

SAFEGUARDING POLICY
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Date for renewal/updates/reviews
Designated Safeguarding Lead

October 2025
Susannah Gorgeous

Finance and Operations Director
iniva - Institute of International Visual Arts
16 John Islip St
London SW1P 4JU
020 7630 1278
www.iniva.org

Deputy designated Safeguarding Lead

Kaitlene Koranteng

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POLICY DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, a **child** is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this Policy, **staff** is defined as anyone engaged in full time, part time or freelance employment, work placements, trainees or volunteers.

For the purposes of this Policy, a **Vulnerable Person** can be anyone according to the Department of Health who 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.

POLICY STATEMENT

iniva is committed to a practice which protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice, which is applicable to all iniva staff and volunteers, including those who work with iniva on a freelance basis.

Safeguarding involves both attitudes and policies, and iniva is dedicated to fostering an approach that prioritises both supportive interactions and safety for those we serve. We will do all we can to limit risk, whilst maximising the engagement of our staff with everyone we work with. Our safeguarding responsibilities apply to children, young adults and vulnerable persons.

It is the policy of iniva to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm (see definitions in Appendix A).

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which children, young people and vulnerable adults can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of iniva's programmes, workshops or other activities.

Staff should, at all times, show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of iniva.

We will safeguard by following the following principals:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately and doing so in a swift and appropriate manner.
- Following carefully the procedures for safer recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and any freelancers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Making this Policy readily available to all staff and the public via iniva's website.

- Reviewing our policy annually, reflecting on any reports made and reviewing the effectiveness of the reporting process every quarter.
- Ensuring that this Policy is fully supported by the Artistic Director, Finance and Operations Director, Board of Trustees and all members of iniva staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Providing the 'first port of call' and offering advice and support to all staff regarding safeguarding issues.
- Disseminating policy and good practice to all staff, in particular:
 - Ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities for being alert to the signs of abuse and referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection, young people and vulnerable adults.
 - Ensuring that all staff have read, and are aware of all of iniva's Policies and Procedures
- Ensuring that new staff receive induction about safeguarding procedures and existing staff receive training as required.
- Organising information relating to safeguarding so that this is accessible to all staff.
- Keeping up to date with changes and developments in safeguarding.
- Making referrals as necessary.
- Liaising with identified safeguarding leads at external venues being used for activities by iniva

2. Nominated Deputy Safeguarding Lead

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Nominated Deputy Safeguarding Lead will assume the responsibilities of this role.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should identify, liaise and work with safeguarding leads at external venues that are being used for activities by Iniva.

In the absence of all of these people, or in respect to a complaint about either of these persons, immediate referral must be made to regional safeguarding authorities (see appendix D).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead should attend Level 2 Safeguarding Training.

3. Staff

All iniva staff should ensure their attitudes include:

- A commitment to treating children, young people and vulnerable persons with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a person is saying.
- Valuing every person.
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make.
- Encouraging and praising people

iniva will ensure that it provides effective management for staff engaged in working with vulnerable people through, supervision, support and training.

It is imperative that each member of iniva's staff is aware of their responsibilities under current safeguarding legislation and has a working knowledge of iniva's procedures. Each member of staff will receive this Policy when they start work at iniva and the reviewed and updated versions of this policy will also be shared with the staff.

STAFF CONDUCT

Staff should:

- Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow.
- Use appropriate language with children and young people.
- Challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect people's right to privacy.
- Always dress professionally and appropriately at all times.
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned.
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts.
- Never allow themselves to enter or become embroiled in inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes.
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

CONTACT WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Staff should:

- Actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable persons or adults, away from others.
- In the event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable person this meeting must be as open as possible, and other iniva staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. If no adult is available as company, to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable adult without first asking permission.
- If a child or vulnerable adult is reliant upon an adult for any aspects of personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, iniva will ensure that there is a responsible adult, or carer present which will never be a member of iniva staff.
- Staff should never allow inappropriate touching from others of any kind.

