



SHREE SORATHIA PRAJAPATI COMMUNITY UK

શ્રી સોરઠીઆ પ્રજાપતિ જ્ઞાતિ મંડળ યુ.કે.

Shree Sorathia Prajapati Community UK

Child Protection Policy & Procedures

This Policy was approved by the NEC Executive on 27th June 2011.

This Policy will be reviewed by no later than 31st Jan 2012



SSPC Child Protection Policy and Procedures

1.0 Definitions

- 1.1. In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004, a child is any person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. For the purpose of these procedures the reference to children therefore means 'children and young people' throughout.
- 1.2. Where Shree Sorathia Prajapati Community [SSPC] is stated, this is inclusive of National and Local Branch committees unless where otherwise stated.

2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 SSPC is committed to protecting the welfare of all children as they participate in SSPC's services and/or activities. SSPC understands its responsibility to comply with legislation and will constantly monitor developments in this field. However, SSPC recognises that the best protection for children participating in our programmes is the vigilance and forethought of volunteers in preventing circumstances where abuse of trust could occur. To that end, SSPC will strive to create a safe and secure environment where service users, volunteers and staff can work together confidently in mutual respect.
- 2.2 These procedures reflect and are compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and the following: the Education Act 2002, Every Child Matters: Change for Children Agenda, the Children Act 2004 and the National Service Framework (NSF) Children and Young People and Maternity Services.
- 2.3 SSPC staff and volunteers are required to abide by the Staff Member/Volunteer Code of Conduct and, as part of that Code of Conduct, are required to notify SSPC of any police record or other factor which may make that person unsuitable to work with children.
- 2.4 SSPC will ensure that the organisation's child protection procedures are continually monitored, developed and maintained and are appropriately communicated throughout the staff and volunteer network. Volunteers and staff throughout the organisation are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the Codes, Guidelines and procedures of the organisation, and that new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted.



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- 2.5 SSPC will maintain several policies and procedures geared towards abuse prevention that include, but are not limited to the following topics:
- Criminal Records Bureau Checks
 - Careful selection, training and supervision of staff and volunteers
 - Employee and Volunteer Disciplinary Process
 - Continuing education for staff
 - Procedure for reporting suspected abuse
 - Volunteer Code of Conduct
- 2.6 All staff and volunteers will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practising skills needed for the work.
- 2.7 Training on specific areas such as child protection, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality of personal information will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be regularly reviewed.



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3 What is Abuse and Neglect?

3.1 Working together 2006 provides the following definitions:

3.2 **Physical abuse** 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.

3.3 **Emotional Abuse** is 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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's development 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 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 ill treatment to a child, though it may occur alone.

3.4 **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

3.5 **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. 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 and clothing
- 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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment



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It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

3.6 Recognising Abuse: Child abuse occurs to children of both sexes and all ages, in all cultures, religions, and social classes and to children with and without disabilities. All staff and volunteers should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of significant harm. Some general considerations are as follows:

- Identification of child abuse may be difficult; it normally requires both medical and social assessment.
- Different types of child abuse may be present at the same time, e.g. a child who is being sexually abused may also be being physically abused. When enquiring into one type of abuse staff need to be alert to potential signs of other abuse.
- Always listen carefully to the child – pay particular attention to any spontaneous statement. In the case of children without speech or with limited language, pay attention to their signing or other means of expression, including behavior and play.
- Any delay in seeking medical assistance or indeed none being sought at all, could be an indicator of abuse.
- Beware if explanation of an accident is vague, lacking detail, is inconsistent with the injury, or varies with each telling.
- Take note of inappropriate responses from parents or carers.
- Observe the child's interaction with the parents – particularly wariness, fear or watchfulness.
- Any history or patterns of unexplained injury/illness requires the most careful scrutiny. The fact that the parent/carer appears to be highly attentive and concerned should not divert attention from the assessment of risk.
- Beware if the child's injury is inconsistent with the child's development and mobility.
- Beware if there are indications of or a history of domestic violence. Violence towards adults may also indicate violence towards children and is itself be experienced as emotionally abusive.
- Children who are being abused often do not say and tend to perceive themselves as deserving of ill treatment. This is particularly so for children who are being emotionally abused.



