



THE TOY LIBRARY

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

MAY 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Toy Library will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children are protected and to give them the best possible start in life. We are committed to building a culture of safety, responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse and promoting awareness of child abuse issues through training and learning.

These guidelines are intended as a straightforward guide that tell everyone what to do in situations where child protection or safeguarding could be a concern.

These guidelines need to be read and followed in conjunction with:

- The Nottingham City Safeguarding Children's Partnership practice guidance and the Inter-agency Children's Safeguarding procedures, both of which need to be accessed online:

[Inter-agency Procedures and Practice Guidance - Nottingham City Council](#)

<http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/>

- Nottingham City Threshold of Needs

[2023-nottingham-city-threshold-of-needs.pdf \(nottinghamcity.gov.uk\)](#)

- The Toy Library Record of Concern and associated documents.

Note: These procedures are in line with the Nottingham City and County Safeguarding procedures. The procedures are the same for both City and County, but the referral processes are different.

If there is a concern relating to a child who lives outside of Nottingham City boundaries, the Nottinghamshire County Safeguarding referral processes need to be followed. These can be found at:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/nscp>

Referrals for the County are made to the the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) this is the single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns. Contact details can be found at:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/nottinghamshire-children-and-families-alliance/pathway-to-provision/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash>

Further guidance and information can also be found in The Toy Library Safeguarding Policy and associated policies and procedures.

A child is defined as any person under the age of 18.

A CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING

In Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, there is information and guidance on what children have said they want from an effective safeguarding system. These should guide the behaviour of practitioners.

Children have said that they need:

• **vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them • **understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon • **stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them • **respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not • **information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans • **explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response • **support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family • **advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views • **protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children July 2018

CONCERNS & WORRIES BEING RAISED

There are a number of ways that worries may be raised, for instance:

- A child or young person may tell you about something that has upset or harmed them, or that has happened to another child or young person
- Someone else might report that a child or young person has told them, or that they strongly believe, that a child or young person has been or is being harmed in some way
- A child or young person might show signs of physical injury or neglect, for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation
- A child's or young person's behaviour may suggest he or she is being abused
- The behaviour or attitude of one of the workers towards a child or young person may worry you or make you feel uncomfortable in some way
- Someone might make an allegation that a worker or volunteer has harmed a child or young person or behaved inappropriately towards them
- You may witness worrying behaviour from one child or young person to another.

NSPCC Are They Safe? guide 2017

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

1. When any person has knowledge or suspicion that a child is either being abused, or is at risk of abuse, or that a Carer has seriously neglected or failed to protect a child, he/she

has a personal duty to refer this to the Children's Social Care Team. If this is not possible, it should be reported to the Police.

2. Concerns may be as a result of information other than direct observation or evidence of abuse to a child/young person, such as evidence of domestic violence or substance abuse within the family.
3. The role of staff and volunteers is to make referrals when abuse is suspected, not to investigate. Therefore, you should not seek to try and determine whether any concern of description of child abuse is valid. There are, however, actions we are expected to have taken before making a referral and you may also be asked to assist with assessments where appropriate.
4. All staff and volunteers must be aware of definitions and indicators of abuse.
5. All staff and volunteers must be aware of the course of action to follow when they have a concern or have received a direct description of abuse.
6. All staff and volunteers must have a good working understanding of The Toy Library's procedures and paperwork to use when they have a safeguarding concern that may not be a direct child protection concern.
7. All staff and volunteers should be aware of what happens after a referral, and possible roles.
8. All staff and volunteers are required to attend appropriate training opportunities, and to renew training as a minimum every 3 years or more frequently if appropriate.
9. Any referral must be confirmed in writing, using a copy of the relevant referral form.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation. Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety.

If you have any concerns about how a safeguarding or child protection concern is being handled it is important you raise this with the appropriate person. This could be your line manager, a safeguarding Lead, or if you felt unable to go to them, the Service Director. The Toy Library has a Whistleblowing Policy which explains this in more detail.

If for any reason you felt unable to speak to anyone within the organisation, the NSPCC has a Whistleblowing Helpline that you can contact for advice and support:

You should call the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

- your organisation doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures to follow.
- you think your concern won't be dealt with properly or may be covered-up.

- you've raised a concern, but it hasn't been acted upon
- you're worried about being treated unfairly.

You can call about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or you believe may happen in the future.

Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line

Call [0800 028 0285](tel:08000280285)

Email help@nspcc.org.uk

Adapted from: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL

Please follow guidance on consent prior to making any referral (see Consent section on page 7 of these guidelines.

