

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

This policy details Electric Storm Youth's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people involved in our activities. It outlines the specific procedures we follow to protect them from harm and abuse.

For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as anyone up to the age of 18. This document is inclusive of all Electric Storm Youth staff (paid and unpaid), volunteers, trustees, and contractors, and its procedures apply across all Electric Storm Youth activities and services.

Every individual within Electric Storm Youth has a duty of care to ensure the protection of young people. Our safeguarding framework is grounded in the Children Act 2004, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance. These foundational principles establish that the welfare of the young person is paramount, ensuring all young people, regardless of their background or characteristics, have the right to be safe from all forms of harm and abuse.

It is vital that all individuals are aware of how to report a safeguarding concern by following the guidelines set out within this policy.

### **Principles of Safeguarding at Electric Storm Youth**

Our safeguarding policy is built upon the following fundamental principles:

- **Child-Centered Approach:** We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children who engage with Electric Storm Youth. This includes protecting them from all forms of neglect, physical, sexual, emotional, and online abuse.
- **Equality and Rights:** All young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from any kind of harm or abuse. We believe all young people have the right to participate in an enjoyable, safe, and supportive environment that promotes their personal and social development.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of everyone within Electric Storm Youth

- **Timely and Appropriate Response:** We commit to providing a timely and appropriate response to all suspicions or allegations of abuse or poor practice. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Leadership Team, in collaboration with relevant external agencies, are responsible for upholding safeguarding criteria thresholds and ensuring appropriate action is taken.
- **Information Sharing and Confidentiality:** Confidential information regarding safeguarding concerns will only be shared with necessary external agencies and in accordance with legal requirements. All personal information about children and young people is handled, stored, and shared appropriately and securely, in strict adherence to the UK Data Protection Act (GDPR) and relevant Information Sharing Protocols.
- **Partnership Working:** Working effectively in partnership with young people, their parents/carers, and other statutory and voluntary agencies is essential for the effective protection of young people.
- **Statutory Compliance & Local Collaboration:** Electric Storm Youth recognises its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people. We will work in full cooperation with the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP) and other relevant local safeguarding partners to comply with and contribute to local safeguarding procedures and multi-agency arrangements.

## **Policy Review and Monitoring**

Electric Storm Youth is committed to ensuring its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy remains current, effective, and compliant.

This policy will be formally reviewed bi-annually, with annual monitoring to ensure continued adherence and effectiveness.

Additionally, a review will be triggered by any of the following:

- Changes in UK safeguarding legislation or statutory guidance (e.g., updates to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children').
- Changes in youth sector governance or best practice guidelines (e.g., from the National Youth Agency).
- The outcome of a significant safeguarding incident or case review affecting Electric Storm Youth or the wider youth sector.

## Supporting Documents and Resources

This policy works in conjunction with a range of supporting documents and resources, designed to provide more in-depth detail and practical guidance for safeguarding practice within Electric Storm Youth. These include:

- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Safeguarding Incident Report Form
- Photography Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Contact list for key external safeguarding agencies (e.g., Local Authority Children's Social Care, LADO, Police, NSPCC)

These documents provide practical templates and further information to support all staff and volunteers in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

## Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding

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### 1. The Board of Trustees/Directors

The Board of Trustees/Directors holds the ultimate strategic and legal accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people involved with Electric Storm Youth. Their responsibilities include:

- Overall Accountability: Ensuring Electric Storm Youth meets its statutory and moral obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Policy Approval and Oversight: Reviewing and formally approving this Safeguarding Policy and all related safeguarding procedures.
- Resource Allocation: Ensuring adequate resources are allocated to enable the effective implementation of the policy.
- Designated Safeguarding Trustee: Appointing a named Trustee with specific oversight for safeguarding, who acts as a direct point of contact for the DSL.
- Whistleblowing Mechanism: Ensuring there is a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy and procedure in place.
- Compliance Monitoring: Receiving regular reports from the DSL on safeguarding activity, concerns, training uptake, and policy adherence.
- Responding to Allegations against Senior Staff: Ensuring robust procedures are in place for managing allegations and that these are handled and in line with LADO guidance.

### 2. The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (The CEO and Senior Youth Work Manager) is responsible for the operational implementation and management of Electric Storm Youth's Safeguarding Policy and procedures. Their responsibilities include:

- Policy Implementation: Ensuring the safeguarding policy and all related procedures are effectively implemented.
  - Support for the DSL: Providing direct support, supervision, and resources to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(DDSL) to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively.
  - Promoting a Safeguarding Culture: Fostering an open, vigilant, and child-centered culture within Electric Storm Youth .
  - Recruitment and HR Oversight: Ensuring that safer recruitment practices are consistently applied across the organisation and that all HR processes align with safeguarding principles.
  - Training Oversight: Ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and trustees receive appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding training relevant to their roles.
  - Risk Management: Overseeing the identification and management of safeguarding risks across all activities.
  - Inter-Agency Collaboration: Supporting the DSL in effective liaison with statutory agencies and other external partners.
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### **3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by the appointed Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(DDSL), is the central point of contact for all safeguarding concerns within Electric Storm Youth.

The DSL's core responsibilities include (and Deputy DSL will deputise for these in the DSL's absence):

- First Point of Contact: Acting as the first point of contact for all staff, volunteers, and trustees to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- Managing Referrals: Receiving all safeguarding concerns, evaluating them against safeguarding thresholds, and making timely and appropriate referrals to statutory agencies.
- Providing Advice and Guidance: Offering clear, accurate, and up-to-date advice and support to all staff and volunteers on safeguarding matters.
- Liaison with External Agencies: Acting as the primary link with Children's Social Care, the LADO, Police, and other relevant external agencies for ongoing safeguarding cases, information sharing, and multi-agency working.
- Record-Keeping: Ensuring that detailed, accurate, and confidential records of all safeguarding concerns, discussions, and actions taken are maintained securely.
- Policy Implementation and Review: Championing the implementation of this Safeguarding Policy and contributing to its regular review.
- Training and Awareness: Ensuring all staff, volunteers, and trustees receive mandatory initial and refresher safeguarding training relevant to their roles.
- Staying Informed: Keeping fully up-to-date with local and national safeguarding legislation, guidance and best practices.

- **Managing Allegations:** Working closely with the Senior Leadership Team and the LADO to manage and respond to allegations ensuring a fair and thorough process that prioritises the young person's safety.
- **Supporting Young People:** Where appropriate and safe to do so, explaining to young people the limits of confidentiality and the steps that will be taken to ensure their safety.
- **Advocacy:** Advocating for the welfare of young people in all safeguarding processes and decisions.