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4.0 Staff Member/Volunteer Code of Conduct

4.1 It is important that both Service users and Staff members/Volunteers can participate in SSPC activities in a safe and secure environment. This Code of Conduct has been developed for the protection of both service users and Staff members/Volunteers. To this end, SSPC expects all its Staff members/Volunteers to abide by this Code of Conduct.

4.2 Each Staff member/Volunteer:-

- 4.2.1 Will abide by the Guiding Principles of SSPC in all activities as a SSPC staff member/volunteer
 - 4.2.2 Will inform SSPC executives of any relevant police record or other factor, or any change in his/her circumstances, which may make him/her unsuitable either as a SSPC volunteer or for any particular SSPC activity.
 - 4.2.3 Recognises that the role of a SSPC staff member/volunteer places him/her in a position of trust with regard to all children who are service users participating in SSPC programmes, the SSPC organisation, and to colleagues in the staff member/volunteer and staff network, and undertakes to uphold that trust at all times.
 - 4.2.4 Undertakes to maintain, within the organisation's procedures, the confidentiality of any information relating to other staff member/volunteers, supporters, students or staff members made available to him/her in the course of the role as a SSPC staff member/volunteer.
 - 4.2.5 Will not knowingly place him/herself in a situation where the Staff member/volunteer is alone with a child or young person and will endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, that there is another adult in attendance at any meetings.
 - 4.2.6 Will ensure that any SSPC activities involving children outside the normal activities are agreed and approved by her/his line manager in advance.
 - 4.2.7 Will not behave in any way, physically or verbally, that could be offensive.
 - 4.2.8 Remembers at all times that interactions between him/herself and service users must be such that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature as abusive.
- 4.3 *If you follow these simple guidelines, SSPC staff, volunteers and service users will work confidently together in mutual respect.*



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5.0 SSPC's procedures for dealing with suspected abuse of trust by staff members/volunteers:

5.1 When dealing with issues concerning abuse of trust, Executive Committee Members must remember that the welfare of the children participating in SSPC is paramount, but that we also have a responsibility to ensure that our volunteers are treated fairly and with respect. This procedure is designed to meet both those objectives. The Executive Committee should ensure that every member is fully aware of these procedures.

5.2 The term "**Child Protection Representative**" is used in the following procedure to indicate the appropriate person to represent (GROUP).

SSPC [insert branch] nominated Child Protection Representative is:

.....

5.3 The term "**Support Worker**" is used in the following procedure to indicate the appropriate person responsible for the welfare of the child in question – this may be the staff member or volunteer's line manager or the volunteer's support worker etc.

5.4 **If the allegation of abuse concerns sexual or physical abuse, do not attempt to investigate. Notify the Police and inform the child's parent/carer**

5.5 If the allegation does not concern sexual or physical abuse and is of a minor enough nature to be dealt with locally, a meeting must be arranged for the soonest possible time between the Child Protection Representative, the Support Worker and the individual to whom the allegation has been made. If at any time the Child Protection Representative feels their knowledge or experience is inadequate to deal with the situation or allegation, they should contact the Local Authority.

