

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

## 1. REFERENCES

The Children Act 1989  
Diversity and Equality Policy  
Disciplinary Procedure  
Protection of Vulnerable Adults Procedure  
Service Risk assessments  
Whistle Blowing Policy  
Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd Rules for Probity  
Recruitment and Selection Policy  
Confidentiality Policy

## 2. DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd recognise that true diversity can only be achieved when there is a commitment to combating the effects of existing barriers to fair and equal treatment. Within society certain groups are unfairly discriminated against e.g. on the grounds of race, gender or gender identity, disability, sexual orientation and most importantly in this case, age – and as a result disadvantaged in terms of their access to services.

## 3. PURPOSE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd acknowledges it has a responsibility for the safety of children who come into contact with the organisation. It also recognises that good child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved in Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's work, including staff, as they can help protect them from erroneous or malicious allegation.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd does not look after children under 16 and has no powers to intervene in parental issues unless the child is in immediate danger. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd also does not have the power to investigate child protection issues, which is the role of social services and/or the police. However, it has a duty to inform the authorities if a child is considered to be in a harmful situation.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is committed to practices which protect children from harm. For the purpose of this policy, Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's staff include not only its full-time employees but trainees, volunteers and contractors. All staff who have unsupervised access to or contact with children are required to:

- recognise and accept their responsibilities;
- develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm; and
- report concerns following the procedure below.

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is concerned that, in all its activities, it safeguards the well-being of every person in our community, of whatever age. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd takes extremely seriously the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of every member of our community, and particularly the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children and young people.

## 4. SCOPE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd endeavors to safeguard children by:

- a) Adopting child protection procedures and a code of practice for all who work on behalf of the organisation;
- b) Reporting concerns to the authorities irrespective of practice for all who work on behalf of the organisation
- c) Following carefully procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and Trustees; and
- d) Providing effective management for all staff and volunteers through support and training.
- e) Reviewing its Child Protection Policy and Code of Practice at regular intervals.

Furthermore, Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd plans the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITY

Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Are responsible for ensuring this procedure is implemented</li><li>▪ Are responsible for ensuring that reporting structures are used and followed</li></ul>
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Must follow this procedure</li></ul>

## 6. DEFINITIONS

### Child

For the purpose of this procedure, a child is considered any person age 18 or under.

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may be the result of a deliberate act, but could also be caused through the omission or failure to act to protect.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### 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, or consents to, what is happening. It may involve physical contact, including rape or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, and by other young people. It also includes non-contact activities such as involving children in watching or taking part in the making of pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways.

### Neglect

Neglect is 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. It may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or failing to ensure that a child gets appropriate medical care or treatment.

## 7. POLICY STATEMENT

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd is committed to reviewing its Child and Protection Policy and Code of Practice at regular intervals.

- 7.1 All staff working on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will accept responsibility for the welfare of children who come into contact with the charity in connection with its tasks and functions; and that they will report any concerns about a child or somebody else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
- 7.2 There is a designated child protection person within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who will take action following any expression of concern and the lines of responsibility in respect of child protection are clear.
- 7.3 The designated child protection person knows how to make appropriate referrals to child protection agencies.
- 7.4 All those who come into contact with children on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd should adhere to the Code of Practice in relation to children.
- 7.5 Information relating to any allegation or disclosure will be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should for record information and the time-scales for passing it on.
- 7.6 The Children Act 1987 states that the "welfare of the child is paramount". This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- 7.7 Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's Child Protection policy, and its duty of care to children, will be referred to or included in recruitment, training and policy materials where appropriate, and the policies are openly and widely available to staff and actively promoted within the organisation.
- 7.8 A culture of mutual respect between children and Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd staff and volunteers will be encouraged in all its activities, with adults modeling good practice in this context.
- 7.9 All staff and volunteers and anyone in paid or unpaid work on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who could at any time have unsupervised access to children will be checked appropriately.
- 7.10 It is part of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children that anybody who encounters child protection concerns in the context of their work on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.

## 8. CODE OF PRACTICE

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd expects that all its staff, which for these purposes includes anybody in paid or unpaid work on its behalf, will be aware of this Code of Practice and adhere to its principles in their approach to all children.

1. All Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd activities are to be organised so that staff generally spend no time alone with children and in any event no longer than is necessary for the function of the event in question.
2. Parents/carers are informed clearly that they remain responsible for the welfare of their children at all Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd events – but Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd staff are also responsible for working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard the welfare of their children.
3. It is important for staff not to have physical contact with children when their parents/carers are not present, and this should in any event in general be avoided.
4. It is not good practice for staff to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.
5. Staff must not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
6. It is important for staff not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If this gives rise to a child protection concern it is important for staff to follow Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern themselves.
7. Staff need to remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
8. Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

## **9. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSON (DCPP)**

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd has appointed a designated child protection person who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. This person is Carmen Llorente, contactable by telephone on **0208 904 2242 or 07506 828 939** or by email at [Carmen.llorente@yes-ltd.org.uk](mailto:Carmen.llorente@yes-ltd.org.uk)

The role of the designated person(s) is to:

1. Know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern coming to the notice of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd
2. Provide information and advice on child protection within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd
3. Liaise with the legal guardian prior to contacting Social Services, unless the health & safety of the child would be put at risk by doing so;
4. Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover.
5. Liaise with local social services and other agencies, as appropriate.
6. Keep relevant people within Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd informed about any action taken and any further action required; for example, disciplinary action against a member of staff.
7. Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence.
8. Advise Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd of child protection training needs; and
9. Liaise with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to review the operation of the Child Protection Policy regularly to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice.

## **10. RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO A CHILD MAKING AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE**

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said.
3. 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.
4. Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
7. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
9. Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
10. It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection person in the organisation.

## **11. PROCEDURE**

### **11.1 Procedure for reporting concerns**

Staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

1. The conduct of a member of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's staff;
2. A child "disclosing" abuse;
3. Bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by
4. Unusual behaviour by a child.
5. A disclosure or unusual behaviour of an adult, including members of staff from other agencies.

If a member of staff has such concerns they should be reported to a DCPD using the form as set out as part of the process flowchart

Concerns about a specific child should be reported immediately by telephone to the DCPD and confirmed in writing within 24 hours using the form available from the DCPD. Delay could prejudice the welfare of a child. If the concerns relate to the conduct of a member of staff these should be reported by phone to the DCPD at the earliest opportunity.

The DCPD will consider the report and either refer this immediately to the authorities or, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with the NSPCC) decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns.

If the allegation of abuse is about the conduct of a member of staff, then the allegation should be considered as an allegation of gross misconduct under the disciplinary procedure and the member of staff should be suspended immediately, pending an investigation (Section 6.3 Disciplinary Procedure).

The member of staff should have access to all the support provided by Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd and should be made clear that suspension is not a sign of presumed guilt, just a precautionary act while the claim is investigated.

### **11.2 Recruitment and selection procedures**

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd has a policy that Staff have a minimum of unsupervised access to or contact with children in the normal course of their work. They are required to develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm; and report concerns following the procedures set out in this document.

No-one shall work or volunteer within or on behalf of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd who:

- has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933; or
- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people.

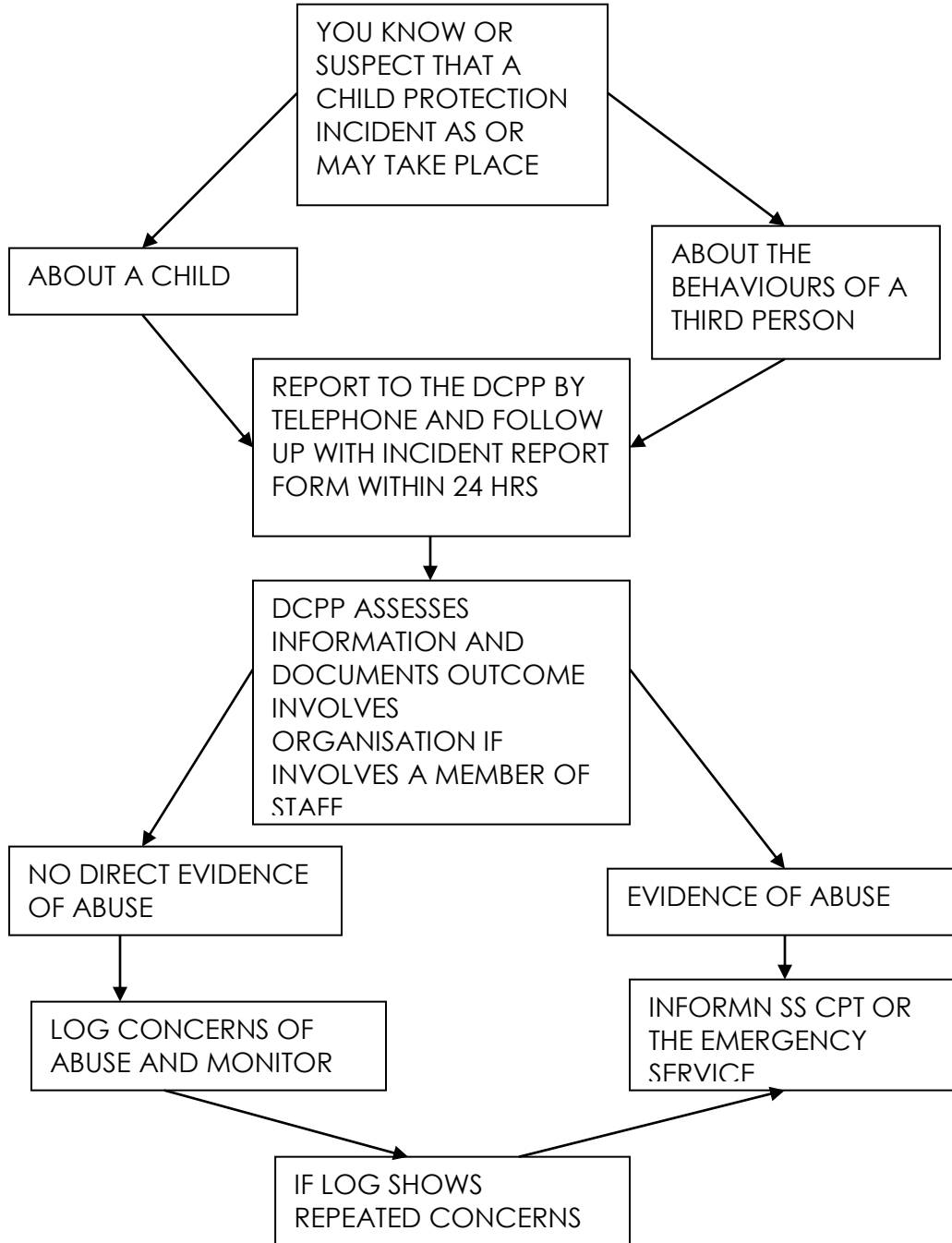
This means that:

- all who work or volunteer to work for Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will be required to be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau, and are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work; and (from 2009 individuals will need to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority).
- those responsible for the appointment of such workers and volunteers must take all reasonable steps, including obtaining Disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau, to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work with young people under the auspices of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd

Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures for staff and volunteers in the context of child protection have been adopted by Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd and include the following.

1. A clear definition of any role so that the most suitable appointee can be identified.
2. Identification of key selection criteria.
3. A wide circulation of vacancies to ensure equal opportunities.
4. Confirmation of the identity of the applicant including personal details obtained either through using an application form where appropriate, or through other means.
5. Requirement of a declaration of previous convictions and submission to formal check, together with the issue of the Child Protection Policy for those candidates whose work will bring them into contact with children or who will have a management responsibility in relation to those whose work does bring them into such contact.
6. A clear guarantee that disclosed information will be treated in confidence and not used against applicants unfairly, including adherence to the Criminal Records Bureau code of practice.
7. Documentary evidence of qualifications.
8. Use of several selection techniques to maximise the chance of safe recruitment, e.g. interview, references, checks.
9. At least one representative from Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd meeting personally with every applicant, and an exploration of their attitudes towards working with children.
10. Written references.