#### **4. All Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors**

Every individual involved with Electric Storm Youth, including all paid staff, unpaid staff, volunteers, and contractors, has a fundamental role and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Their responsibilities include:

- **Prioritising Young People's Welfare:** Always acting in the best interests of young people and ensuring their safety and well-being are paramount in all activities and interactions.
- **Recognising and Reporting Concerns:** Being vigilant to the signs and indicators of abuse or neglect, and immediately reporting *any* safeguarding concern, suspicion, or disclosure about a young person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
- **Following Procedures:** Strictly adhering to the procedures outlined in this Safeguarding Policy.
- **Do Not Investigate:** Understanding that it is never their role to investigate a safeguarding concern. Their responsibility is to report it promptly to the DSL/Deputy DSL.
- **Maintaining Professional Boundaries:** Adhering strictly to Electric Storm Youth's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times with young people.
- **Confidentiality:** Understanding the limits of confidentiality and knowing when and how to share information appropriately with the DSL/Deputy DSL.
- **Participating in Training:** Attending and engaging fully in all safeguarding training and refresher courses provided by Electric Storm Youth.
- **Promoting a Safe Environment:** Contributing positively to an open, safe, and supportive culture where young people feel comfortable to speak up and where safeguarding is openly discussed and prioritised.

## Safer Recruitment at Electric Storm Youth

When recruiting for any role involving contact with young people, Electric Storm Youth will take the following essential steps:

### 1. Clear Role Definition:

Develop a comprehensive and detailed Person Specification defining the essential skills, experience, and personal attributes required for the role.

### 2. Transparent Advertising:

- Clearly articulate the aims and values of Electric Storm Youth in all information packs and explicitly state Electric Storm Youth's commitment to safeguarding and equal opportunities.

### 3. Robust Application Process:

- Use a standardised application form to collect information from each applicant. CVs will not be accepted as standalone applications.
- Ensure at least two people from Electric Storm Youth's management team review all application forms.
- Verify the applicant's identity during the interview stage.

### 4. Rigorous Selection and Vetting:

- Conduct face-to-face interviews, which include safeguarding-related questions.
- Obtain at least two satisfactory written references from previous employers or relevant individuals.
- Require an Enhanced DBS check for all eligible roles. No individual will commence regulated activity until a satisfactory DBS certificate has been received.

### 5. Induction and Probation:

- Provide a comprehensive induction process covering Electric Storm Youth's safeguarding policy and procedures, Code of Conduct, and roles and responsibilities.
- All new staff and volunteers will undergo a probationary period.

### 6. Ongoing Management:

- Maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks for all staff and volunteers, ensuring it is kept up-to-date. This is held on the HR Toolkit.
- Implement ongoing supervision and appraisal to monitor performance.

Electric Storm Youth adheres to the principles of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and relevant legislation concerning vetting and barring, including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).

## Promoting Safe Practice and Positive Behaviour at Electric Storm Youth

To embed effective safeguarding practice and promote appropriate behaviour by everyone supervising young people's activities, Electric Storm Youth will:

1. **Comprehensive Training:** Provide regular and mandatory safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers, tailored to their roles and responsibilities.
2. **Clear Code of Conduct:** Ensure all staff, volunteers, and trustees are required to read, understand, and sign Electric Storm Youth's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.
3. **Accessible Policy and Procedures:** Make the full Safeguarding Policy and all supporting procedures readily accessible to everyone involved with Electric Storm Youth. This will be via our website, our staff handbook and on our shared drive.
4. **Open Communication and Culture:** Foster a culture where safeguarding is openly discussed and individuals feel confident and supported in reporting any issues or seeking advice.
5. **Supervision and Support:** Provide ongoing supervision and support for staff and volunteers, ensuring they feel equipped to manage challenging situations and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
6. **Specific Activity Guidelines:** Develop specific guidelines and risk assessments for different types of activities and events ensuring these are understood and followed.
7. **Youth Voice:** Seek to involve young people themselves in discussions about how to keep Electric Storm Youth a safe and welcoming space, through appropriate channels and feedback mechanisms, empowering them in decision-making processes.

By implementing these measures, Electric Storm Youth aims to proactively create a secure environment where good safeguarding practice is the norm for all activities.

## Relationships of Trust and Professional Boundaries

Electric Storm Youth recognises that staff, volunteers, and trustees, by virtue of their roles, hold positions of trust and influence over young people attending our activities. We are committed to ensuring that these relationships are always professional, appropriate, and based on the young person's best interests.

### Maintaining Professional Boundaries:

All individuals working with or for Electric Storm Youth are expected to operate strictly within appropriate professional boundaries with young people, in all forms of communication and interaction (in-person, online, and via digital platforms). This includes:

- **No intimate or sexual relationships:** It is strictly prohibited for any staff, volunteer, or trustee to engage in or attempt to engage in any intimate, sexual, or romantic relationship with a young person (under 18) with whom they have contact through

Electric Storm Youth. This prohibition applies even if the young person appears to have given consent.

- **Appropriate Physical Contact:** Any physical contact with young people must be appropriate, minimal, and in response to the young person's needs (e.g. comfort, first aid), always maintaining professional boundaries and respect.
- **Respectful Communication:** All communication must be professional, transparent, and align with Electric Storm Youth's Code of Conduct, avoiding overly personal or secretive interactions.

### **Legal Framework (Sexual Offences Act 2003):**

Electric Storm Youth acknowledges the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which makes it a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual activity with a child under that age where they are in a specified 'position of trust' in relation to that child. This includes roles such as those who care for, advise, supervise, or train children and young people, even if the young person is aged 16 or 17 and deemed to be above the age of consent.

Electric Storm Youth's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers provides comprehensive, specific guidelines on maintaining appropriate professional boundaries, appropriate behaviour, acceptable communication methods, and other detailed expectations related to relationships of trust. All individuals must read, understand, and adhere to this Code as a condition of their involvement with Electric Storm Youth.

## **Supervision Ratios and Activity Management at Electric Storm Youth**

Electric Storm Youth is committed to ensuring appropriate levels of supervision for all activities involving young people. To determine appropriate supervision ratios for each activity or programme, Electric Storm Youth will conduct a thorough assessment, taking into account the following factors:

- **Age and Abilities of Young People:** Younger and/or less able groups will require higher ratios.
- **Nature of the Activity:** Higher-risk activities (e.g., swimming, outdoor pursuits, overnight stays) will necessitate increased supervision.
- **Developing Independence:** As young people mature, supervision may be adjusted, but safety must always remain paramount.
- **Need for Privacy:** While supervision is essential, the privacy and dignity of young people must also be respected.
- **Environment and Location:** The layout and geography of the facility or location will influence supervision needs.
- **Risk Assessments:** All activities will have a documented risk assessment that explicitly addresses supervision requirements. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed and updated.

## **Specific Ratio Guidelines:**

While each activity will be assessed individually, Electric Storm Youth will generally adhere to the following minimum supervision ratios:

- Outdoor activities capped at 15 young people with 2 Youth Workers.
- Electric Storm Youth does not register any young people under 10.
- There are always a minimum of 2 Youth Workers in any group session
- When a Youth Worker is on their own they will follow the Lone Worker Policy

These ratios may be increased based on the factors outlined above and the specific risk assessment for the activity. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the authority to mandate higher ratios where deemed necessary.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for adhering to the specified supervision ratios and for raising any concerns about inadequate staffing levels.