Immediate child protection referral:

When you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or at immediate risk of significant harm/abuse.

Note: For children living within Nottingham City. For children living within Nottingham County see information in Introduction.

If you believe that a child is at immediate risk and in need of protection then you should call the Police 999 if you are unable to speak with Social Care immediately.

Refer to Notification of Concern document and the Nottingham City Threshold of Needs.

Discuss concern immediately with the responsible person/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Record as much as possible, using objective language on the Notification of Concern form.

Ensure all paperwork is dated and signed.

Call in the referral:

City Mash: operational Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4.50pm.

Tel: 0115 876 4800

If you are calling out of hours the line is monitored to take **emergency safeguarding** enquires

Complete a Multi Agency request for Services form (MARF):

This is an online form, accessed by going to:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/marf>

Once the form has been completed it will be sent securely and you will receive a PDF copy of the form back by email.

Open a running records form.

Keep all records up to date and confidential.

Retain records, monitor and take actions as appropriate.

Next day child protection referral:

When you have reason to believe that a child is being abused or at risk of significant harm/abuse but it is not immediate.

Note: For children living within Nottingham City. For children living within Nottingham County see information in Introduction.

Refer to Notification of Concern document and the Nottingham City Threshold of Needs.

Discuss concern with the responsible person/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Record as much as possible, using objective language on the Notification of Concern form.

Ensure all paperwork is dated and signed.

Call in the referral:

City Mash: is operational Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4.50pm.

Tel: 0115 876 4800

Complete a Multi Agency request for Services form (MARF):

This is an online form, accessed by going to:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/marf>

Once the form has been completed it will be sent securely and you will receive a PDF copy of the form back by email.

Open a running records form.

Keep all records up to date and confidential.

Retain all records, monitor and take actions as appropriate.

Non-urgent safeguarding concern:

When you have reason to believe that a child is in need of some additional support to ensure their wellbeing but is not at risk of significant harm/abuse.

Note: For children living within Nottingham City. For children living within Nottingham County see information in Introduction.

Refer to Notification of Concern document and the Nottingham City Threshold of Needs.

Discuss concern with the responsible person/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Record as much as possible, using objective language on the Notification of Concern form.

Ensure all paperwork is dated and signed.

Complete a Multi-Agency request for Services form (MARF) if needed:

This is an online form, accessed by going to:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/marf>

Once the form has been completed it will be sent securely and you will receive a PDF copy of the form back by email.

Open a running records form.

Keep all records up to date and confidential.

Retain all records, monitor and take actions as appropriate.

CONSENT

Permission to share information with the MASH should always be sought from an adult with parental responsibility for the child / young person before passing information about them to Children's Social Care, UNLESS seeking permission would place the child at immediate risk of significant harm or may lead to the loss of evidence, for example destroying evidence of a crime or influencing a child about a disclosure made.

This would be done by an appropriate person – either the person making the referral or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

CONFIDENTIALITY: when seeking consent please ensure that parents/carers understand that the information will be shared with services where considered appropriate to do so.

If a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, a referral to Children's Social Care SHOULD NOT BE DELAYED whilst consent is sought.

If you have not sought consent, you will be asked to explain the immediate risk that has prevented you from obtaining consent.

ALLEGATIONS/CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

The Nottingham City Children's Safeguarding Partnership have produced guidelines to help an agency or organization respond appropriately to allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers. These include allegations that are recent or historical (when the alleged abuse took place in the past and has only recently been reported) and apply to both the professional and personal life of the alleged abuser.

It is a contractual requirement of all staff and volunteers at The Toy Library to declare to their line manager or another DSL in their absence, any information about their own circumstances which may affect their suitability to work with children and young people.

All staff and volunteers are also expected to bring any concerns about colleagues (paid or volunteers), whether this is information you have received or behaviour you have seen, to their line manager or another DSL in their absence. If you are uncertain whether the information is relevant it is always better to discuss this with your manager or another DSL so they can support you and reach a decision on whether any action is required.

It is important that you raise any concerns as soon as possible.

In all instances any allegations/concerns identified must be reported to the Organization Safeguarding Lead – Celina Adams. Decisions will be made, and actions taken in accordance with the NCSCB guidelines. This may or may not lead to suspension and/or disciplinary procedures and police involvement.

