Merry Go Round Toy Libraries  
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**Safeguarding Policy**

**Purpose and Aims**  
The purpose of Merry Go Round Toy Libraries'safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for the workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children/young people who attend our toy libraries. The policy aims to ensure that:

* All our children are safe and protected from harm.
* Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices;
* Staff, members, volunteers, committee members, trustees and visitors are aware of the expected behaviours and the toy libraries' legal responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children.

**Ethos**   
*‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.’* Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Safeguarding at Merry Go Round Toy Libraries is considered everyone’s responsibility and as such our toy libraries aim to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The toy libraries recognize the contribution they can make in ensuring that all children registered or who use our services feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. We will work to ensure children’s safety by working in partnership with other agencies I,e Early Help, MASG, Police and Social care as well as seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities that will help to equip our children with the skills they need.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with the following:

* [Working Together to Safeguard Children](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)
* [What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)
* [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf)
* [The Prevent Duty 2015 advice for childcare settings](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf)
* [Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)
* [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations)
* [Female genital mutilation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation)

**Responsibilities and expectations**  
The Toy Library committee takes seriously its responsibility under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under “working together” to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify, and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer significant harm. We recognise that all staff and volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern.

The committee should also ensure the following:

\* that the safeguarding policy is made available to parents and carers if requested.

\* that all staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with the children who attend our toy libraries.

\* that the toy libraries have procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff or volunteers.

\* the safe and appropriate use of cameras, mobile phones, technology and on line equipment within the toy libraries.

\*be aware of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (The Prevent Duty) is implemented, taking into account the Local authorities ‘*Prevent’* policies, protocols and procedures

\* a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in our toy libraries.

\* that our procedures will be annually reviewed and up-dated.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Andrea Bristow**07702 747296 [coordinator@mgrtoylibrary.org](mailto:coordinator@mgrtoylibrary.org)

**The Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding is Nicky Jeffrey**07879046501[office@mgrtoylibrary.org](mailto:office@mgrtoylibrary.org)

**The responsibilities for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are:**

\* to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in the toy libraries are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency.

\* All adults (including volunteers) new to our toy libraries will be made aware of this policy and the procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the DSL and have these explained, as part of their induction into the toy library.

\* Be responsible for arranging the toy library’s safeguarding training for all staff. The DSL will ensure that the safeguarding training takes place at least every three years;

\* for ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones through the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the appropriate policies and procedures.

\*To ensure allegations regarding adults in the setting are effectively responded to and referred to the appropriate agency

**Staff roles and responsibilities will include:**

* maintaining an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.
* to provide a safe environment in which children can play and learn.
* knowing what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
* being able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
* recognising the barriers for children when wanting to make a disclosure (verbal or non-verbal)
* raising any concerns for a child following the setting’s safeguarding policies and procedures
* Attending regular safeguarding and child protection training.

**All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on immediately. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the DSL.**

**All Adults, including the DSL, have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to the relevant agency including MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) via the ‘request for Support Form’, Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS) – Social Care, or the Police.**

**Recognising concerns, signs and indicators of abuse**

Any child, in any family, in any community setting could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here.” We also recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them, or more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Abuse and Neglect may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding. This may include (but not limited to), female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, serious youth violence.

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to parental drug taking, alcohol abuse, mental ill health and domestic abuse can put children at risk and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.

Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, (familial and contextual) and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in appendix 1.

**Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities**

All children have the right to be safe, yet research shows that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused. A number of factors have been identified as to reasons why these children are more at risk (see bullet points) and we are aware of these and endeavour to protect all children.

* a general reluctance of people to believe that disabled children are abused
* limited opportunities to seek help from someone else
* a skills gap between disability and child protection workers
* inadequate teaching about personal safety skills e.g. NSPCC pants campaign
* issues relating to the child’s specific disability or special educational need, e.g. difficulties in communicating or an inability to understand what is happening

**Prevent**

The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015, the Act places a Prevent duty on settings to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

Settings subject to the Prevent Duty will be expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas.

* Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism
* Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
* Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Devon Children and Families Partnership.
* Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children and families at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism

**What to do if you are concerned**   
If a child makes a disclosure or allegation of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

* Stay calm and listen carefully.
* Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
* Do not investigate or ask leading questions instead ask clarifying questions tell me, explain to me, describe to me (TED).
* Let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
* Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
* Inform your DSL as soon as possible.
* Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign, date and record your position.

**Whistleblowing**

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues via our whistleblowing and complaints policies and appropriate advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Safeguarding Team where necessary.

If you are concerned that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person or that they might be abusing a child or young person you should report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where those concerns relate to the DSL however, this should be reported to the Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 the line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Managing Allegations**   
We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working or may come into contact with children and young people whilst in our toy libraries. An allegation is when it appears that the professional, staff member, volunteer has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
* behaved in an inappropriate way towards a child which may indicate that he or she is unsuitable to work with children
* if there are concerns about the person’s behaviour towards their own children
* children unrelated to their employment or voluntary work, and there has been a recommendation as part of a strategy discussion, that consideration should be given to the risk posed to children they work with
* an allegation has been made about abuse that took place some time ago and the accused person may still be working with or having contact with children

Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. This could include inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or other persons working with the children such as inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements their role and responsibilities, inappropriate sharing or images. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults. Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

* Abuse has actually taken place.
* Something has happened to the child that reminds them of a past event – the child is unable to recognize that the situation and people are different; Children can misinterpret your language or your actions.
* Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something they can make an allegation as a way of hitting out.
* An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they be members of staff or volunteers this should be brought to the immediate attention of the **DSL** who will advise the **Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding*.*** In the case of the allegation being made against the DSL this will be brought to the immediate attention of the Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding. The DSL or Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations made against the adult, in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made. All allegations must be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely manner, in the case of an allegation the **DSL or** **Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding** will need to:

* Refer to the LADO guidance [Managing allegations - Devon Childrens' and Families Partnership (dcfp.org.uk)](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/training-and-resources/managing-allegations/) and submit the [LADO notification form](https://services.devon.gov.uk/web/lado/form).
* Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO.
* Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
* Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation if this is deemed necessary.
* Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting.
* Advise the Disclosure and Barring Service [[1]](#footnote-1)where a member of staff has been removed, would have been removed or dismissed if as a result of the allegations being founded.

It is our policy at the Toy Libraries, and at any event associated with the Toy Libraries, that staff and volunteers do not have sole contact with children. Parents/carers must remain with and responsible for their children at all times.

**Low Level Concerns *(Identified in the Keeping Children Safe in Education)***

The term ‘low-level’ is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the setting may have acted in a way that:

* is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
* does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

* being over friendly with children
* engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door,
* humiliating children.

Sharing low-level concerns

* All low-level concerns are shared with the DSL.
* If there is doubt as to whether the low-level of concern meets the harm threshold, then the DSL will consult with their LADO.
* Merry Go Round Toy Librarieswill create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer where they have found themselves in situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others or believe they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below professional standards.

Recoding low-level concerns

* All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing including details of concerns, the context and action taken.
* These records will be stored confidentially and held securely and will be kept by the DSLand will be kept for 10 years.
* Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate problematic behaviour can be identified. DSL will need to decide on the course of action if this occurs including referral to LADO or follow disciplinary procedures.

**Confidentiality**

* We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
* We recognise that in order to effectively meet a child’s needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns
* The DSL will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
* However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2019 is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
* All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child’s safety or well-being or that of another.
* We will always undertake to share our concerns with parents and guardians and their consent is sought in accordance with Early help and MASH procedures unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child. If in doubt regarding sharing information with parents and guardians, we will consult with the MASH consultation team.

**Training**   
All members of staff will have access to safeguarding training at least every three years in line with Devon Children and Families Partnership (DCFP). We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to our Safeguarding policy and any policy related to safeguarding and promoting our children/young people’s welfare to all newly appointed staff and volunteers.

Our Safeguarding Designated Officer will undertake further safeguarding training, Group 3 DCFP Multi-agency Safeguarding course or Group 3 Refresher Courses. This will be undertaken at least every three years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support the DSL to be able to better undertake their role and also support the toy libraries in ensuring our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieving better outcomes for the children in our toy libraries.

Our ***Committee*** will have access to safeguarding training and our **Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding** will also undertake additional awareness training at least every three years. They will also be advised to undertake additional training to support their employers’ role in Handling Allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers.

Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on an annual basis to our committee and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation. We will include our Safeguarding Policy on our website and will ensure copies are available at each toy library on request.

**Related Toy libraries Policies**

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children.  It also encompasses issues such as child health and safety, bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, toy libraries security, drugs and substance misuse, etc.

There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population’

*Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES 2007*

This policy will cross reference to related toy libraries policies and other protocol:

Equality and Diversity

The Golden Rules of Information Sharing

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Safe Recruitment Procedure

Safer Recruitment Checklist

Induction Plan

*The above list is not exhaustive and as new policy, guidance and legislation develops within the remit of Safeguarding we will review and update our policies and procedures as appropriate and in line with the Devon Children Families Partnership and Local Authority.*

**This Policy was adopted by:**

**The Board of Trustees at Merry Go Round Toy Libraries as documented in Committee Meeting Minutes dated 14th March 2024**

**Date of Next Policy review: March 2025**

**Signature on behalf of the Committee** ...*A.L Bristow.*

**Name of signatory:** Andrea Louise Bristow

**Role of Signatory**: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Useful Contacts:

[Devon Children and Families Partnerships](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/)

