



CCCC – Domestic Abuse Policy

1. Purpose

The policy outlines how the Chichester Child Contact Centre (CCCC) operates to ensure the safety of all users, volunteers and staff in relation to domestic abuse.

2. Aim

This policy aims to define how CCCC:

- Recognises situations involving domestic abuse
- Responds to concerns or disclosures
- Refers individuals to appropriate support services
- Records incidents, disclosures, and actions taken

3. Introduction

At CCCC, we believe everyone deserves to live free from violence and abuse. Domestic abuse can affect anyone, regardless of background, gender, culture, income, race, religion, or sexuality. Its impact is profound, particularly on children.

We affirm that every child has the right to grow up in a safe environment, free from exposure to domestic abuse, whether as a direct victim or a witness at home or in the community.

Recognising that some families attending the Centre may have experienced domestic abuse, we are committed to providing sensitive and appropriate support. The Centre will be structured and managed to ensure the safety of all families, staff and volunteers.

4. Core Principles of Domestic Abuse



5. Recognise

CCCC acknowledges that abuse can occur within families and treats all allegations with the utmost seriousness. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful and supportive environment where staff, volunteers and Trustees are equipped to identify and respond to signs of domestic abuse.

CCCC will work to recognise domestic abuse by:

- Asking about current or historical domestic abuse during the referral process



- Accepting families only once a fully completed referral form has been received and reviewed by the Coordinator
- Treating all information related to domestic abuse with confidentiality and seriousness
- Declining referrals if the Coordinator believes a family's presence may pose a risk to others, guided by the NACCC Supervised vs Supported Checklist and safeguarding best practice
- Consulting with external professionals (e.g., social workers, domestic abuse specialists) when additional risk assessment is required

All staff, volunteers, and Trustees will receive domestic abuse training as part of their induction and refresher sessions every three years. This training will include:

- Recognising physical, emotional and psychological signs of abuse
- Understanding the impact of domestic abuse on children and parenting
- Responding to disclosures safely and appropriately
- Knowing when and how to escalate concerns
- Maintaining professional boundaries and avoiding re-traumatisation

6. Respond

CCCC will take appropriate action when concerns about domestic abuse arise. If a family is accepted, a tailored safety plan will be developed, which may include:

- Separate pre-contact visits for each parent
- Instructions detailing entrance use and arrival times
- Encouraging resident parents to consider alternative arrangements for bringing children to the Centre
- Keeping waiting room doors closed and managing access to shared areas to prevent overlap
- Asking one parent to remain after contact until the other has left the premises
- Maintaining strict confidentiality of personal information

If domestic abuse is disclosed, staff, volunteers, or Trustees will follow the Centre's Safeguarding Policy.

Essential Requirements for Managing Domestic Abuse and Conflict:

- A minimum of three staff or volunteers will be on duty, with numbers adjusted based on attendance
- Staff and volunteers will be briefed on each family's needs
- All staff and volunteers will be trained in domestic abuse awareness, child protection and conflict resolution
- A mobile will be readily available during Centre hours
- A clear emergency procedure will be in place and communicated to all staff and volunteers
- A support system will be available for staff and volunteers affected by stressful or violent incidents

7. Refer

For families with current or historical domestic abuse concerns, CCCC will offer timely and appropriate referrals to specialist services that provide expert support, advocacy and protection. These referrals will be made sensitively, discreetly and in consultation with the affected individuals wherever possible.



Referral pathways include:

- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** – confidential support, advice and access to refuge accommodation
- **WORTH Services** – West Sussex domestic abuse outreach service offering risk assessment, safety planning and emotional support
- **Safe in Sussex** – refuge accommodation, community outreach and educational programmes

Where appropriate, referrals may also be made to:

- Local mental health services
- Housing support agencies
- Legal aid and family law services
- Counselling and trauma recovery programmes

If domestic abuse concerns raise safeguarding issues for children, whether through direct harm, exposure to violence, or emotional neglect, CCCC will:

- Follow its Safeguarding Policy without delay
- Refer to the West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD), which coordinates multi-agency responses to child protection concerns
- Ensure that any referral is documented clearly and securely, with appropriate follow-up

8. Record

All domestic abuse incidents will be documented in accordance with the Centre's Safeguarding Policy. Accurate and timely record-keeping is essential to ensure transparency, continuity of care and legal compliance. CCCC will:

- Use the Centre's standard Incident Report Form to document all disclosures, observations, or concerns
- Ensure records are completed promptly, ideally on the same day
- