



torus

**Safeguarding Children Policy
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1. Scope

This policy applies to all employees and workers of Torus, including secondees into and out of the organisation, board members, volunteers, trainees, contractors, and temporary workers, including those working on a bank or agency contract.

For ease of reference, all employees and workers who fall under these groups will be uniformly referred to as 'staff' in this document.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 The Torus Group recognises that nothing is more important than children's welfare, and that children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as needs are identified.

2.2 The Torus Group has a responsibility to contribute to the safeguarding of the children and young people that it works with, and to act on any concerns when someone is at risk of abuse. Everyone within the Torus Group who comes into contact with children and young people has a part to play and a responsibility for promoting their welfare and keeping them safe. Definitions of a child and type of abuse can be found in appendix 1

2.2 Responsibilities for safeguarding are enshrined in legislation. This policy has been informed by all relevant guidance (statutory and non-statutory) that seeks to protect children and young people, including:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018 (updated in 2020)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Handling Cases of Forced Marriage Ministry of Justice 2009
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation 2020
- Safeguarding Children and Young People who may be affected by Gang Activity DCSF 2010
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners 2018
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Housing Act 1996
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Online Safety Bill 2022

3. Implementation

3.1 Torus will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Ensuring a structured and systematic approach to safeguarding children and young people with clear lines of accountability
- Providing clarity regarding roles and responsibility from 'Board to Floor' in safeguarding children and young people
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers
- Having robust systems in place to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Having effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice through a series of audits and case reviews
- Embedding safe working practices, including recruitment, vetting, and barring procedures
- Ensuring everyone in the organisation understands their role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and is provided with appropriate support to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- Ensure staff are aware of how and when to raise safeguarding concerns using appropriate escalation procedures where relevant to their role
- Offering staff training and continuing professional development so that staff are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities, and understand those of other professionals and organisations in relation to safeguarding children and young people
- Ensure effective interagency working and information sharing practices
- Ensuring appropriate action is taken in the event of an incident or concern being raised and support provided to those who raise or disclose the concern
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through providing supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Recording and storing information safely and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, and staff and volunteers
- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people
- Providing early help, where appropriate, to support children and their families as soon as a problem emerges to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and dealing with any bullying effectively as and when it does arise
- Providing a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and appropriate regulatory guidance
- Sharing our concerns, along with relevant information, with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people and their families and carers appropriately

4. Responsibility

4.1 The Board

The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that this policy and associated procedures are in place and complied with to protect children and young people.

The Board has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that an effective system for managing any risks associated with safeguarding children and young people exists within Torus and that all staff working in Torus are aware of and operate within this policy.

The Board will assure itself of compliance with this policy through the accountability arrangements delegated to the safeguarding subcommittee and via an annual report prepared by the Safeguarding Officer supported by the Safeguarding workstreams. A copy of the Safeguarding Governance Structure can be found in Appendix 2

4.2 The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive (CEO) provides strategic leadership, promoting a culture of supporting good practice and excellence in relation to safeguarding within the organisation and promotes collaborative working with other agencies.

4.3 The Chief Operating Officer

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is the nominated Director at board level responsible for reporting to the Board on safeguarding issues, providing assurance that the organisation is meeting its safeguarding requirements on an annual basis, promoting initiatives to ensure that Torus has robust arrangements for safeguarding and providing leadership in the long term

4.4 The Safeguarding Sub Committee

The subcommittee has delegated authority to oversee and monitor the safeguarding of adults, children and young people and domestic abuse arrangements for the group and to ensure that all safeguarding functions are embedded in the governance structures of the organisation. The subcommittee is accountable for its work to the board.

4.5 Members of the safeguarding workstreams are responsible for the delivery of key priorities and will report progress to the committee on a quarterly basis.

4.6 Safeguarding reports will be produced on a quarterly basis for the safeguarding committee, scrutiny and risk panel and an annual report for the board.

4.7 The Safeguarding Officer (SO)

The Safeguarding Officer will provide operational support and expert advice to support the management of safeguarding concerns, significant events and will lead the development of best practice and effectiveness of services.