[South West Child Protection Procedures](http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/)

[Devon Early Years and Childcare Service](http://www.devon.gov.uk/eycs)

[Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency](http://www.ceop.org.uk/)

[NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/)

[CHILDWISE - a leading specialist in research with children and young people - ABOUT](https://www.childwise.co.uk/)

**Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

[DCC - Request for support (outsystemsenterprise.com)](https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage)

**0345 155 1071**

email: [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)

**MASH Consultation Line for professionals only 01392 388428** (ask for Consultation Line)

**Early Help co-ordination centre** 0345 155 1071 (ask for Early Help)

[Early Help information](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/early-help/)

**Out of hours for CYPS (Social Care):**

5pm -9am and at weekends and public holidays, please contact:

Emergency Duty Service 0845 6000 388 (low-rate call)

**Police Central Referral Unit**: 0845 605 116

**EYCS Consultation Service**:

If you have concerns about a child but are unsure whether to make a MASH enquiry. The numbers are:

Nikki Phillips – Locality Manager for Exeter, East, North & Mid Devon 01392 385394

Melissa Filby – Holiday Activities and Food Programme Co-ordinator 01392 388461

Susan Bolt - Locality Manager for South West Devon 01392 384046

**DCFP**

DCFP Office: 01392 386067

**Child Protection Chairs and Local Authority Designated** **Officers** for managing allegations against staff:

Allegations against staff LADO Referral Co-ordinator 01392 384964

[Training and Resources on managing allegations](https://www.dcfp.org.uk/training-and-resources/managing-allegations/)

**Devon’s Domestic Abuse Helpline** 0345 155 1074

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub – MASH**

MASH contributes to improved outcomes for safeguarding children because it has the ability to swiftly collate and share information held by the various agencies and to provide a multi-agency risk assessment of each case for ‘actual or likely harm’.

* Manages contacts and enquiries received from any source (usually CYPS and Police VIST *vulnerable incident screening tool*)
* Develops a document recording the concern information and all other agencies information available within agreed timescales and a social worker manager makes an informed decision using all of the available information.
* Develops concern information into a social care referral if services are required under section 17 or section 47 of The Children Act 1989
* Liaises with the Early Help for children and young people who need services but do not meet The Children Act 1989 threshold
* Provides consultation line to agency enquirers about thresholds, appropriate action to be undertaken and services.

**Appendix 1 Categories of Abuse**

* **Categories of Abuse:**
* Physical Abuse
* Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
* Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)
* Neglect
* **Signs of Abuse in Children:**

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

* Significant change in behaviour
* Extreme anger or sadness
* Aggressive and attention-needing behaviour
* Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
* Lack of self-esteem
* Self-injury
* Depression and/or anxiousness
* Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
* Child Sexual Exploitation
* Criminality
* Substance abuse
* Mental health problems
* Poor attendance

**Neglect** The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairments 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 food, clothing and shelter.
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
* ensure adequate supervision.
* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

***Possible indicators of Neglect***

Obvious signs of lack of care including:

Problems with personal hygiene, constant hunger, inadequate clothing, emaciation, lateness or non-attendance at the setting, poor relationship with peers, untreated medical problems, compulsive stealing and scavenging, rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking, running away, low self-esteem etc.

**Physical Abuse**

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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.

***Possible Indicators*** Physical signs that do not tally with the given account of occurrence conflicting or unrealistic explanations of cause repeated injuries delay in reporting or seeking medical advice.

**Sexual Abuse**

Forcing or enticing a child 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, penetrative or non-penetrative acts and also includes involving children in watching pornographic material or watching sexual acts.

***Possible indicators*** Sudden changes in behaviour, displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate, tendency to cling or need constant reassurance, tendency to cry easily, regression to younger behaviour – e.g. thumb sucking, acting like a baby, unexplained gifts or money, depression and withdrawal, wetting/soiling day or night, fear of undressing for PE etc.

**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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in as far as they meet the needs of another person.

***Possible Indicators*** Rejection, isolation, child being blamed for actions of adults, child being used as carer for younger siblings, affection and basic emotional care giving/warmth, persistently absent or withheld.

**Appendix 2 Current Safeguarding Issues**

The following Safeguarding issues are all considered to be Child Protection issues and should be referred immediately to the most relevant agency. The issues featured below are linked to guidance and local procedures which can be found on the [South West Child Protection Procedures](http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/)

**E-Safety**   
Children and young people can be exploited and suffer bullying through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites. In order to minimize the risks to our children and young people Merry Go Round will ensure that we have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering. We will ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in or outside of the toy libraries and are aware of the dangers associated with social networking sites.