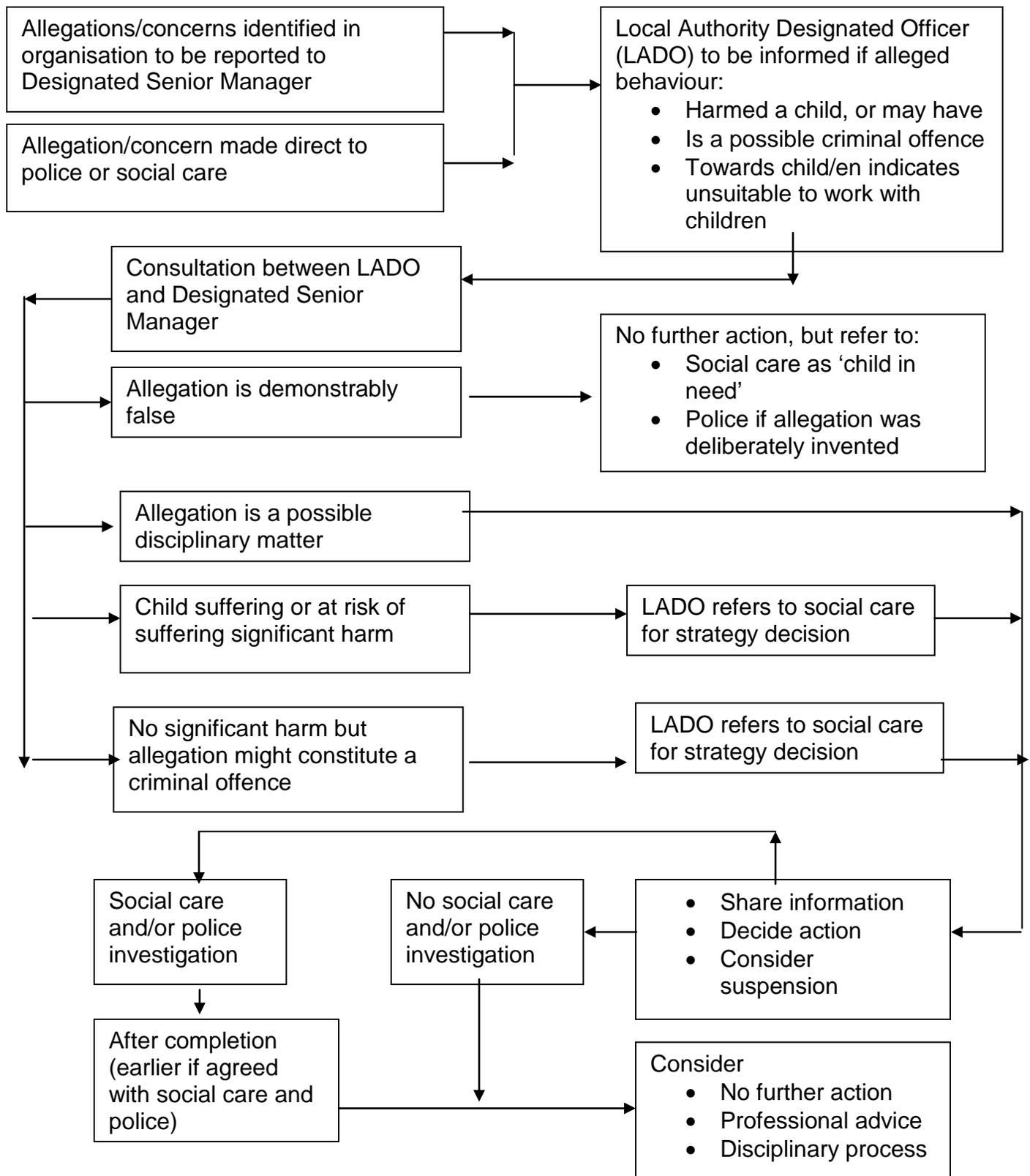
5.6 At that meeting, any notes made about the child's disclosure should be used to ensure all relevant facts are passed on. A course of action must be agreed and the decision taken as to whom will undertake further discussions with the vulnerable person. Under no circumstances must the person who made the allegation be contacted by anyone other than the nominated person, after the disclosure has been passed on.



