platforms;
- Behave professionally, both in dress code and manner, as if working face to face;
- Have written permission before a lesson/session takes place:
 - The consent from will also have the contact details of the parent/carer

Parents and Carers

- Before any online lesson/session take place, contact must be made with the parent/carer and written permission received to attend the lesson/session;
- Must be made aware of how teaching will take place and safeguarding process that will be followed;
- Must keep a record of log in details for the online learning platform;

- The log in details for the online learning platform must not be shared with anyone else;
- Must be given opportunities to identify any concerns and additional support that might be needed.

Children and vulnerable adults

- Lessons/sessions must take place in a room with an open door;
- A parent/carer or trusted adult must be on the same premises;
- With written permission from the parent/carer the child can keep a record of log in details for the online learning platform;
- Log in details for the online learning platform will be shared with the parent/carer and must not be shared with anyone else;
- children/participants must not record or take photographs during the lesson/session

Recording lessons/sessions

- Additional written permission must be obtained from the parent/carer to record a session;
- The lesson/session must not be recorded without the knowledge of the children;
- Any recordings made must only be used for tuition or accreditation purposes;
- The music leader must explain why the recording is being made. Let the parent/carer know how the recording will be kept for and that it will only be shared with the parent/carer and the children
- The Music leader must let the parent/carer know where the recording will be saved and how it will be deleted;
- Parent/carer can withdraw their consent at any time, recording must then be deleted;
- A parent/carer must not record lesson/sessions where other children are present
- If a parent/carer wants to record the lesson/session, they must agree in writing that they will not share any recordings. They must agree to delete any recordings on request.

Specific Areas of Online Abuse

- Cyber bullying: Bullying that occurs online – unique and extremely dangerous because it can follow the child wherever they go;
- Emotional abuse: Continual emotional mistreatment of a child that can make them feel worthless and inadequate. This can occur through a lack of positive affirmation and/or a negative response;
- Grooming: This occurs when someone builds a relationship with a child they can sexually abuse, exploit or traffic them;
- Sexting: This occurs when someone share sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves and/or others or sends sexual messages. A

child or vulnerable adult is pressured or coerced into creating or sending these types of images;

- Sexual Abuse: When a child is forced or tricked into sexual activities. For example, a child could be forced to make, view or share child abuse images and/or videos online;
- Sexual Exploitation: When a child is persuaded or forced to create sexually explicit photos/videos that make personal gain or profit for an adult(s). It is the abuse of power or trust by an adult and the vulnerability of a child for sexual purposes.

Specific Signs of Online Abuse

- Spending a lot more or a lot less time than usual online; texting, gaming or using social media;
- Is very distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting;
- Is secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone;
- Suddenly has lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Key Elements to Safeguarding

Prevention, Protection, Guidance and Support

Prevention

Recruitment

- A music leader leading sessions online will go through the recruitment procedures as outlined in Wren Music's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Freelance musicians provide DBS certificate and allow Wren Music access to information

Training

- All Wren Music employees and freelance staff working directly with children or vulnerable adults, or having access to confidential and sensitive information must receive online safeguarding training, which includes guidance on working with children online. Identify Risks
- Risk assessments will be carried out to identify areas of potential hazard and the steps that need to be put in place to reduce the risk when working online.

Protection

Visibility

- The online learning platform must not be closed or completely exclusive;
- Lessons/sessions must take place with the child in a room with an open door;

- A parent/carer or trusted adult must be on the same premises while the online lessons/sessions take place;
- With the use of mobile phone technology, it is important to make sure the child is not alone in a bedroom/room with the door shut;
- It is the music leader's responsibility to stop the lesson/session if they identify that the setting is not appropriate.

Contact Online

- The music leader begins and ends a lesson/session;
- The music leader must initiate the call and the children must not be allowed access to the online room until the allotted time;
- At the end of the lesson/session, the music leader is responsible for closing the link for everyone simultaneously;
- The music leader is responsible for ensuring the system is not left open for others to misuse or for contact to be made outside the scheduled lesson/session.

Appearance

- Both music leader and children must dress appropriately;
- Clothes must be worn that are suitable for public spaces

Positive Behaviour

- The music leader must always behave professionally;
- A verbal assault can be as damaging as a physical one;
- The music leader must praise positive behaviour and any criticism must always be constructive;
- Music leaders must not make sexually suggestive comments, even if it is believed these comments are said in fun, it is not appropriate.
- children may display inappropriate behaviour during a lesson/session online, it could be of a sexual nature. The music leader must clearly discourage this behaviour without being insensitive;
- The music leader must report inappropriate behaviour to the DCPO immediately after the lesson/session. The details of the incident will be recorded and stored confidentially;
- The music leader will be offered support by the DCPO;
- The DCPO will discuss the incident, where appropriate, with the child and their parent/carer.