Our E-safety policy is that mobile phone, camera or electronic communications with a child or family at our setting are not acceptable other than for approved setting business. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber-bullying we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**   
The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people, (or a third person or persons) receive something, (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidations are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child’s or young person’s limited availability of choice, resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

**Good practice – Individuals**

Recognise the symptoms and distinguish them from other forms of abuse

\* Treat the child/young person as a victim of abuse

\* Understand the perspective / behaviour of the child/young person and be patient with them

\* Help the child/young person to recognise that they are being exploited

\* Collate as much information as possible

\* Share information with other agencies and seek advice / refer to Social Care

**Good practice – Organisations**

\* Ensure robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place which cover CSE

\* Promote and engage in effective multi-agency working to prevent abuse

\* Work to help victims move out of exploitation

\* Cooperate to enable successful investigations and prosecutions of perpetrators

**Child on Child Abuse**

Children can abuse other children, and this is referred to as ‘child on child abuse’ this can take many forms including those listed in the table above as well as bullying, sexual violence and harassment etc. Staff will raise concerns when there are issues of child on child abuse and DSL’s will consider what support might be needed for both the victim and perpetrators**.**

**Forced marriages (FM)**   
FM is now a specific offence under s121 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 that came into force on 16 June 2014.

A FM is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties, and where duress is a factor Forced marriage is when someone faces physical pressure to marry (e.g. threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (e.g. if someone is made to feel like they’re bringing shame on their family). This is very different to an arranged marriage where both parties give consent.

FM is illegal in England and Wales. This includes:

\* taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)

\* marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they’re pressured to or not)

**Under-age Marriage** In England, a young person cannot legally marry until they are 16 years old (without the consent of their parents or carers) nor have sexual relationships.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**   
FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures.

FGM is illegal in the UK. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Other than in the excepted circumstances, it is an offence for any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status) to:

\* perform FGM in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 1 of the Act);

\* assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 2 of the Act); and

\* Assist (from England, Wales or Northern Ireland) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or permanent UK resident (section 3 of the Act).

**Ritualistic Abuse**   
Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be considered is the use of any physical or psychological violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is abusive and will result in the criminal conviction of those using this form of abuse even if the intention is to help the child.

**Sexually Active under Eighteen years old**   
It is acknowledged by those working with young people that most young people under the age of 18 will have an interest in sex and sexual relationships. The Protocol for Sexually Active Young People under 18 years old has been designed to assist those working with children and young people to identify where these relationships may be abusive, and the children and young people may need the provision of protection or additional services.

**Safeguarding Disabled Children**   
Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks and ‘created vulnerability’ as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairment (Safeguarding Children, DCSF, July 2009) Merry Go Round will ensure that our disabled children are listened to and responded to appropriately where they have concerns regarding abuse. In order to do this we will ensure that our staff and volunteers receive the relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child.

**Safer Recruitment and Selection**   
It is a requirement for all agencies to ensure that all staff recruited to work with children and young people are properly selected and checked. At Merry Go Round we will ensure that we have a member on every recruitment panel who has received the appropriate recruitment and selection training. That all of our staff are appropriately qualified and have the relevant employment history and checks to ensure they are safe to work with children in compliance with the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards.

**Honour Based Violence**   
Honour based violence’ is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community’. It is important to be alert to signs of distress and indications such as self-harm, absence from setting, infections resulting from female genital mutilation, isolation from peers, being monitored by family, not participating in setting activities, unreasonable restrictions at home. Where it is suspected that a child/young person is at risk form Honour based violence Merry Go Round will report those concerns to the appropriate agency in order to prevent this form of abuse taking place.

**Trafficked Children**   
Child trafficking involves moving children across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud. Where Merry Go Round is made aware of a child is suspected of or actually being trafficked/exploited we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

**Domestic Abuse**   
The Government defines domestic abuse as “Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality”.

Staff need to understand what is required of them if children are members of the household where domestic abuse is known or suspected to be taking place. Our policy includes action to be taken regarding referrals to the Police and Children and Young People’s Services and any action to be taken where a member of staff is the alleged perpetrator or victim of domestic abuse. At Merry Go Round we will follow our safeguarding policy and report any suspected concerns regarding Domestic Abuse to the relevant agency.

**Private Fostering**   
Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parent and the private foster carer, who then becomes responsible for caring for the child in such a way as to safeguard and promote his/her welfare.

A privately fostered child means a child under the age of 16 (18 if a disabled child) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than:

\* A parent.

\* A person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility.

\* A close relative.

\* A Local Authority.

for more than 28 days and where the care is intended to continue. It is a statutory duty for us at Merry Go Round to inform the Local Authority via MASH where we are made aware of a child or young person who may be subject to private fostering arrangements.

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance [↑](#footnote-ref-1)