## **Consent for Participation**

Electric Storm Youth is committed to ensuring that all young people participate in our activities with appropriate consent, upholding their rights and ensuring their safety.

### **1. Requirement for Consent:**

- General Participation: For any young person under the age of 18, explicit consent for participation in Electric Storm Youth's activities must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian. This consent will typically be gathered upon registration.
- Specific Activities: For activities that carry additional risks, or involve specific permissions separate, specific consent will be obtained from the parent or legal guardian.

### **2. Process for Obtaining Consent:**

- Consent will be obtained in writing (or electronically, where secure and auditable) using Electric Storm Youth's designated consent forms.
- These forms will clearly detail the nature of the activity, any associated risks, expected behaviours, and emergency contact information.
- They will also include a section for parental/guardian consent for emergency medical treatment if required, in their absence.

### **3. Managing Exceptions and Challenges:**

- If it is not possible to obtain parental or guardian consent for a young person under 18, staff must immediately seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Participation without valid consent will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and with explicit DSL approval, or if there is a clear safeguarding concern necessitating the young person's presence.

- Any exceptions or specific circumstances regarding consent must be clearly documented within the relevant Risk Assessment for the activity and formally approved by the DSL or management.

#### **4. Data Retention and Confidentiality:**

- All personal information provided for the purpose of obtaining consent will be processed, stored, and managed strictly in accordance with Electric Storm Youth's Data Protection Policy and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Consent forms and associated personal data will be kept securely for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it was collected, as defined by Electric Storm Youth's data retention schedule, and will be destroyed confidentially thereafter.

## **Media Consent and Use of Images**

Electric Storm Youth is committed to respecting the privacy and safeguarding the digital footprint of all young people participating in our activities.

### **1. Policy on Identifiable Images:**

- Electric Storm Youth operates a strict policy: no identifiable photographs, videos, or images of any young person will be used on our social media channels, website, or any external marketing and publicity materials.

### **2. Consent for Internal/Limited Sharing:**

- For any photographic or video material that *is* captured and may be shared internally within Electric Storm Youth or for specific, limited purposes (e.g. grant reports), specific Media Consent will be obtained from a parent or legal guardian for any young person under the age of 18.

### **3. Withdrawal of Consent and Data Retention:**

- Young people (or their parents/guardians) can withdraw consent for the use of their image at any time by informing Electric Storm Youth in writing.
- All media consent forms and associated photographic/video material will be kept securely for a maximum of two years then securely destroyed.

This section should be read in conjunction with Electric Storm Youth's detailed Photography and Social Media Policy.

## **Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding**

We are committed to ensuring a safe online environment for all participants and to educating both young people and adults on responsible digital citizenship. This includes protecting young people from online harm, exploitation, and inappropriate content.

### **1. Risks and Responsibilities:**

Electric Storm Youth acknowledges the significant risks associated with online activity, including but not limited to: online grooming, cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate or illegal content (e.g., sexually explicit, violent, extremist material), online exploitation, privacy

breaches, and scams. Safeguarding young people online is the shared responsibility of Electric Storm Youth, young people, their parents/carers, and the wider community.

## **2. Expectations for Staff, Volunteers, and Trustees (Digital Code of Conduct):**

- **Professional Communication:** All online communication with young people must be professional, transparent, and only conducted through authorised Electric Storm Youth channels. Private or one-to-one messaging with young people is strictly prohibited.
- **Appropriate Content:** Staff must never access, download, share, or distribute any inappropriate, illegal, pornographic, offensive, or disrespectful material using Electric Storm Youth's equipment or personal devices when interacting with young people.
- **Personal Use of Social Media:** Staff should exercise extreme caution regarding personal social media use and ensure their online presence does not compromise their professional role or pose any safeguarding risk. They must not 'friend' or 'follow' young people on personal accounts.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns about inappropriate online behaviour (by staff, volunteers, or young people) or exposure to harmful content must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL).

## **3. Online Provision and Access for Young People:**

Where Electric Storm Youth provides young people with access to the internet or online platforms strict protocols will be in place to ensure safe use.

These protocols will include:

- **Acceptable Use Agreements:** Young people and/or their parents/carers will sign an Acceptable Use Agreement outlining expectations for online behaviour.
- **Filtering and Monitoring:** Appropriate technical measures, such as content filtering and monitoring, will be employed on Electric Storm Youth devices and networks to minimise access to harmful content.
- **Supervision:** Appropriate supervision will be in place when young people are accessing the internet via Electric Storm Youth's facilities.
- **Digital Literacy Education:** Electric Storm Youth will actively promote digital literacy and critical thinking skills among young people, helping them understand online risks and how to stay safe.

## **4. Breach of Policy and Legal Implications:**

Any breach of this Online Safety section or the detailed Online Safety Policy/Procedures will be treated with utmost seriousness and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and/or termination of volunteering roles.

- Where accidental exposure to inappropriate or harmful material occurs, the user must immediately exit the site, report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL), and delete any downloaded material.
- If a staff member or volunteer is discovered to have accessed or placed illegal material online, Electric Storm Youth will immediately report this to the police and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and appropriate internal disciplinary action will be taken. Such actions will be treated as gross misconduct.

This section should be read in conjunction with Electric Storm Youth's comprehensive Online Safety Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, which provide detailed guidance on all aspects of digital safeguarding.

## **Recognising and Responding to Abuse**

Electric Storm Youth prioritises the safety and well-being of all young people. It is the moral and professional responsibility of everyone involved with Electric Storm Youth to do everything possible to keep young people safe from abuse and to report any concerns.

### **Definition of Abuse:**

Electric Storm Youth adopts the definition of abuse as outlined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023): '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. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.'

### **Types of Abuse and Harm:**

Abuse generally falls into four main categories:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse (including the impact of persistent, unresolved parental conflict which can cause significant emotional harm)
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect (this can include "unresponsiveness to basic emotional needs" and can even occur "during pregnancy" eg through maternal substance abuse.)

In addition, Electric Storm Youth is alert to other forms of harm that may affect young people, often fitting within these categories. These include, but are not limited to:

- Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII). Where a parent or carer feigns, exaggerates, or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in a child.

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage. Recognising that it is a criminal offence to involve a child (anyone under 18) in a marriage, even if they appear to consent or it is framed as a cultural practice.
- Extremism and Radicalisation (Prevent Duty)
- Contextual Safeguarding issues (e.g., exploitation outside the family, in schools, or peer groups)
- Impact of Mental Health challenges on safeguarding
- Impact of Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness and Trafficking

### **Child-on-Child Abuse**

- Peer-on-Peer Bullying. Including physical, verbal, and persistent emotional bullying.
- Cyberbullying. The use of digital technology or social media to threaten, harass, or humiliate a peer.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB). A continuum of sexual behaviours between children that are developmentally inappropriate or coercive.
- Sexting (Consensual or Non-consensual Image Sharing). The sharing of sexual images or videos of themselves or others.
- Initiation/Hazing. Humiliating, distressing, or dangerous rituals used as a condition of joining a peer group.
- Teenage Relationship Abuse. Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse within a young person's own intimate relationship.