All staff

4.8 All members of staff (including contractors and volunteers) have responsibility for adherence to this policy and associated procedures. A copy of the Safeguarding Governance Structure can be found in Appendix 2

4.9 All staff are responsible for understanding the different types of abuse and reporting concerns or suspected abuse via the relevant escalation route.

4.10 All staff are responsible for recognising and responding to allegations of abuse by ensuring that they discuss their concerns with their line manager, refer their concerns or assist in the referral and complete an incident report in accordance with Policy

4.11 All staff should contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child, young person or family against specific plans and outcomes

4.12 Managers

Line managers will be responsible for:

- Contribute to the dissemination and implementation of this policy
- Ensure all staff within their department are aware of this policy and the process to be followed in the event of suspected abuse of a child or young person
- Ensure all staff access the appropriate level of training as defined in the Torus safeguarding training strategy and training needs analysis
- Develop and promote training needs and priorities and contribute to the delivery of training for staff
- Provide/ensure provision of effective safeguarding appraisal, support, peer review and supervision for staff
- Provide routine management supervision assuring core competencies in safeguarding practice
- Manage/oversee immediate safeguarding and protection issues
- Co-ordinate referrals, safe transfer of responsibilities and support the implementation and attendance of multi-agency processes and meetings
- Co-ordinate any alternative action plans
- Make decisions about referrals to local authority Safeguarding Services and utilise escalation procedures
- Ensure staff in their areas meet mandatory training requirements in safeguarding and provide support to those making safeguarding referrals.

5 Consultation/Resident Involvement

5.1 Consultation with residents, service users and operational staff has been established throughout the development of this policy at several stages and the policy content has been influenced by their feedback.

6 Diversity & Inclusion

6.1 Equality, diversity, and inclusion are important to Torus. Throughout the development of this document, due regard has been given to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited in the Equality Act 2010).

6.2 The following have also been referenced in the development of this document: European Convention on Human Rights, and the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

6.3 This policy will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation).

7 Monitoring & Review

7.1 The Safeguarding Committee via the Safeguarding Practice and Quality Assurance Subgroup will monitor this policy through a system of audit and case review.

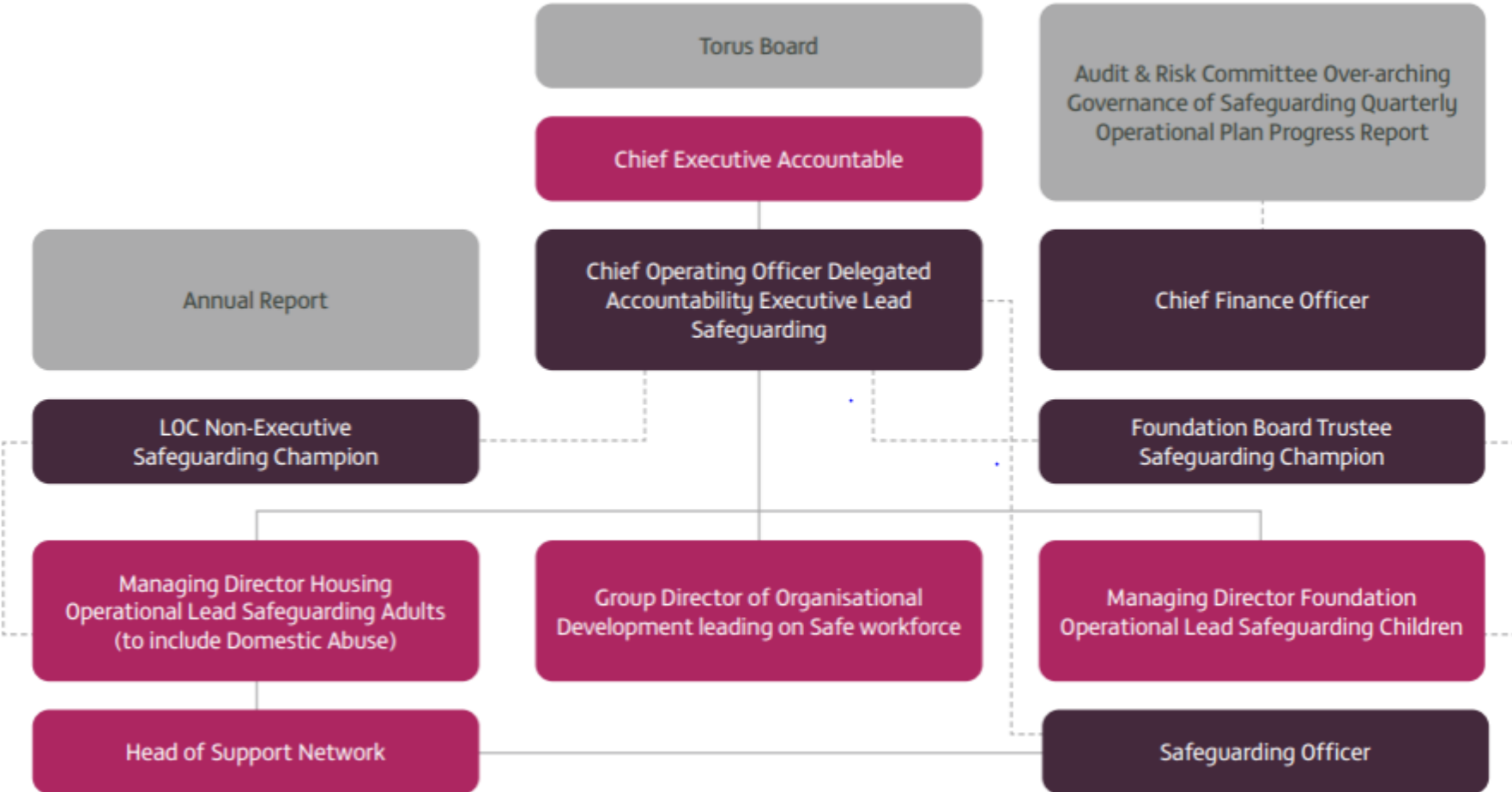
7.2 This policy document is due for review in two years unless new legislation, a Local Safeguarding Children's Board(s) directive or learning from a serious incident requires earlier review.