### 11.3 Process Flowchart for Reporting Concern



#### **11.4 Monitoring**

The Designated Manager will collate all abuse cases every 3 months to:

- Analyse how each reported case was dealt with
- Ensure this procedure was followed in all case
- Identify any themes emerging in abuse cases
- Identify any disincentives to reporting suspected or actual abuse
- Identify any potential service improvements which can be made

The designated Manager will produce a report for discussion at meetings of the Senior Management meeting and Management Committee Meeting.

#### **12. FORMS**

Appendix 1: Report Form

Appendix 2: Individual Log Form

# APPENDIX 1

## CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT MONITORING FORM

<b>Name of Staff Reporting</b>	
<b>Date of Incident</b>	
<b>People Involved, including Ages</b>	
<b>Date Reported to DCP</b>	
<b>Type of Alleged Abuse</b>	
<b>Details of Incident</b>	
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



<b>Date Seen by DCP</b>	
<b>Action by DCP</b>	
<b>Follow Up Action Required</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Signed Off by DCP</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

**APPENDIX 2**

**CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT LOG**

<b>Customer name and address</b>	<b>Date of incident</b>	<b>Date reported</b>	<b>Nature of abuse</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Ref to social service?</b>	<b>Date sent to DCCP</b>

## SAFEGUARDING ADULTS – ABUSE AWARENESS POLICY

### 1.0 Introduction

Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd recognises that all the people using its services have the same human value, rights and responsibilities as anyone else. They should therefore be shown the same dignity and respect as others in society. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd condemns all forms of abuse and neglect.

### 2.0 Definition of Abuse

- Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons (*D.O.H. 'No Secrets' Report*)
- Abuse is when a person or persons have caused harm, or may be likely to do so, to the physical, sexual, emotional, financial or material well being of a vulnerable person.
- Harm may be caused by direct acts or by failure to provide adequate care. It may be systematic and repeated or may consist of a single incident.

### 3.0 Definition of Vulnerability

The Law Commission (1995) defined a vulnerable adult as someone:

“Who is 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 himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.”

### 4.0 Forms of Abuse

Abuse, which is a misuse of power, can take many forms including the following:

- **Physical abuse** (including actual or threatened physical attacks, verbal assault or neglect.)
- **Sexual abuse** (including rape, other sexual assault, threatened touching or inappropriate sexual remarks.)
- **Emotional abuse** (including any actions or comments which fail to show dignity and respect for the individual.)

- **Financial abuse** (including misappropriation of the personal finances of people using our services, borrowing from people using our services etc.)
- **Neglect**, which is a failure to properly care for the physical and emotional needs of the person and to protect them from harm.
- **Institutional abuse** where the rituals and routines mean individuals have to sacrifice their lifestyle to conform with those of the institution
- **Discriminatory abuse** (including that based on a person's race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion & social status)

## 5.0 Objectives

The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that people using our services do not suffer from abuse or neglect. Where incidents of abuse or neglect are reported or suspected, Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will seek to deal with such incidents as speedily as possible, providing positive help, support and assistance to the alleged victim, and taking action against alleged perpetrators wherever possible.

## 6.0 Strategy

In order to achieve the above objectives Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will:

6.1 Take up two written references and undertake enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks on all new staff, including volunteers

6.2 Ensure that all staff working directly with people using our services are informed of Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd.'s stand against abuse and neglect, and receive training in abuse awareness including instruction in what to do if:

- Someone tells them that they are being abused
- They suspect that a person is being abused
- A third party reports suspected abuse to them

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd.'s confidential reporting policy.

6.3 Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will take a victim based approach to reports of abuse and neglect. Any person reporting an alleged incident of abuse or neglect will be treated with dignity and respect. Where an allegation has been made in good faith the person making the allegation will be treated without prejudice in the future, even if the allegations prove to be unfounded. The alleged victim will be offered assistance where required (e.g. from an advocate) in order to make their allegation, and offered help, support and most importantly protection from the risk of further incidents of risk.

6.4 Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will be careful to protect the service user's right to confidentiality, and indeed that of the alleged perpetrator, as an allegation may prove to be unfounded. Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will establish clear guidelines as to who needs to be informed regarding different forms of alleged abuse or neglect in different projects. Those needing to be informed may include Social Services, the Police, the Commission for Social Care Inspection and Supporting People.