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- 5.7 The Child Protection Representative and the Support Worker will then determine the appropriate process of investigation. Once an allegation has been made the investigation should be conducted swiftly and with appropriate thoroughness. If it is deemed necessary to make enquiries of a third party, such enquiries should be conducted with discretion.
- 5.8 The staff member/volunteer who is the subject of the complaint must be informed of the complaint by the Child Protection Representative - though not necessarily of the identity of the person who made the complaint - and be given an opportunity to respond to it.
- 5.9 When interviewing the staff member/volunteer who is the subject of the complaint, it is important that this procedure is explained to the staff member/volunteer; that he/she is told that the investigation is being undertaken to establish the facts, and that any decisions will be based on the facts identified by the investigation. Explain that you will make notes of what they say to ensure you get the facts correct, but that they can see what has been written to confirm its accuracy. The staff member/volunteer must be treated with respect and allowed to state the facts as he/she knows them without interruption.
- 5.10 Having considered all the information available, and the views of the Support Worker, the Child Protection Representative must decide on an appropriate course of action. This decision should be communicated to the staff member/volunteer first and then, via the Support Worker, to the person who made the original disclosure.
- 5.11 Whatever the outcome of the investigation, the Child Protection Representative must complete a Complaints Procedure Form and return it, marked "Strictly Confidential", to the Honorable Secretary NEC and Local Branch.

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- 6.0 Guidelines for Staff member/volunteers - action to be taken if a child or young person discloses to you abuse by someone else.**
- 6.1 If a child who is a service user approaches you about an issue of abuse of trust, you must proceed with great caution.
- 6.2 The Staff/Volunteer's Code of Conduct specifies that a Staff member/volunteer should not place him/herself in a situation where he/she is alone with a service user who is a child. However, it is possible that a service user will be unwilling to make disclosures of this nature in anything but a one-to-one situation. *The Service user's needs must take priority in this situation. Ask if the service user would like someone else to be present – an adult or a friend - but if he/she declines, proceed with the interview, taking extra care with your behaviour and body language.***
- 6.3 Before the child goes into detail, explain the consequences of you knowing and the action you will take. Assure them that you will offer support but must pass any information to another professional who may take appropriate action. Explain that this may be the Child Protection Representative .
- 6.4 Keep calm and listen to the child - do not have physical contact at any time. Allow the Achiever to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- 6.5 Do not make judgements or offer opinion.
- 6.6 Explain again what will happen next. Find out when the child is next due to see the individual who is the subject of the complaint. (You will then be able to make a judgement as to the appropriate timing of your follow-up actions.)
- 6.7 If the complaint concerns a situation not related to (GROUP) (e.g. at home or at school), refer the complaint directly to the Support Worker. Pass on all information disclosed to you by the child and then leave. All involvement by you ceases at this point.
- 6.8 If the complaint concerns a (GROUP) staff member/volunteer, staff member or adult where the contact between that individual is a direct result of (GROUP) activity, immediately inform the Child Protection Representative who will then initiate the procedure.



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7.0 Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself.

- 7.1 Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.
- 7.2 Immediately inform your committee executive. The quicker that action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.
- 7.3 Record the facts as you understand them.
- 7.4 Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise. Do not contact another agency involved with the child or young person concerned.
- 7.5 Await further contact from committee executives.

8.0 Action to be taken if you suspect an abuse of trust has occurred

- 8.1 Discuss your suspicions with your committee executives.
- 8.2 Record the facts which support your suspicions
- 8.3 You may be asked to attend a meeting of the Child Protection Representative and the Support Worker who has regular contact with the child or young person involved.
- 8.4 Once your suspicions have been passed on to the appropriate person, you should have no further involvement.
- 8.5 **Whatever the nature of the complaint, it must be kept confidential. You must not discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those identified in the above procedure.**



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Complaints Procedure Form

Date:

Nature of Complaint: *(please give brief description of complaint)*

Name and contact number of Child Protection Representative

Staff member/volunteer against whom complaint has been made:

Job role:

Name and Address of school/organisation/centre involved

Name and contact number of Support Worker involved:

Name and contact number of investigating Committee Member:

Job role

As a result of the investigation, was the complaint upheld?

Action(s) taken:-

Signed _____ Job Role (e.g. Board Chair)

In the event of a complaint of abuse of trust, this form must be completed and returned regardless of whether or not the complaint is upheld.