



Weardale Railway Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

December 2021

Introduction

This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Weardale Railway and any extended and associated services that it provides, including Weardale Railway Trust.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers, temporary and visiting staff working on the railway. It will be reviewed annually by the Weardale Railway Trust.

Weardale Railway operates wholly within County Durham and therefore it is important that all staff are aware of the reporting procedures for Durham County Council should there be a concern of a safeguarding need that requires reporting to Durham Children's Safeguarding Partnership..

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The Railway has a culture of vigilance and is committed to safeguarding children and young people, and we expect everyone who works on our railway to share this commitment.

All adults on our railway take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that worries them.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow 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 refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the railway, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, and adoptive parents.

Purpose of Safeguarding Policy

Purpose of a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	To inform all members of staff, parents and volunteers about the railway's responsibilities for safeguarding children and their responsibilities therein
Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP)	We follow the procedures agreed by Durham County Council's Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCSP)
Railway Staff & Volunteers	Staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The railway will therefore: Ensure that key staff and volunteers receive safeguarding children training, to help identify concerns. Ensure that all volunteers and staff are aware of this policy and those relating to the safeguarding of children.
Principles	This railway recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe and trusting environment in which children can contribute, learn and develop. The policy applies to all children between the ages of 0-18. The staff and board of this railway are committed to establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. We will ensure that children know there are adults in the railway who they can approach if they are worried and that the principles of confidentiality are made clear to children and young people.

	<p>Children need to be supported in approaching any member of staff they feel most comfortable in speaking with. The railway promotes a positive, supportive, and secure ethos, giving pupils a sense of being valued.</p> <p>To ensure children know that there are adults in the railway whom they can approach if they are worried.</p> <p>This railway also recognises its duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and in responding to concerns about possible abuse, including the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and any other agencies/services coming into the railway to support individual children/groups of children.</p> <p>To include training where appropriate.</p>
<p>Implementation, Monitoring and Review of the Safeguarding and child protection Policy</p>	<p>The Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is put on the agenda of the Board at least once a year for discussion, monitoring, review, and renewal.</p>

Child protection referrals

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership, use this link: <https://durham-scp.org.uk/>

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection will co-ordinate action on child protection within the railway. The DSL is to have the overall contextual safeguarding view for all children within the railway. This means to consider and have an understanding of wider community issues when we consider the wellbeing and safety of young people.

Also, that they are aware of what happens once a concern has been raised.

A Duty Manager should know who the DSL is and to whom they should report concerns.

Key personnel

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection is: Simon Adams

Contact details: email: simon@adamsfamily.com

Tel: 07880 332577

It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection:

- Ensure that they receive regular refresher training.
- To keep their knowledge and skills up to date.
- Make sure that concerns are raised by staff/volunteers when necessary
- Offer support and guidance to all adults working within the railway on matters of safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that the names and contact details of the DSL are available for all staff, volunteers of the railway.
- Complete all necessary paperwork and correspondence including referral forms to MASH in regard to safeguarding and child protection referrals.
- Keep the railway's Board informed about safeguarding and child protection issues as requested.

Railway Procedures – Staff Responsibilities

All railway staff and volunteers need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and from other sources, including members of the railway community.

If any member of staff or volunteer is concerned about a child, the DSL (or the duty manager in their absence) must be informed immediately. There is an absolute responsibility for all members of the railway to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns and ensure the written record is passed to the DSL on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.

The DSL will decide whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Social Care via the MASH. If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Social Care this will be discussed with the parents and consent sought, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm, place a vulnerable adult at risk or compromise any enquiries that may need to be made.

All staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse are. See Appendix A:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm – see Appendix A for details.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff.

Good practice includes:

- treating all children with respect.
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- encouraging positive, respectful, and safe behaviour among children.
- being a good listener.
- reading and understanding the railway's Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- asking the child's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support or administering first aid.

- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse.
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or Children's Social Care.

Allegations of abuse made against other children

We recognise that children can abuse their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse. However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of children hurting other children will be dealt by the supervising adult, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put children in the railway at risk
- Is violent
- Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, ‘upskirting’, ‘downblousing’ or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

Procedures for dealing with allegations of peer-on-peer abuse

If a child makes an allegation of abuse against another child:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- Children must be supported, and assurance is to be given to them that they are believed and taken seriously
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will work with the railway board to organise safe management of the children

Creating a supportive environment in railway and minimising the risk of peer-on-peer abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female children, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure adults reassure victims that they are being taken seriously

Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect children, we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the child's first name with an image
- ensure children are appropriately dressed
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Dealing with a Disclosure

Where a child actually discloses that he/she has been abused the following guidelines must be followed:

Receive

- If a child wants to talk to you, never ask them to come back later. Ask them what they want to talk to you about and, if you are concerned about their welfare, give them the time to speak to you.

