



NEW LANDSCAPE
FAMILY MEDIATION

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Child Protection Policy

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Coopers End Road
Stansted, Essex, CM24 1SJ

New Landscape Mediation is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. New Landscape Mediation acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

In implementing this child protection policy New Landscape Mediation will:

- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
- Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's *Child Protection Procedures* and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
- Ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's named person for child protection;
- Ensure that the named person understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Social Work);
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people;
- Ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and will have access to the organisation's *Complaints Procedure*;
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

Section 1 – Introduction:

New Landscape Mediation is involved in the Direct Consultation of Children within Mediation and Family Consultation settings. New Landscape Mediation is committed to the welfare and protection of children within all the activities it undertakes.

These procedures have been designed to ensure that the welfare and protection of any child and/or young person who accesses the services provided by New Landscape Mediation. The procedures recognise that child protection can be a very difficult subject for workers to deal with to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else's problem to deal with. New Landscape Mediation is committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all workers and volunteers to act appropriately to any concerns that arise in respect of a child/young person.

Where New Landscape Mediation brings in additional workers whether paid or volunteer, the organization is committed to the concept of equal employment and will not discriminate on race or disability.

All workers of New Landscape Mediation are required to provide a valid Criminal Records Bureau Certificate and proof of valid public indemnity insurance

Section 2 - Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

New Landscape Mediation will ensure that all staff members whether paid or unpaid, undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Specifically, all members of staff undertake to remain vigilant to signs that abuse might come to light. For example:

- a child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- a third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;
- a report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Section 3 - A Named Person(s) for Child Protection

New Landscape Mediation has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. The named persons for Child Protection within New Landscape Mediation is:

Named Person for Child Protection: Johnathan Pease
Work telephone number: 01279 211657
Mobile number: 07799 647 307

Deputy Name of contact person: Carolyn Hanes
Work telephone number: 01279 211657
Mobile number: 07908547647

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- > To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.
- > Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- > The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

Section 4 - Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child

Outline Format:

New Landscape Mediation recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However New Landscape Mediation believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will:

Stage 1

- > Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
- > Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it Seriously
- > Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a Child/young person makes a disclosure
- > Always explain to children and young people that any information They have given will have to be shared with others
- > Notify the organisation's Named Person for Child Protection
- > Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should Complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated
- > Respect confidentiality and file documents securely

Stage 2

- > The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact the police and/or the local authority children's department.
- > The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through the NSPCC 24 hour National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- > Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on 0800 096 7719.

Section 5 – Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

New Landscape Mediation will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The named person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the named person, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a committee member, director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position within the organisation and believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO - who is based at the Child Protection Unit) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, New Landscape Mediation will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.

Section 6 - Recording and managing confidential information.

This section includes:

- A pro-forma for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect should be attached to the guidelines. The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma.
- A summary of the organisation's commitment to manage confidential information safely, how information is stored and, the circumstances under which information needs to be shared (Data Protection).
- A statement about the rights of children and young people to confidentiality unless the organisation considers they could be at risk of abuse and/or harm.

This proforma should be used by New Landscape Mediation staff reporting concerns/alleged abuse to a nominated co-ordinator. Remember to maintain confidentiality. Do not share this information with anyone other than those who need to know.

Name of person reporting concern/disclosure:

Position: Title:

Date and time disclosure made :..... Time:

Reporting to:

Position:

Person at risk:.....

Date of Birth:..... Age:.....

Address:

.....

..... Post Code: Contact number:.....

Record EXACTLY what the person concerned reported to you. Record as many actual details as you can – including any subsequent questions and answers.

Date and time **report** written:Time:

Signature Reporter: Signature Reported to:

Print name:..... Print name :.....

Date:..... Date:.....

Appendix 1

Definitions of Abuse as cited in: Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2006, Chapter 1, P: 37-38)

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/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

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 in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's 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, 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.