For further information, see the guidance in the NCSCB procedures:

http://nottinghamshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p_alleg_against_staff.html

PROTECTING YOURSELF – GOOD PRACTICE

Many staff and volunteers are concerned about the potential of being falsely accused of abuse of a child or young person in the course of their work. The following are some basic guidelines to limit such possibilities:

- Never work alone, ensure there is always at least one other adult or multiple children around.
- Do not have any personal contact/conversations with a child you are working with via phone and social media.
- If a one-to-one talk with a child is necessary, do not do this behind closed doors. Ensure others can see what is happening.
- Never give a lone child or young person a lift in your car. Avoid providing lifts altogether unless previously agreed with a manager.
- Avoid all unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Talk to your line manager if you have any concerns about how a child or young person is relating to you, including any concerns around physical contact and emotional attachment.
- Ensure that you have an Enhanced DBS Certificate that is less than 3 years old.

SOME BASIC DO'S AND DON'T'S WHEN A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE:

DO:

- o Listen carefully, be sympathetic, comforting, and supportive and show you believe what they are telling you
- o If you are able to, involve another worker in the conversation or have them in hearing distance
- o Confirm that they are right to talk to you about it
- o Make sure they know that you may have to refer the concerns to someone else, such as Children's Social Care
- o Spend time with them, don't try and rush things
- o Explain to them what you will do and what will happen next
- o If they are old enough, talk through the referring to Children's Social Care and seek their agreement (although you will still need to make the referral if they don't agree)
- o Write clear written records as soon as possible, dated and signed – ideally typed.
- O If appropriate, make arrangements to support them through the process.

DON'T:

- o Stop them freely recalling events
- o Promise to keep what they are telling you a secret
- o Promise everything will be alright, or anything you cannot be sure about
- o Do not do or say anything that could put ideas into their mind

DEFINITIONS

Children

Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as: a. protecting children from maltreatment b. preventing impairment of children's health or development c. ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. 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.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

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.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

Physical abuse

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

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) d.

ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Taken from:

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children July 2018:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Designated Safeguarding Leads: (DSL)

Senior Organisation Lead:	Celina Adams	Phone: 0115 9753898
Board member-Safeguarding Lead:	Melkorka Stiller-Magnúsdóttir Via Organisation Lead	
Safeguarding Practice Lead:	Helen Barnett	Phone: 07502 258247
Family Mentor Service:	Lorraine Stevenson	Phone: 07825 233577
Creche & Play	Sara Taylor	Phone: 07950 279454
Next Steps & Play	Yan Gough	Phone: 07383 103374

Other useful contacts:

CITY COUNCIL

City Mash: Phone: 0115 876 4800

City Mash: Email: CityMASH@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership:

Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Tel: 0115 876 4762

Email: safeguarding.partnerships@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCIL

MASH Hub: Phone: 0300 500 80 90

(Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8.30am to 5pm Wednesday 10.30 – 5 pm Friday: 8.30am to 4.30pm)

mash.safeguarding@nottscc.gov.uk.

Emergency Duty Team Phone: 0300 456 4546.

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, County Hall, West Bridgford
Nottingham, NG2 7QP.

Tel: 0115 977 3935

Email: info.nscp@nottsc.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline:

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Domestic Violence information & guidance

Online form for professionals to request support & information:

[Dedicated service for professionals - Womens Aid](#)

National Domestic Abuse Helplines

Phone 0808 2000 247 – www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/ (run by Refuge)

The Men's Advice Line, for male domestic abuse survivors – 0808 801 0327 (run by Respect)

The Mix, free information and support for under 25s in the UK – [The Mix - Essential support for under 25s](#)

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0800 999 5428 (run by Galop)

Document produced	November 2018		
V2	V2 March 2019, V3 March 20, V4 August 21		
V5	23/06/22	Changed reference from 'Family Support Pathway' to 'Nottingham City Threshold of Needs'	Pgs 2, 5, 6, 7
		Changed link for Nottingham City Threshold of Needs	Pg 2
		Updated C & F Direct phone operational times	Pg 5
V6	08/11/22	All hyperlinks checked	
		Change C& F Direct to City Mash	Pg's 5, 6, 12
		Change of Organisational Lead	Pg's 8, 12
		Additional info on using secure email account	Pg 6
		Deletion of reference to Ofsted	Pg 8
		Added in new email for City Mash	Pg 12
V7	24/02/23	Reference to consent under referral guide	Pg 5
		Consent section updated	Pg 7
		Contact information updated	Pg 12
V8	10/08/23	Change of Organisational Lead	Pg's 8, 12
V9	10/05/24	Updated links	Pg 2
		Information on MARF form updated	Pg 6
		Removed refs to DSL meetings	Pg 6

		Added 'open a running records form' to Immediate and Next day referral guidance	Pg 6
		Amended County Council Hub availability times	Pg 12
		Deleted phone number and added in link for 'The Mix'	Pg 13