- Never promise confidentiality, inform the child that you are happy to talk to them but if they tell you anything that you believe may be putting them at harm that you will have to talk to someone.
- Listen carefully to the child. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling information.
- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused or respond to a child wanting to talk to you to help clarify vague concerns and result in the right action being taken.

React

- If you need to clarify information, ask open-ended questions e.g., "Is there anything you'd like to tell me?", "Can you explain to me..." "Can you describe to me...?"
- Never ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. 'Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?'
- Never ask 'accusing' questions e.g., "Why didn't you tell someone earlier?"
- Never criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- Never ask the pupil to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff; it is your responsibility to share the information
- These four factors may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by Children's Social Care or Police.

Reassure

- Ensure that the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- If you have any concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, you must tell them that you will speak to someone to get help

Record

- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used.
- Do not record your assumptions and interpretations, just what you heard and saw.
- Do not destroy original notes even if you later write things up more neatly and fully.
- Record the date, time and place of the disclosure.
- Sign any written records and identify your position in the school setting.
- Do not ask a child to write an account or sign any of your documentation as this may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children's social care or Police.

Refer

Immediately inform the lead for child protection who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures. In the absence of anyone being available at the railway, call First Contact on 03000 267 979. First Contact brings together children's services staff with partners such as Durham Constabulary and health services.

Making a Referral

If you have a concern about a child or young person's welfare who lives in County Durham, call First Contact on 03000 267 979. First Contact brings together children's services staff with partners such as Durham Constabulary and health services.

Opening hours

First Contact is open from 8.30am until 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and from 8.30am until 4.30pm on a Friday.

What to do in an emergency:

In an emergency situation, call on the number above – there will be a duty officer working outside of opening hours who will take your call.

If you fax or email outside of the opening hours, please be aware that these enquiries will be dealt with on the next working day.

What happens when you call:

When you contact, you will speak to a trained officer who will work with you to decide the level of response needed. Providing early help to children, young people and their families is the priority. They may start an Early Help Assessment to inform what happens next, which may be:

- giving you appropriate advice and guidance
- a referral to preventative services such as One Point, with a 'team around the family' and a named lead professional
- a statutory referral to assessment and interventions teams due to safeguarding concerns, with a 'team around the family' and a named lead professional

First Contact works to Single Assessment Procedure and Practice Guidance, which can be found on the [Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) website.

Concerns re: Terrorism / Radicalisation

Contact can be made with the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321.

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the Safeguarding Lead first to agree a course of action.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

Children in Whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (formerly known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy)

This is a form of child abuse in which the parents or carers give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children. The government guidance on this is found in 'Safeguarding Children in whom illness is Fabricated or Induced' (15th March 2008). All suspicions of the above, must reported to the DSL.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all adults.

If a child wishes to confide in a member of staff / volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of staff / volunteer will tell the child, in an appropriate manner to the individual needs of the child, that they cannot promise confidentiality and may need to pass the information on to help keep the child or other children safe.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation.
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries.
- Frozen watchfulness.

Possible effects of Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may 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 the 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 cyberbullying),

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.

Signs of possible Emotional Abuse

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration.
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children.
- Sleep or speech disorders.
- Negative statements about self.
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others.
- Extreme shyness or passivity.
- Running away, stealing and lying.

Possible effects of Emotional Abuse

- If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse, there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic Abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.
- Domestic Abuse comes in many forms and is not just physical but can be:
 - Emotional
 - Sexual
 - Financial
 - Controlling and coercive
 - Physical
- Exposure to Domestic Abuse and /or violence, can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on young people.

Sexual Abuse

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, grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs of possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

Possible effects of Sexual Abuse

- Disturbed behaviour including self-harm,
- inappropriate sexual behaviour,
- sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem has all been linked to sexual abuse.
- Its adverse effects may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser. The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection. Some adults who sexually abuse children were themselves sexually abused as children.

Child Sexual Exploitation

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.

Possible signs of child sexual exploitation

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from railway, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).
- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Possible effects

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Child Criminal Exploitation

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child 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. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Possible signs of CCE

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

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 maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
 - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
 - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Signs of possible Neglect

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice

- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the carer does not respond to
- Frequently hungry
- Overeating junk food

Possible effects of Neglect

Neglect can seriously impair a child's health, physical and intellectual growth and development, and can cause long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Extreme cases of neglect can cause death.