<p>PHYSICAL ABUSE</p>	<p>May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child</p> <p>May also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child</p>
<p>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</p>	<p>Persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe</p> <p>and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>May feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children</p>
<p>SEXUAL ABUSE</p>	<p>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</p> <p>May involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing</p> <p>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 (including via the internet)</p> <p>Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children</p>

<p>NEGLECT</p>	<p>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 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-takers) ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs</p>
<p>CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION</p>	<p>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 Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation</p>
<p>CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION</p>	<p>There is no agreed statutory definition of child criminal exploitation (CCE). Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where a child (or a third person or persons) receives ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them completing a task on behalf of another individual or group of individuals; this is often of a criminal nature. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economical and/or emotional vulnerability.</p>
<p>Country Lines</p>	<p>County lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or ‘deal lines’. It involves CCE as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or</p>

	coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'.
DOMESTIC ABUSE &	Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners of family members regardless of their gender and sexuality.
HARMFUL PRACTICES:	It can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:
Honour based abuse	Is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. Often linked to family members or acquaintances who mistakenly believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture.
Forced Marriage	<p>A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.</p> <p>There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement still remains with the prospective spouses. However, in a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it.</p>
Female genital mutilation	<p>Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways.</p> <p>The practice causes severe pain and has several immediate and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth also causing dangers to the child. It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to FGM or to take a child abroad to undergo FGM.</p>
RADICALISTION AND PREVENT	The current threat from terrorism in the UK is severe and can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people. This threat can extend to children and young people to draw them into extremist ideology and behaviours.
MODERN DAY SLAVERY & CHILD TRAFFICKING	Modern slavery is an illicit trade in which human beings are turned into commodities to be bought, sold and exploited for vast profits. Within a UK context and based upon the Modern Slavery Act 2015, modern slavery encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and / or sexual exploitation

Bullying and Cyber Bullying	Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone
Online abuse	<p>Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including social media, text messages and messaging apps, emails, online chats, online gaming, live streaming sites</p> <p>Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.</p>
Grooming	<p>Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.</p> <p>Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.</p> <p>Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.</p>



Safeguarding Groups and Reporting Structure