Online Contact

- Where possible, all contact with children will be conducted via schools, or relevant and responsible adults.
- iniva will only contact a child directly via email, telephone or designated, private Social Media pages with multiple users (where relevant) in reference to workshops, performances or related iniva work.
- iniva will not contact a child directly in regard to non-professional or personal matters.
- iniva staff will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child.
- iniva staff will not take or share photos or video footage of children without confirmation from the Project Manager that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The relevant member of staff related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms and for discussing how best to document projects and will circulate this information.
- Any confidential data that is collected including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need to know basis.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to know the information iniva holds on them.
- When sharing information, iniva staff will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

See appendix C for further use of social media and child protection.

GUIDELINES ON RECRUITMENT

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people and vulnerable adults.

Recruitment procedure

The same recruitment procedure will be adopted whether staff are paid or unpaid, full-time, part-time or freelance.

The following process will be adhered to for any role at iniva that directly relates to working with children, young people or vulnerable adults:

- Advertisements for roles that involve work with children will state that applicants will be expected to have an enhanced DBS check. In most circumstances, staff will have obtained their own check, which should have been undertaken within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances iniva may arrange this. They may not work with children until a clean check is received.
- All applicants must apply to the organisation in the appropriate format for the job, detailing their experience relevant to the role.
- Successful applicants, including volunteers, will be interviewed to assess suitability for the role.
- Substantial gaps in employment will be queried.
- Two references should be taken up before appointing paid staff.
- For posts in which there will be direct contact with children, one reference should be regarding previous work with children.

On appointment

- An enhanced DBS check must be held by iniva staff who will be working directly with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked adult in carrying out their duties in working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Copies of DBS checks for staff and volunteers will be held in the iniva office in a locked filing cabinet or protected digital HR folder.
- As with all staff members, photocopied evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo) will be required and kept in a lockable cupboard at the iniva office or protected digital HR folder.

REFERRAL PROCEDURE

The iniva referral procedure for identified suspicion or concern will be followed at all times. This is outlined in the following two examples:

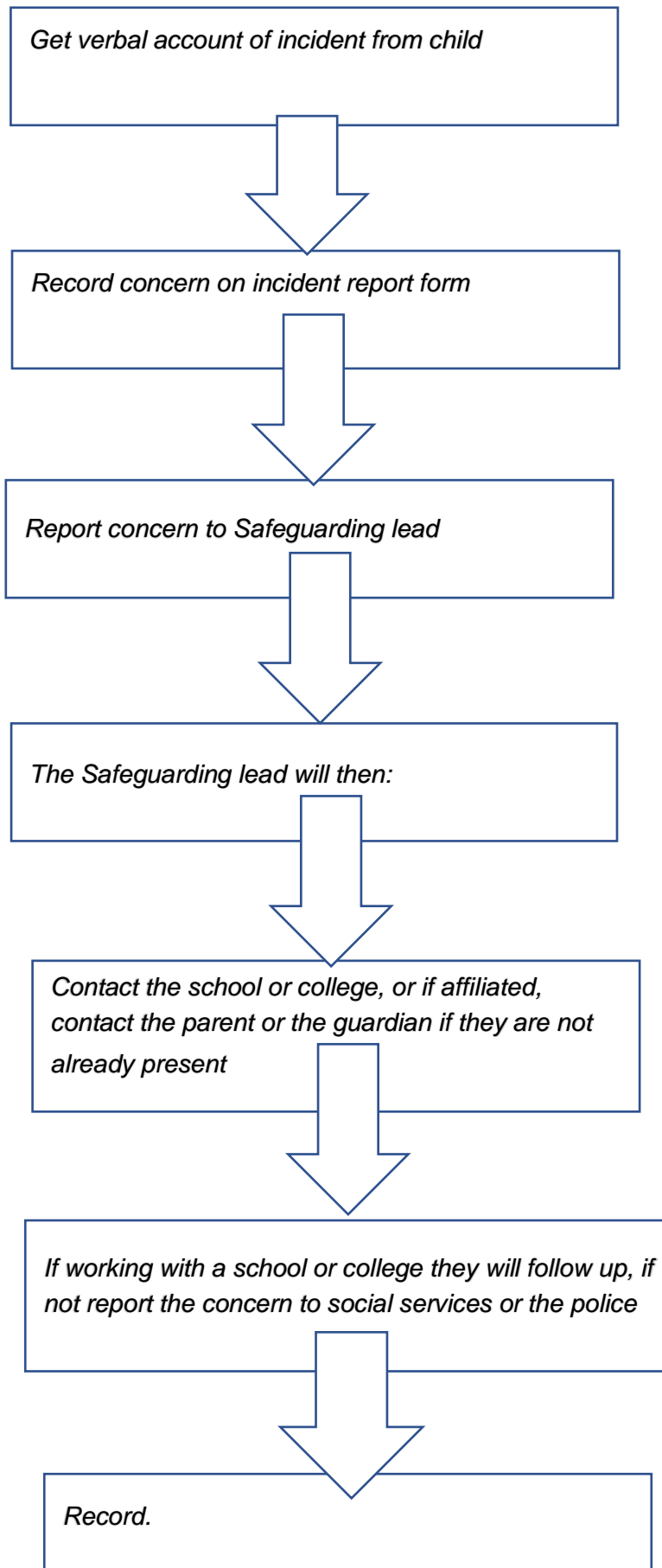
iniva staff identify a safeguarding concern:

- All safeguarding concerns should first be referred to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. No member of staff should act alone.
- Do Not Delay, the concern should be discussed between the referring member of staff and the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, other iniva staff consulted as appropriate, and a decision made.
- If the concern is deemed of a serious nature, particularly one that warrants a referral to Social Services, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- Wherever possible an identified concern will be discussed with the social worker or person responsible for the child or adult (if possible) before any further action is taken. Advice from the social work department will be taken and any concerns discussed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead on this but the person who identified the concern will assist.
- The person who identified the concern will be asked to complete a referral form.
- Information sharing needs to be proportional to the level of concern. Relevant iniva staff and other agencies involved with the child will only be given information on a need-to-know basis.

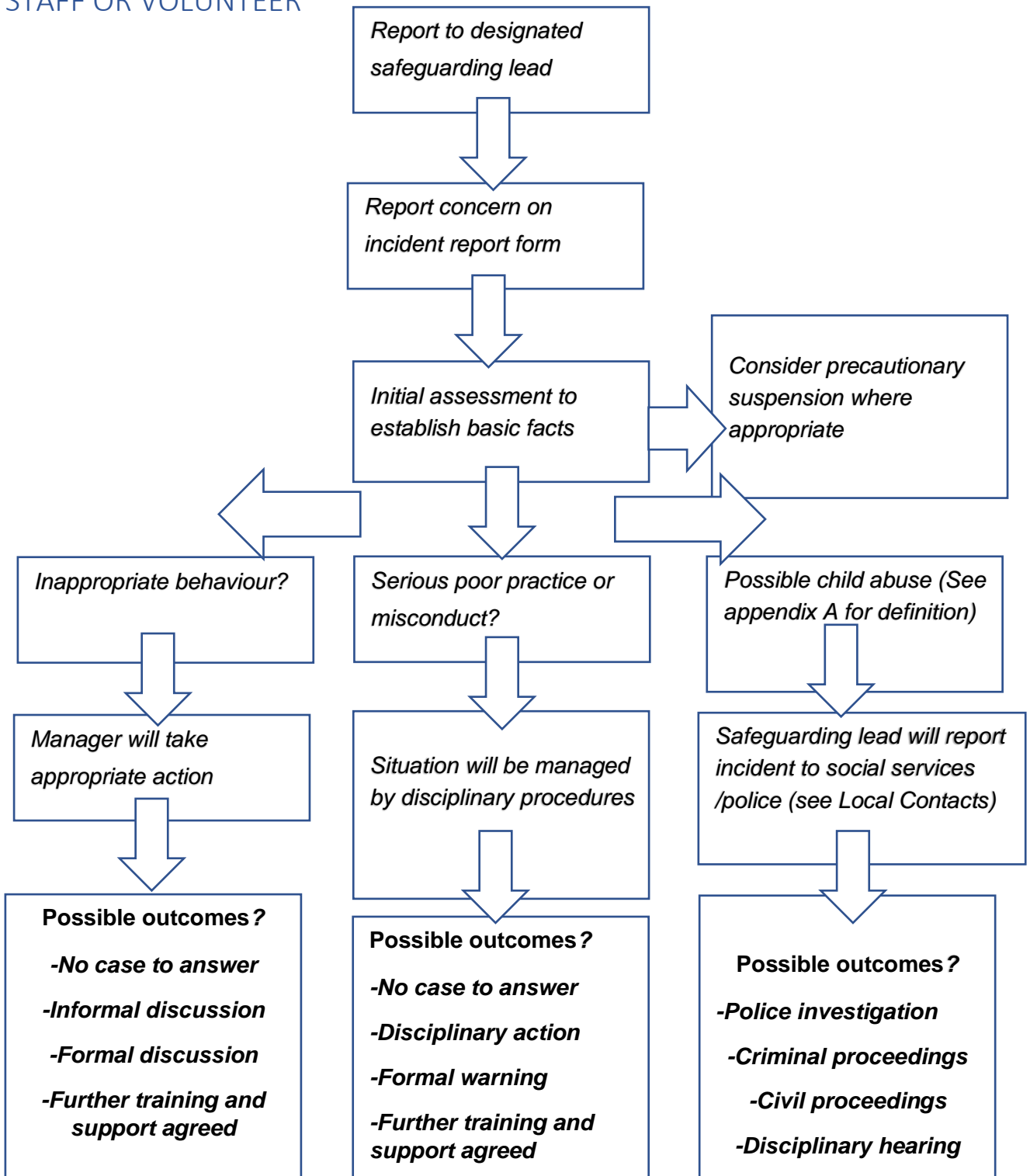
iniva staff are made aware of a child currently on a child protection plan:

- When a child who is already subject to a Child Protection Plan is involved with iniva the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be notified and provided with any relevant information on a need-to-know basis. This information will be shared with other iniva staff on a need-to-know basis.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS MADE BY A CHILD OF SUSPECTED ABUSE



RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER



DISCLOSURE

When information about a concern or suspicion is disclosed, it is important to follow these guidelines:

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as the protection of vulnerable persons will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Allow the people to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Make sure to avoid closed or leading questions, such as those that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," or that suggest a particular answer through their phrasing.
- Offer them reassurance without making promises and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the people to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use people's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what they were trying to say.
- Contact one of the iniva Designated Safeguarding Leads for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

RECORD-KEEPING

All records, information and confidential notes should be kept and digitally saved in the confidential folder around Safeguarding Incidences in HR or relevant closed folder.

Only the Designated Safeguarding Leads will have access to these files.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

In any case where someone has concerns about staff conduct, suspected abuse or an allegation is made, an in-person meeting will be required followed by a written record using an Incident Report form (see Appendix B). Details must include:

- Name of Child/ Vulnerable Adult
- Date of Birth of Child/ Vulnerable adult (if available)
- Approximate Age of Child/ Vulnerable adult if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action Taken
- Were the parents/guardian/carer informed?

The record be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and if necessary, will be investigated following our referral procedure.

DECLARATION

By signing this page, I confirm I have read and understood iniva's Safeguarding Policy and will abide by its content at all times.

Name:	
Position:	
Signature:	
Date:	

APPENDIX A – WHAT IS ABUSE?

The following definitions are taken from [The Department for Children Schools and Families \(2013\) Working Together to Safeguard Children document](#).

