Appendix K: Definitions of Abuse

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| **Physical Abuse**  When someone deliberately hurts a child causing physical harm it is called physical abuse. It may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, pushing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, drowning or any other method of causing non-accidental harm.  **Sexual Abuse**  Sexual abuse is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline. Children and young people may not always understand that they are being sexually abused.  Sexual abuse has immediate and long-term impacts on a child's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, behaviour, development and personal relationships.  **Neglect**  Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.  **Emotional Abuse**  Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.  Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of [abuse](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/), which means it can be difficult to [spot the signs](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/emotional-abuse/#signs) or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.  **Online Abuse**  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   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.  **Grooming**  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.  Children and young people who are groomed can be [sexually abused](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-abuse/), [exploited](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/) or [trafficked](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-trafficking/).  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.  **Non-recent abuse**  Non-recent abuse is abuse that occurred a period of time ago. It's sometimes referred to as historic abuse, but many survivors of abuse say they are still impacted and traumatised many years after the abuse ends and therefore it is not historic as they still live with the consequences in the here and now.  Non-recent abuse refers to allegations of neglect, physical or sexual abuse of someone now 18 years or older, relating to an event when the victim was under 18 years old.  **Female genital mutilation**  FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names.  **Domestic Abuse**  Domestic abuse describes violence or abuse used by one person over another within intimate relationships or families. This includes all threatening, controlling, coercive, bullying or violent behaviours. Domestic abuse typically escalates in both frequency and severity over time.  Children may experience domestic abuse directly themselves, or through being exposed to the domestic abuse of another person. Both experiences have adverse impacts on a child’s life. For example, it can negatively affect their:   * physical and mental wellbeing * confidence * development * behaviour   These impacts can often have detrimental long-term effects which extend into adulthood.  **Criminal exploitation and gangs**  Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. The word ‘gang’ means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper ‘Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity’ distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.   * Peer group   A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.   * Street gang   ‘’Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the groups identity.’’   * Organised criminal gangs   ‘’A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their ‘occupation.’’  It is not illegal for a young person to be in a gang- there are different types of ‘gang’ and not every ‘gang’ is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime.  **Child trafficking**  Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:   * Sexual exploitation * Benefit fraud * Forced marriage * Domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare * Forced labour in factories or agriculture * Committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.   Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.  **Child Sexual exploitation**  Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of [sexual abuse](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-abuse/). It happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship so the sexual activity may appear consensual. This is called [grooming](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/) and is a type of abuse. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. CSE does not always involve physical contact, and can also occur through the use of technology.  **Bullying and cyberbullying**  Bullying behaviour is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone they may be jealous of or who is perceived to be vulnerable. It can involve people of any age and can happen anywhere, including at home, school, sports clubs or online.  Bullying behaviour can take many forms, including physical, verbal, racist, sexist, homophobic or online 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. A person can be bullied online and offline at the same time.  **The above definitions are taken from the** [**NSPCC**](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/) **and** [**CPSU**](https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/introduction-to-safeguarding/child-abuse-in-a-sports-setting/) **04/2024.**  Related policies and procedures  This policy appendix should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:  • Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.  Contact details  Appendix holder  Name: Nicky Harverson  Children and Young People’s Designated Safeguarding Lead  Phone/email: 01452 393607 [nickyharverson@activegloucestershire.org](mailto:nickyharverson@activegloucestershire.org)  NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000 We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.  Key compliance dates:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Last Review | April 2024 | | Next Review | April 2025 | |