6.5 Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will consult with staff, other professionals and service users about the operation of this policy.

6.6 Where a member of staff is accused or suspected of abuse or neglect they will be subject to Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's disciplinary procedures, and may be subject to criminal prosecution. A member of staff who fails to report an incident of abuse or neglect will also be subject to Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd's disciplinary procedure.

## **PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH A SUSPICION OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE**

### **1.0 Introduction**

All staff have a responsibility to act where they suspect abuse may be taking place or an allegation of abuse has been made. Doing nothing is not an option. Staff must:

1.1 Contact the emergency services immediately where their presence is required (e.g. a person has been injured and requires an ambulance or someone is at risk of an imminent violent attack and a police presence is required. In the event of an allegation of rape, the GP and police must be consulted regarding referral to a Rape Crisis facility.)

1.2 Within the limits of your relationship with the alleged victim, their mental capacity, and the complexities of the situation, discuss your concerns with the alleged victim and the options available to them and seek their consent for steps you believe to be necessary. Explain that you will need to discuss your concerns with the Welfare Officer and/or a manager within your organisation. If consent has not been given it may be deemed appropriate to go against the alleged victim's wishes where:

- They or others are at risk of serious harm
- Staff assess that they are unable / incapable of making an informed decision for themselves
- They are not the only ones affected and risks to others need to be considered, e.g. where a child is involved, their safety will always be paramount.
- Where consent was not given this should always be mentioned at any Adult protection meetings

1.3 Inform your line manager and/or Welfare Officer, or if unavailable the appropriate on call manager, who will make the initial risk assessment and decide on further action required with or without the consent of the alleged victim.

1.4 You should write a report as quickly as possible after talking to your manager while the information is still fresh.

1.5 Where outside bodies need to be contacted this should be done without delay. The following should be contacted as required:

- The relevant Social Services department
- The Police if there is a suspicion that a crime may have been committed
- The Commission for Social Care Inspection if the service is registered
- The Supporting People team if the service is in receipt of Supporting People funding (this will be for information only)

Where an Adult Protection Investigation is led by Social Services or the

Police, (who take the lead if they suspect a crime has been committed), Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd will participate fully in all strategy meetings.

- 2.0** If the alleged abuser is a member of staff then the abuser should not be informed that any allegation has been made until the police have been advised of the situation and confirmed their course of action and their requirements of the Manager/Project. During this conversation, the police should be informed that the alleged perpetrator would be suspended from duty immediately following the telephone call. Should the Police specifically request that the perpetrator is not suspended this must be discussed carefully and adhered to if at all possible without putting service users at risk.
- 3.0** The alleged abuser should be suspended in accordance with this Organisation's personnel procedures pending further investigations
- 4.0** Where the alleged perpetrator is not a member of staff, steps must be taken to ensure the immediate safety of the service user and all other people using our services felt to be at risk.
- 5.0** Staff on duty must ensure that anything relating to the suspicion or allegation should not be touched or altered in any way. For example the person's belongings should not be touched or moved, clothes should not be washed, and the room involved should be locked where possible. The service user should be advised and encouraged not to wash. The police should be advised immediately if the person using our services wishes to do so.
- 6.0** Staff are reminded:
  - 6.1** That they must not discuss the matter with any other staff employed within the organisation as this could jeopardise any investigation.
  - 6.2** That confidentiality is essential. Any breach of confidentiality is a disciplinary offence.
  - 6.3** Not to talk to the press. Any enquiries should be referred to the Chief Executive.
  - 6.4** That if for any reason it is inappropriate to involve the Line Manager or any Senior Manager the confidential reporting procedure (whistle blowing procedure) should be used.

- 6.5 That following any proven investigation of allegation of abuse or suspected abuse against a member of staff they will be subject to Youth Engagement Solutions Ltd.'s disciplinary procedure.
- 6.6 At all stages of this procedure accurate reports **must** be recorded, including dates and times, of telephone conversations, meetings attended, action taken and outcomes, and any other relevant information.
- 6.7 At the conclusion of all investigations a meeting will be held with staff in the project, involving a senior manager to formally notify closure of the investigation, to consider lessons learned for the future and to allow staff the opportunity to discuss feelings if this is appropriate.