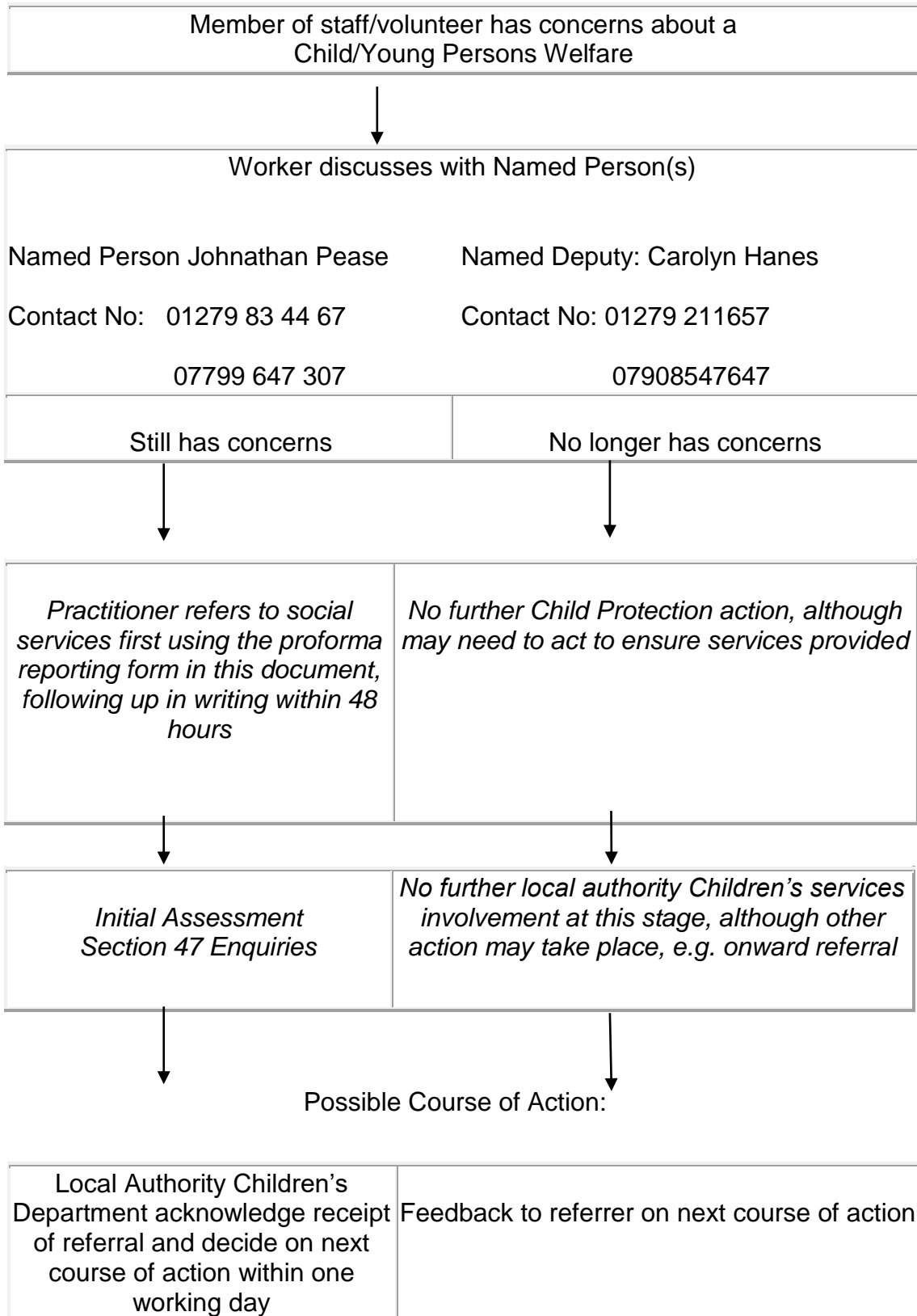
SEXUAL ABUSE: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative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

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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Appendix 2 – Flow Chart



Appendix 3

Useful Contacts/Support Organisations

If you have concern that a child is being harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

You need to ensure that you speak to the appropriate organisations who can listen to and record your concern, and then take appropriate action.

In Essex, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

- During office hours (8.30 - 5.00 Monday to Thursday, 4.30 on Friday) call Children's Social Care Initial Contact Point - 08457 430430 to refer any child in need, including child protection concerns.
- Essex Area Child Protection Unit -for consultation about child protection concerns – 0845 606 1212
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 - Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

The NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helpline is a free, multilingual service for the UK's Asian communities providing counselling, information and advice to ANYONE who is concerned about the welfare of a child, including:

- Parents, carers or relatives who need advice
- Children or young people in need of help and advice
- Education, health and social welfare professionals seeking culturally sensitive advice and information.