### **Recognising Signs of Abuse:**

Most suspicions of abuse arise from changes in a young person's behaviour, appearance, attitude, or relationships. Signs that may indicate abuse include:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries, or a pattern of injuries.
- Sexually explicit language, drawings, or actions that are inappropriate for their age.
- Sudden changes in behaviour, such as withdrawal, aggression, secrecy, or increased absences.
- Possession of unexplained material goods or money.
- Statements or disclosures made directly by a child or young person.
- Changes observed over time, such as significant weight loss, poor hygiene, or unkempt appearance.
- Appearing anxious, fearful, or displaying extreme mood swings.
- Lack of confidence, low self-esteem, or self-harming behaviours.
- Signs of emotional distress related to family tensions, such as anxiety, withdrawal, or behavioural issues linked to parents' arguments.

### **Crucial Principle: Report, Don't Investigate:**

It is important to remember that such signs do not definitively mean a child or young person is being abused. Equally, there may be no obvious signs, but you may just feel something is wrong.

It is never the responsibility of an Electric Storm Youth staff member, volunteer, or associate to decide if abuse has occurred or to investigate suspicions. Instead, it is their immediate responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them promptly and accurately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) as outlined in Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures. Crucially, do not make assumptions that a young person's needs or existing concerns are already being managed by another agency or local authority; all new or continuing concerns must still be reported to the DSL

### **Training and Awareness:**

Electric Storm Youth provides mandatory annual safeguarding training that covers these definitions, types, and signs of abuse in-depth. The DSL will also proactively review new programmes and activities to ensure any specific safeguarding risks are identified, flagged in relevant risk assessments, and additional training needs are addressed

## **Identifying and Supporting Vulnerable Young People**

Electric Storm Youth is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all young people. We recognise that some children and young people participating in our activities may experience additional vulnerabilities or difficulties that increase their risk of harm, both within their home lives and in wider community settings.

### **1. Children and Young People with a Disability**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that children and young people with a disability face increased risks of abuse and unique challenges in recognising or disclosing harm. Disability can take many forms, including physical, sensory, and learning disabilities.

Research indicates that children and young people with a disability are significantly more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Disclosing abuse can be particularly difficult for them due to factors such as:

- Limited life experience or understanding of inappropriate behaviour.
- Communication difficulties, which can hinder reporting.
- Physical inability to leave an abusive situation.
- Receiving intimate physical care, which might normalise inappropriate touch.
- Lowered self-esteem or self-image.
- Lack of awareness of how or to whom they can report abuse.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth is committed to adapting its approach to communication, activities, and support to meet the diverse needs of young people with disabilities, fostering an inclusive environment where they feel safe and empowered to raise concerns. All staff and volunteers receive training to understand these specific vulnerabilities and how to provide tailored support.

If any staff member or volunteer has a safeguarding concern about a child or young person with a disability, particularly if it relates to abuse or neglect, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures. The DSL will then liaise with appropriate statutory and specialist agencies to ensure the young person receives the necessary protection and support, recognising the unique challenges they may face in disclosure or intervention.

## **2. Children and Young People at Risk of, or Engaged in, Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a significant and complex form of abuse that can affect any child or young person, regardless of their background. Young people at risk of, or engaged in, sexual exploitation may not always see themselves as victims, making awareness and proactive identification by workers crucial.

Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):

Electric Storm Youth adopts the definition of CSE as outlined in government guidance (2017) and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children':

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'

Key Characteristics and Indicators of CSE:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers need to be aware that:

- Exploitative situations often involve young people receiving 'something' (e.g., food, accommodation, drugs, affection, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activity.
- CSE can occur solely through the use of technology, such as being persuaded to post sexual images online without immediate payment or gain.
- Perpetrators typically have power over the child due to age, gender, intellect, physical strength, or economic resources, often employing violence, coercion, or intimidation. The child's choice is limited by their social, economic, and/or emotional vulnerability.
- There are strong links between children going missing and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

- It is crucial not to stereotype specific groups of children as potential victims; any child, including those from supportive families, can be at risk.

Electric Storm Youth's Response to CSE:

All staff and volunteers are trained to recognise the signs and indicators of CSE. Any concerns that a young person may be at risk of, or engaged in, CSE must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures. The DSL will then liaise with statutory agencies, including local Children's Social Care and the Police, to ensure appropriate intervention and support for the young person

### **3. Young Carers**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that a young carer is a child or young person whose life is significantly impacted by the need to take responsibility for another person (such as a parent, sibling, grandparent, or other relative) who is disabled, has a chronic illness, mental health problem, or requires care, support, or supervision due to other conditions.

Young carers often face unique challenges, including:

- Isolation: Limited opportunities for social interaction, leisure, and a 'normal' childhood.
- Pressure and Stress: Significant responsibilities that can affect their education, development, and well-being.
- Reluctance to Seek Help: Fear of letting their family down or concerns about family breakdown if their caring role is disclosed.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth is committed to identifying and supporting young carers within our activities. Our staff and volunteers will:

- Be aware of the potential signs and needs of young carers.
- Offer appropriate support within Electric Storm Youth's provision.
- Where necessary, signpost young carers and their families to specialised charities and services dedicated to young carers, such as Young Carers Family Service
- If a young carer's needs are serious, urgent, or if there are safeguarding concerns relating to their caring role or welfare, these concerns must be shared immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures. The DSL will then ensure appropriate action is taken, which may include liaising with Children's Social Care or other relevant support agencies

### **4. Children and Young People Affected by Gang Activity and Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that young people involved in or affected by gang activity are highly vulnerable and at significant risk of harm, including serious violence, exploitation,

and criminalisation. This often falls under the broader term of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).

#### Understanding Gangs and CCE:

- Gang Characteristics: While varying, gangs often involve young males, early offending, territorial links, and drug dealing for financial gain.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): This is a form of abuse where an individual or group targets, grooms, coerces, or exploits a child (under 18) to commit crimes for them. This can involve drug dealing, carrying weapons, theft, or other illegal activities.
- County Lines: A specific and prevalent form of CCE where urban gangs use mobile phone "lines" to distribute drugs to customers in suburban or rural areas. This often involves.
  - Geographical Movement: Exploited young people being moved across the country to deliver drugs or manage "trap houses."
  - Debt Bondage: Creating a situation where the child "owes" the exploiter money or goods, making it harder for them to leave.
  - Cuckooing: Taking over the home of a vulnerable person (including young people in independent living) to use as a base for criminal activity.
- Vulnerability to Exploitation: Young people are exploited through bribery, intimidation, violence, and/or threats. They may not see themselves as victims, or may feel trapped due to social, economic, or emotional vulnerabilities.
- Gender Dynamics: Girls (and sometimes boys) are often drawn into gangs as 'girlfriends' or through other relationships, placing them at particular risk of sexual exploitation and abuse alongside criminal exploitation.