Social Networking

- The music leader cannot befriend or interact with any children who participates in Wren Music programmes, whether face to face or through online platforms. Wren Music will keep a record of pre-existing personal relationships (e.g. where a music leader is friends with a participant's parents).

Live Streaming

- Live streaming is the broadcasting of live events as they happen over the internet, to a potentially unlimited audience;
- children can still be at risk online when participating as audience members. It's important to remember when online it is easy to develop a false sense of security;
- People may attempt to trick, blackmail or coerce children while online when their defences are down, and this may lead to risk-taking behaviour;
- In cases of online grooming, predators have targeted children using trickery and grooming techniques to get them to perform acts of a sexual nature in front of the camera. This is classified as 'non-contact' abuse.

Vulnerability to other participants

- The music leader must be aware of the potential for cyber bullying within and outside of an online group activity;
- The music leader must report any suspicion or disclosure of cyber bullying;
- An incident form must be submitted;
- Children must be told not to respond to the intimidation and keep all correspondence they receive.

Vulnerability to third parties

- Online lessons/sessions must only be accessible to children or an authorised party. This could be a social worker or key worker assigned to the participant;
- It is important to remember that children who are vulnerable in the real world will be the same online;
- Groomers deliberately target those perceived to be vulnerable;
- children tend to use coping strategies when faced with abuse. They need to be encouraged to report a concern.

Guidance

Live Streaming

Wren Music will deliver live streaming of children only in very exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of senior managers and additional consent from parents/carers. Furthermore:

- Risk assessment must be carried out;
- A music leader, parent/carer or external partner staff must be present;
- children must understand the activity is 'live';
- Remember, a person viewing may pretend to be someone they are not, e.g. adult as a child;
- When performing to an open audience there must be no interaction with that audience;
- A live stream can be closed to an invited audience;
- Children must not disclose personal information;

- It must be understood that what is shared online can be saved and shared again;
- Children must not respond to donation requests;
- Children must understand that they can ask for help if activity is upsetting.

Reporting Abuse

- If a disclosure of abuse is made to a music leader online or the music leader has a suspicion that child abuse issue, they must respond. The one thing they cannot do is do nothing;
- In the first instance the music leader must contact the DCPO and if that is not possible contact the deputy DCPO. The DCPO will make sure the standard reporting procedure is followed and if necessary, promptly referred to the relevant social service agencies;
- As outlined above local authority agencies can be contacted if the DCPO or deputy are not able to be contacted and the matter is considered serious enough to warrant an immediate response;
- The issue will then be the responsibility of the DCPO and /or local authority agency, and not the individual music leader
- The music leader will only be kept informed of developments on the issue if more information is needed and it is considered appropriate.

Allegations against a staff member

All allegations will be fully investigated

- Procedure as set out in Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Investigation led by Wren Music senior team member (DFO or CEO);
- Legal advice can be sought from the staff member's Union
- Recognition of possible malicious allegation;
- Suspension does not constitute an assumption the allegation is true.

Response to a Disclosure

A disclosure may be made to a music leader because that person is seen as a trusted adult. It may be that being online a child is more comfortable than face to face. A disclosure either made online or about an online incident is a child protection incident. Remember:

- Listen
- Do not pass judgement
- The child must feel they are being believed
- Stay calm: do not display disbelief, anger or disgust
- Let them know they are not to blame
- Do not put pressure on the child
- Do not ask leading or closed questions
- Do not promise confidentiality

After a disclosure is made

- Make a detailed note of what has been said;
- Inform the DCPO;
- Complete the incident form, get confirmation of receipt by DCPO and delete your copy of the Incident form, keeping e-mail confirmation;
- When writing the Incident form ask yourself the following questions as a checklist
 - Is the person harmed?
 - Are they currently at risk or is anyone else at risk?
 - Do they need medical attention? Physical/mental?
 - What are their overall needs?
 - What is most important to the person making the disclosure?

Confidentiality

- All disclosed information is treated with the strictest confidence;
- Information will be shared only as appropriate;
- If there is a risk of serious harm a referral can be made without consent of the parent/carer;
- All information will be saved in a secure place.

Support

A disclosure can be challenging and stressful.

Supervisors of staff who work with children should be aware of these pressures, and look for signs that their staff may need additional support. Increased contact, more frequent one-to-one supervision meetings or referral to a counselling service may be appropriate.