ABUSE: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

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

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it alone is still a form of abuse.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NEGLECT: 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 or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);

- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs

APPENDIX B – INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary:	
Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:	
Name of staff member completing form:	
Date the incident took place:	
Time:	
Where did the incident take place:	
Who else was involved/witnessed the incident:	
Details- Please provide a statement of fact (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):	
Action taken:	
Parents/Guardian informed? Yes/No	
Name of staff member reporting incident:	
Signature of staff member reporting incident:	
Date:	

APPENDIX C – USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND CHILD PROTECTION

We acknowledge the impact and involvement that social networking & messenger sites/apps such as Facebook, Twitter (X), Threads, Instagram and Snapchat have on the lives of young people and their role in the ways which they interact with each other. There is huge potential for these tools to be used by iniva to communicate activities beyond face-to-face groups.

At the same time, we acknowledge the dangers and potential risks that these sites can pose to young people and iniva staff and have the potential to be abused as ways of interacting. Therefore, as an organisation any staff member using social networking as part of their ongoing work with young people must abide by the following guidelines to safeguard both staff and the young people involved.

Guidelines *Use of messages and communication with individuals*

All social networks allow private messaging to take place between ‘friends’. There are times when one-to-one communication is appropriate however we would strongly advise that any one-to-one communication using social media is kept to a minimum and that it is done via a platform that keeps a record of these messages (i.e. Facebook messenger) and is ideally done using a specific work account.

When using social networks to communicate with young people we highly recommend that you:

- Use designated iniva Facebook account. This account may be examined by any of the iniva Directors and should be used for iniva purposes only and not as a workers personal account.
- Any communication using this Facebook account should be kept public or kept logged. Messages should be saved and kept (both incoming and outgoing).
- All contact with young people using Facebook should be kept appropriate and not use language that could be misunderstood by a parent or guardian.
- It is recommended that staff do not use this account after 10pm in order to maintain a safe boundary between work and personal life.
- All communication with young people on social media can only be done with parental consent.
- If you are concerned about a young person from their posts on a social media network, then you should seek further advice from the Safeguarding Lead and consult the safeguarding policy.

Specific Site Guidelines

Facebook

Young people are only added to a specific work Facebook account with parental consent. Facebook has a function that allows us to download an archive of the profile, this will be done periodically to enable the administrator of said group to have a local copy. Messaging on Facebook is typically logged which means a record of individual and group messages are automatically kept.

When using group messages another adult will always be part of this message.

Twitter (X)/Threads

The public nature of the majority of Twitter (x) and Threads profiles means that young people can freely choose to ‘follow’ you on the platform. It also means you can freely choose to ‘follow’ them back.

If you use a public Twitter (X) or Threads account or one specifically for your work you should make sure that your content is appropriate (i.e. a good witness) and only reply to people when absolutely necessary.

If you use Twitter (X) or Threads we recommend using public communication as much as possible as the direct message feature isn't easy to back up or keep a log of.

Instagram

We recommend using Instagram for the purpose of sharing photos only rather than using messaging features as these are difficult to keep a backup of. Permission will be obtained before sharing photos of young people.

Snapchat

The nature of Snapchat makes it completely inappropriate for use with young people as messages disappear after a designated amount of time. If you use Snapchat as an individual, please ensure that you have to give permission for people to follow you and that you do not add any young people.

APPENDIX D - LOCAL CONTACTS

Safeguarding Adults Westminster

If you are concerned that an adult may be at risk of abuse, harm or neglect from either themselves, an individual or an organisation, please contact City of Westminster:

- Phone the Safeguarding Helpline: 020 7641 2176
- Email: adultsocialcare@westminster.gov.uk

Safeguarding children

If you have concerns about a child you are working with, you should visit The City of Westminster [Children's Social Care](#) website and complete a Westminster Multi-Agency Assessment and Referral (MAARF) form. The first time you use the service you will need to register.

If you are concerned about a child who is in immediate risk, please use the contact numbers below:

Children's Services team 020 7641 4000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Emergency Duty Team 020 7641 2388 (outside of these times).

Westminster Police: 303-658-4360