#### Recognising Indicators of Gang Involvement and CCE:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers should be alert to signs that may indicate a young person is affected by gang activity or CCE, including:

- Unexplained money, new clothes, phones (often multiple), or expensive gifts.
- Becoming secretive, withdrawn, or having unexplained injuries.
- Increased absences from home or school, or being found away from their usual area.
- Changes in behaviour, appearance, or use of unfamiliar language (e.g., gang-specific slang).
- Association with older individuals or new, unexplained friendships.
- Increased drug or alcohol use, or carrying weapons.
- Loss of interest in usual activities, decline in school performance.
- Receiving excessive calls or texts, or having multiple phone lines.

#### Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people affected by gang activity and CCE. It is vital to recognise their needs as potential victims, even if they are also involved in offending. Any concerns that a young person may be at risk of, or engaged in, gang activity or CCE must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or (DSL) Deputy Designated

Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures. The DSL will then liaise with statutory agencies (e.g., Children's Social Care, Police) to ensure appropriate support and intervention to prevent further harm.

## **5. Children and Young People Missing Education**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that all children and young people between the ages of 5 and 16 are legally required to be in full-time education. Children and young people who are not attending school, are not receiving suitable home education, or are frequently absent from education, may be particularly vulnerable to harm, exploitation, or neglect.

Indicators and Concerns:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers should be alert to indicators that a young person may be missing education or experiencing persistent non-attendance, as this can be a significant safeguarding concern.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

If any staff member or volunteer has a concern that a child or young person involved with Electric Storm Youth may be missing education, or if there are concerns about a child's persistent absence from school, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with the local authority's Children's Services or relevant Education Welfare Service in West Sussex to ensure the young person's safety and access to appropriate education. This includes concerns about children who may have gone missing from the local area or neighbourhood where there are educational concerns

## **6. Young People Experiencing Homelessness**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that young people experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to harm, exploitation, and detrimental impacts on their well-being and development. We understand that homelessness encompasses more than just sleeping on the streets, and includes:

- 'Sofa surfing': Staying temporarily with friends or family without a secure, long-term home.
- Temporary Accommodation: Living in hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation, or other insecure housing.
- Unsuitable or Unsafe Accommodation: Any living situation that poses a risk to their safety, health, or development.

Whatever the reason for their situation, insecure housing significantly increases a young person's vulnerability to various forms of harm.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers will be alert to indicators that a young person may be experiencing homelessness or insecure housing. If a concern arises regarding a young person's housing situation or their potential vulnerability due to homelessness, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with local authorities' Children's Social Care, housing services, and other relevant support agencies in West Sussex to ensure the young person receives appropriate advice, support, and protection.

## **7. Children and Young People Experiencing Domestic Abuse**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that children and young people living in households where domestic abuse occurs are victims of abuse themselves, regardless of whether they are directly subjected to physical violence. Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, personally connected. This includes children who see, hear, or experience the effects of the abuse.

Children and young people may be impacted by:

- Witnessing incidents of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse between adults.
- Hearing abuse, even if not directly seeing it.
- Experiencing the effects of controlling or coercive behaviour.
- Continuing to witness and/or hear abuse during post-separation contact visits.

Research indicates a significantly increased risk of children and young people in such homes being directly subjected to physical or sexual abuse. The ongoing impact on their well-being can manifest through various behaviours, including aggression, anti-social behaviour, anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or difficulty forming relationships.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers will be alert to the signs and indicators that a young person may be experiencing or affected by domestic abuse. If any staff member or volunteer has a concern about a young person experiencing domestic abuse, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with local authorities' Children's Social Care and other relevant support agencies to ensure the young person and their family receive appropriate assessment, protection, and support.

## **8. Children and Young People Affected by Parental Substance Misuse**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that where parents or carers misuse substances (drugs or alcohol), it can pose a significant risk to the safety and well-being of children and young people. While some parents manage to care for their children despite substance

dependence, severe or enduring parental substance misuse can cause significant harm, primarily through neglect and emotional abuse, at all stages of a child's development.

Young people affected by parental substance misuse may:

- Have their daily life revolve around the parent's/carer's substance use.
- Be exposed to unsafe environments or situations.
- Assume inappropriate caring or household responsibilities, becoming 'hidden' young carers.
- Experience emotional neglect, instability, or a lack of consistent care.
- Be at increased risk of other forms of abuse.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers will be alert to indicators that a young person may be experiencing harm due to parental substance misuse. If any staff member or volunteer has a concern about a young person in this situation, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with local authorities' Children's Social Care and other relevant support agencies (such as adult substance misuse services or family support services) to ensure the young person receives appropriate assessment, protection, and support.

## **9. Children and Young People Whose Parents/Carers Have Learning Disabilities**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that parental learning disabilities do not automatically mean a child will experience harm. However, where parents or carers have learning disabilities, the children and young people in the family may face increased risks and particular attention should be paid to their developmental, social, and emotional needs.

Potential risks of harm or impacts on well-being for children in these families may include:

- **Inappropriate Caring Responsibilities:** A child assuming caring responsibilities that are beyond their age or developmental stage, such as looking after siblings or managing household tasks.
- **Neglect:** Increased risk of a child experiencing neglect due to the parent's/carer's difficulties in meeting their needs consistently.
- **Targeted Exploitation:** A parent/carer with learning disabilities, particularly mothers, may be vulnerable to exploitation, which could then put children at risk of sexual or other forms of abuse.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth is committed to supporting children and young people whose parents/carers have learning disabilities. Our staff and volunteers will:

- Be particularly aware of the unique needs and potential vulnerabilities of these young people.
- Recognise that parents/carers with learning difficulties may require information about programmes and activities to be explained verbally, simply, and clearly. They may also need practical support to understand and complete forms or participate effectively.
- Ensure our communication is accessible and appropriate.
- If any staff member or volunteer has a concern about a young person in this situation, particularly if it relates to a risk of abuse or neglect, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with local authorities' Children's Social Care and other relevant support services (e.g., adult social care, specialist family support teams for parents with learning disabilities) to ensure the family receives appropriate assessment and support, always prioritising the child's welfare.

## **10. Children and Young People Affected by Parental Mental Illness**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that parental mental illness does not automatically have an adverse impact on a child or young person's care and developmental needs. However, severe or enduring parental mental ill-health can significantly increase a child's vulnerability, and studies indicate a heightened risk of child death or significant harm through abuse or neglect in such households.

Potential risks of harm or impacts on well-being for children in these families may include:

- Emotional Harm: Experiencing parental aggression, rejection, or emotional unavailability.
- Inappropriate Caring Responsibilities: Assuming caring duties that are inappropriate for their age or developmental stage, effectively becoming a young carer.
- Witnessing Disturbing Behaviour: Exposure to disturbing behaviours arising from the mental illness, such as self-harm, suicidal ideation, uninhibited behaviour, or violence.
- Neglect: Physical and/or emotional neglect due to an unwell parent's reduced capacity to meet their child's needs consistently.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers will be particularly aware of the potential impact of parental mental illness on children and young people. We will strive to provide a stable and supportive environment for these young people within our activities.

