

## Governance Information

<b>Applicable Legislation</b>	Childrens Act 1989 & 2004, Data Protection Act 2018, Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, Equality Act 2010
<b>Regulatory reference</b>	Neighbourhood and Communities Standard
<b>Policy owner</b>	Director of Operations
<b>Approved by</b>	CMT
<b>Date approved</b>	13th December 2023
<b>Review date</b>	12th December 2025
<b>Stakeholders consulted</b>	n/a
<b>Version</b>	V.1 drafted October 2023

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## 1. Policy Statement

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Whilst parent and carers have primary care for their children, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 places duties on key agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All staff should follow the principles of the Childrens Acts 1989 and 2004 (Section 11).

Local authorities have a statutory duty to run Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and are the lead agency with responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding and case management. Housing organisations are crucial in safeguarding due to the amount of information obtained on families they rent to and are often pivotal in assisting with local authority investigations.

## 2. Scope

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This policy applies to all IDS staff and agents working on behalf of IDS who encounter children and families. A child is classified as anyone up to the age of 18 years whether living with their family or independently. This policy sets out the management responsibilities of IDS staff and agents working on behalf of IDS in identifying, reporting and monitoring concerns around child safeguarding.

## 3. Vulnerable children

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Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their lives. These threats can take a variety of forms, including:

- Sexual
- Physical and emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups
- Trafficking
- Online abuse
- Sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation

## 4. IDS responsibilities in safeguarding children

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All staff must follow the IDS Code of Conduct when dealing with customers.

IDS resident facing staff will have child protection and safeguarding training occurring every 3 years as a minimum while all staff must have a basic awareness.

A safeguarding champion within IDS is accessible to all staff who have concerns about a child. This position is held by the Head of Housing.

Any staff member in receipt of a Children Act 1989 Section 17 or 47 request from a local authority safeguarding team will comply with providing requested information and within required time frames. They will also attend any multi-agency meeting in respect of a child protection plan where required and share information as early as possible to assist in identifying and responding to need.

All staff must have regard to the relevant data protection principles and follow the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is commonly used where staff need to share special category personal data. This includes sharing information without consent, if it is not possible to gain it, for example, where gaining consent would put the child at further risk.

All resident facing staff who would have potential contact with customers will have a clear and valid DBS check carried out.

## 5. Recording, referring and monitoring

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Anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should record their concerns and discuss with their line manager. A referral should be made to local authority children's social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern of significant harm.

A referral to a local authority should be as detailed as possible including the child's parents/carers, child's developmental needs, capacity issues and the details of concerns in full. If staff are not satisfied with the response they receive, they should follow up their concerns immediately.

If staff have a concern about modern slavery or human trafficking, then a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism (08000 121 700) as soon as practically possible.

Where there is a concern for the risk to life of a child or serious immediate harm, the police should be contacted on 999.

All referrals or concerns about child safeguarding will be recorded accurately and in a timely manner on a centralised computer system (marked confidential where necessary). This system is currently Civica Cx. They should be discussed with the line manager and safeguarding lead who will monitor safeguarding concerns.

## 6. Whistle-blowing and allegations against staff members / contractors

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If a member of staff suspects that children are being abused by another member of IDS staff, they should immediately speak to the Safeguarding champion or Head/Director of Service. The whistleblowing policy must be followed.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) protects workers from detrimental treatment or victimisation from their employer if they blow the whistle on any wrongdoing, such as abuse of customers. Staff who whistle blow can remain anonymous, however this cannot necessarily be guaranteed if it results in a criminal investigation. If an allegation is made against a contractor, the contractor will be expected to investigate in line with their procedures.

## 7. Related policies and procedures

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Safeguarding Children Procedure  
Whistle-blowing Policy

## 8. Roles & Responsibilities

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<b>Director of Operations</b>	Overall responsibility for this policy
<b>Head of Housing</b>	Responsible for reviewing and monitoring implementation of this policy and associated procedures. Designated safeguarding lead.
<b>All other staff</b>	Effective day to day implementation of the policy

## 9. Policy Review & Update

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This policy is due to be reviewed every two years, or if there are significant legislative or organisational changes which require a review. The next review date, subject to the above caveat, therefore, will be before December 2025.