If any staff member or volunteer has a concern about a young person in this situation, particularly if it relates to a risk of abuse, neglect, or significant emotional harm, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Deputy DSL) following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise with local authorities' Children's Social Care and other relevant support agencies (e.g., child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), adult mental health services, family support services) to ensure the family receives appropriate assessment and support, always prioritising the child's welfare.

## **11. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking and Refugee Children**

Electric Storm Youth recognises that unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children are among the most vulnerable young people in society. Having arrived in the UK without parents or relatives, they have often endured long, perilous, and traumatic journeys, and may have experienced exploitation or persecution in their home country or en route.

Their vulnerability is significantly heightened by:

- **Trafficking and Exploitation Risks:** Many have been trafficked or are at severe risk of re-trafficking or other forms of exploitation (e.g., criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation).
- **Systemic Vulnerabilities:** Increased risk of homelessness, involvement in gang activity, and being out of education.
- **Going Missing:** A greater likelihood of going missing due to fear, coercion, or disorientation.
- **Complex Mental Health Needs:** Significant risk of experiencing mental health issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression due to past trauma, isolation, and uncertainties.
- **Barriers to Integration and Disclosure:** Difficulties in communication, frustration at not understanding complex asylum processes, worries for family members, isolation, loneliness, and potential debt bondage to traffickers can all create significant barriers to seeking help or disclosing harm.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are the responsibility of the local authority, who should ensure they are living in foster care or supported accommodation and are responsible for their safety and well-being.

Electric Storm Youth's Response:

Electric Storm Youth staff and volunteers will be acutely aware of the extreme vulnerabilities and complex needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children. We will strive to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment within our activities, acknowledging their potential trauma and communication challenges.

If any staff member or volunteer has any safeguarding concern about an unaccompanied asylum-seeking or refugee child, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL following Electric Storm Youth's reporting procedures.

The DSL will then liaise directly with the local authority's Children's Social Care and relevant specialist agencies (e.g., asylum support services, therapeutic services for refugees, anti-trafficking organisations) to ensure the young person receives the necessary protection, care, and support, recognising the local authority's primary responsibility for their welfare

## Responding to Disclosures, Suspicions, and Allegations

At Electric Storm Youth, our primary responsibility is safeguarding young people. This means ensuring that all concerns, suspicions, or allegations about a child's welfare or potential harm are promptly and accurately passed to the statutory agencies—Children's Social Care Services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and in emergencies, the Police. These agencies hold the statutory responsibility to make inquiries and determine if a child or young person is at risk of harm.

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### How to Respond to a Disclosure from a Young Person

If a young person tells you they (or another young person) are concerned about someone's behaviour towards them, the person receiving this information must respond calmly and thoughtfully.

Key Principles for Receiving a Disclosure:

- **Remain Calm and Controlled:** Your calm demeanor helps the young person feel safe and supported.
- **Reassure the Young Person:** Tell them they've done the right thing by speaking up.
- **Take it Seriously:** Believe what the young person is saying.
- **Listen Carefully:** Focus on what is being said, without interrupting or leading the conversation.
- **Keep Questions to a Minimum:** Only ask questions for immediate clarification. Do not ask leading questions or questions that require them to elaborate beyond their initial statement.
- **No Promises of Secrecy:** Explain clearly that you cannot keep this information a secret, as you will need to share it with other professionals to keep them and/or other young people safe. Reassure them that sharing is for their protection.
- **Inform Next Steps:** Briefly explain what will happen next (e.g., "I need to tell our safeguarding lead so they can help us work out the best way to keep you safe").
- **Prioritise Welfare:** In all cases, the welfare and safety of the young person who has disclosed is the absolute highest priority.

### Immediate Danger Response:

If there is a concern that the young person is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention:

- **Contact the Police (999):** Explain the situation to them immediately.
- **Stay with the Young Person:** Do not leave them alone.
- **Ensure Safety:** If necessary, move to a safe place away from immediate harm, ensuring no situation arises that could cause further concern.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** Call for immediate medical attention (e.g., ambulance) if the young person requires it.

- Contact DSL: Inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL as soon as it's safe to do so, explaining what is happening and asking for further advice.
- Do NOT Investigate: Do not investigate further, share confidential information with others, or take any further action unless explicitly authorised by the police or DSL. Anything you do without their authorisation may harm their investigation.
- Record: Make a factual record of events as soon as possible on an Incident Form.

### **Non-Immediate Danger Response (Disclosure Made):**

If a young person discloses, but they are not in immediate danger:

- Follow the disclosure principles outlined above (remain calm, reassure, listen, minimal questions, no secrecy).
  - Complete an Incident Form as soon as possible, detailing what was said or observed.
  - Submit the Incident Form to the DSL/Deputy DSL within 24 hours, and notify them verbally that you have done so.
  - The DSL will review the information, contact you if necessary for further clarification, and inform you of the next steps.
- 

## **Responding to Suspicions and Concerns**

If you have any concern or suspicion about a young person's welfare or safety, even if no direct disclosure has been made (e.g., based on observations, overheard conversations, changes in behaviour), it is your responsibility to report it.

- Complete an Incident Form detailing your concerns and observations.
  - Submit the Incident Form to the DSL or in their absence Deputy DSL as soon as possible (and within 24 hours).
  - The DSL will then advise on the next steps, including whether a referral to statutory agencies is required.
  - Remember: It is not your role to investigate. Your role is to report.
- 

## **Recording Safeguarding Concerns**

Accurate and timely recording of all safeguarding concerns is vital, regardless of whether concerns are shared with the police or other agencies. This record provides a factual account and is essential for safeguarding processes.

Keep an accurate record of:

- The date and time of the incident/disclosure and the date and time of the report.
- The name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported.
- The name and role of the person making the report (if different).
- The names of all parties involved, including any witnesses.

- Precisely what was said or done, and by whom (use direct quotes where possible).
- Any immediate action taken to ensure safety (e.g., medical attention, moving to a safe space).
- Any further action taken (e.g., referral made to statutory agencies).
- The reasons why Electric Storm Youth decided *not* to refer concerns to a statutory agency, if applicable (this decision must be made by the DSL, with clear rationale recorded).

The record must be factual, try to avoid using any interpretation or inference. The record must always be signed and dated by the person making the report.

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## **Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, or Trustees**

Any concerns or allegations involving the inappropriate behaviour of a staff member, volunteer, or trustee towards a young person will be taken with the utmost seriousness.

### **1. Allegation Against a Staff Member, Volunteer, or Trustee (not the DSL):**

- Any such allegation must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The DSL will then immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the area where the incident occurred.
- The DSL, in consultation with the LADO and Senior Management, will determine if the individual should be suspended or asked to cease working on a temporary basis until the matter is formally resolved. This decision will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, prioritising the safety of young people.
- The situation will be explained to the staff member/volunteer concerned (if deemed appropriate by the LADO/DSL).
- Support will be provided for the person against whom the allegation has been made, but this will not compromise the safeguarding investigation.
- Following investigation by statutory agencies (e.g., Police, Social Care), the outcome could lead to disciplinary action, dismissal, and further action being taken against the individual.

### **2. Allegation Against the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

- Any concerns or allegations involving the DSL directly must be reported immediately to the Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding - Matthew Ayling and/or the Deputy Chair of Trustees Ian Tout.
  - The Safeguarding Lead Trustee/Deputy Chair will then immediately contact the LADO to seek advice and initiate the formal process.
  - It is crucial that all staff are aware of this specific reporting structure.
-

## **Malicious Allegations**

Electric Storm Youth understands that allegations may sometimes be classified as malicious following a thorough preliminary inquiry or investigation.

- Care will be taken in dealing with such an outcome, as some facts may not be wholly untrue; elements of an allegation may be fabricated or exaggerated but could be based on a kernel of truth.
- Where a preliminary enquiry or investigation determines an allegation to be malicious or unsubstantiated, a factual record will be made stating:
  - That an allegation was made (without detailing the nature of the allegation).
  - The date the allegation was made.
  - That the allegation was fully investigated.
  - The outcome was that it was found to be malicious or unsubstantiated, and that no further action was taken by statutory agencies.
- Electric Storm Youth will refer to LADO guidelines for classifications of outcomes following investigations to ensure proper recording and closure.

For comprehensive details on how Electric Storm Youth collects, uses, stores, and protects personal data, please refer to our full Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

### **Policy adopted by the Board of Directors**

**18th September 2025**

**Review date September August 2026**

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Key Safeguarding Contact Information**

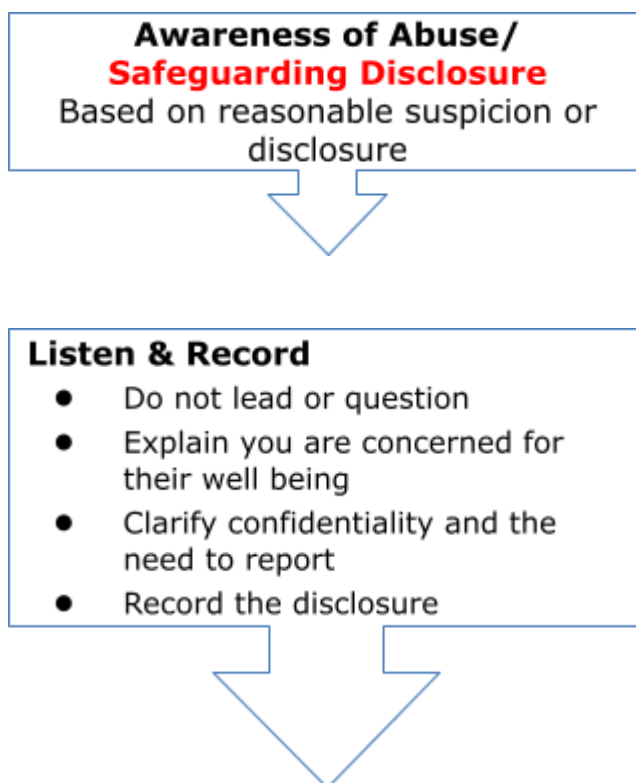
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mark Carrell 07525 727199  
mark.carrell@electricstormyouth.co.uk
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Karen Jefford 07305 090739  
karen@electricstormyouth.co.uk
- Board of Trustees Safeguarding Officer: Matthew Ayling  
safeguarding@electricstormyouth.co.uk
- Deputy Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees: Ian Tout  
treasurer@electricstormyouth.co.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - West Sussex Miriam Williams, Donna Tomlinson and Victoria Williams. Contact as of the 1st My 20205 is via their online referral form.  
<https://www.westsussexscp.org.uk/professionals/professional-disagreements-and-concerns/ladoinformation>
- Children's Social Care - West Sussex:
  - Emergency (Duty Team/Out-of-Hours): 033 022 26664 / 07711 769657

- Non-Emergency (Referral Team): 01403 229900
- Police:
  - Emergency: 999
  - Non-Emergency: 101 (for reporting non-urgent concerns)
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111

## **Appendix 2: Definitions of Abuse**

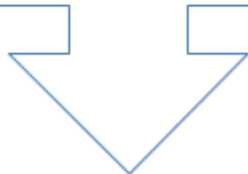
- **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, or suffocating a child. Physical harm may also be caused by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child. Where a parent or carer is found to have harmed one child, consideration must be given to the safety of any other child with whom that person has contact.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It may involve 'the severe and persistent neglect of a child's emotional needs'. Emotional abuse may involve adults who are consistently unsupportive and unavailable to a child, making them feel worthless and unloved, or who impose excessive expectations, criticisms, or control. It can involve bullying, intimidation, humiliation, or terrorising a child. It can also involve children being exposed to frightening situations like domestic violence where they are not physically harmed but are psychologically impacted.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to engage in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or producing, sexual images, or watching sexual acts, or being exposed to indecent sexual content, or having sexualised content sent to them. Perpetrators may be adults or other children.
- **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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of a mother's problematic substance use or other factors. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), or failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm. It may also involve not providing adequate supervision, or medical care (including refusing care, or not following recommendations for care or treatment). Neglect can also be identified if a parent or carer fails to ensure a child receives an education, or attends to a child's emotional or developmental needs.

### Appendix 3: Child Protection Flow Chart



Report to Lead Paid Worker immediately, ideally Youth Work Manage.

If unavailable or accusations are against the Lead Paid Worker, contact Safeguarding Lead/ Safeguarding Director



Lead **Paid Worker** to report to **Safeguarding Lead**.  
Concern to be reported via email.

#### Appendix 4: Incident Report Form Template

### Safeguarding Incident Report Form

<b>Name of Session/Activity:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	
<b>Your Name:</b>	
<b>Your Position:</b>	
<b>Your Email Address:</b>	
<b>Your Phone Number:</b>	

<b>Who is the report about?</b>	
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**How do you know about these concerns?** (Did a young person tell you? If so, who? Is it based on rumour? Something you have overheard? Be as specific as you can)

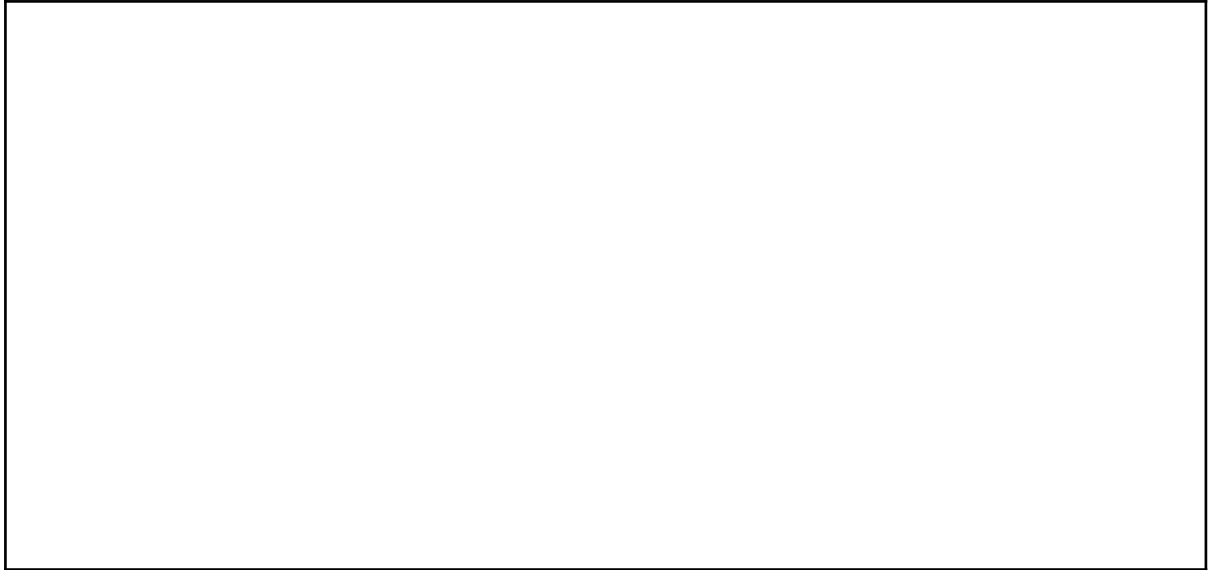
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**Details of your concern:**

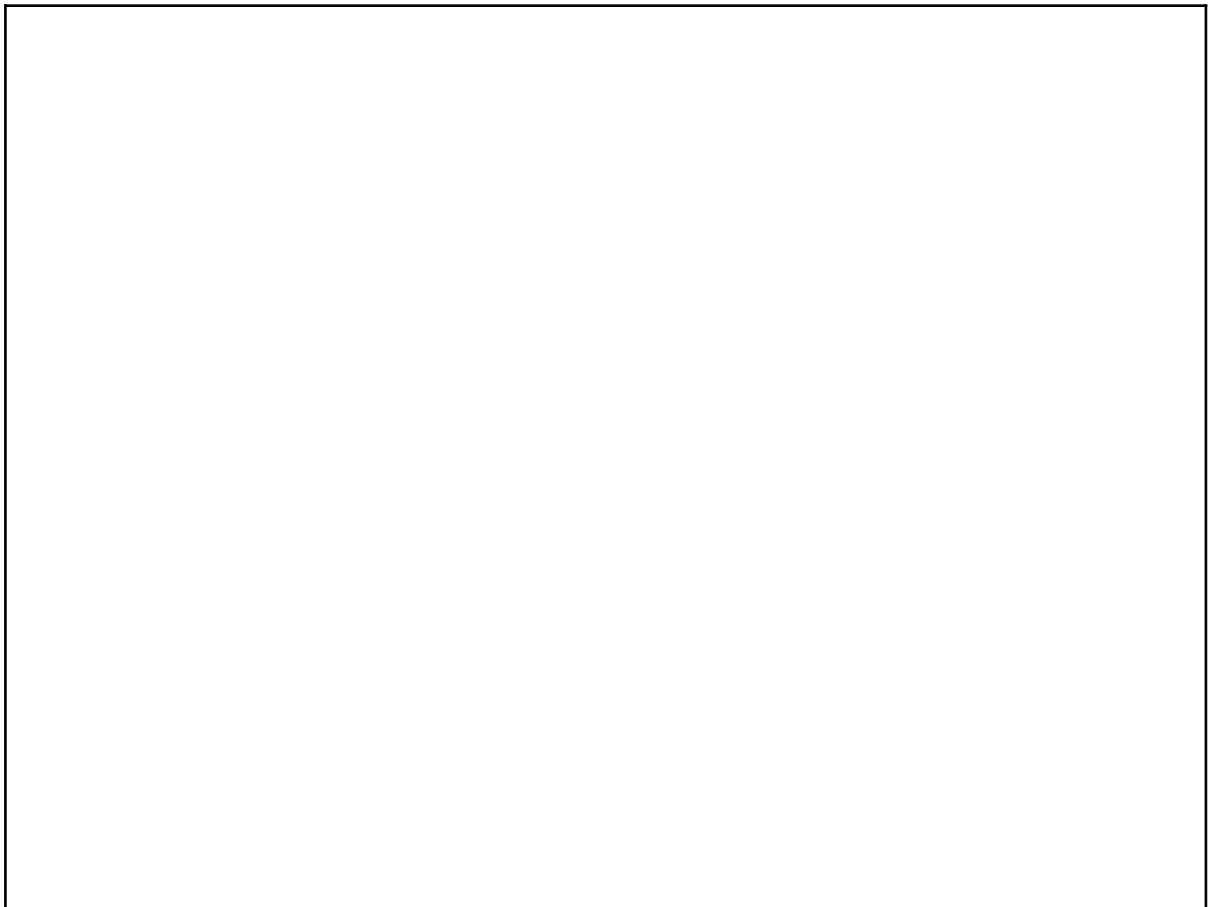
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**Are there any witnesses?**( Provide details of anyone who witnessed the concern. Give their name, contact details and their involvement with ESY e.g. are they staff, a volunteer, participant, teacher etc.)

**Actions taken to date** (Record any actions that have already taken place (if applicable) If you have spoken to anyone, record the name and contact details of who you have spoken to and anything that was agreed, or actions taken.)



**Are you aware of anything else relevant to this concern?**(Complete this area if you feel there is anything else relevant or in support of your concern. This could be images or footage you are aware of, if someone was injured or feeling unwell and they have been seen by the medical team, discussions with teachers, any involvement of a parent/carer etc)



--

<b>Your Signature:</b>	
<b>Print Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

**To be completed by the Event Safeguarding Lead/ Event Safeguarding Team Member/YST Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Officer**

Date and Time notified of the incident/ concern:	
Actions taken:	

Reporting to external agencies If the matter has been referred to an external agency such as Police, Children or Adult Services, LADO, or any other agency record it here:	
Any further follow up required	
Date incident closed for reporting:	

Safeguarding Lead signature:	
Print Name:	
Date:	

### Appendix 5: Related Policies and Documents

These are available on either the shared drive for employees, [on our website](#) or on request [office@electricstormyouth.co.uk](mailto:office@electricstormyouth.co.uk)

- Electric Storm Youth Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Electric Storm Youth Online Safety Policy and Procedures
- Electric Storm Youth Data Protection Policy
- Electric Storm Youth Privacy Notice
- Electric Storm Youth Whistleblowing Policy
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - External guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>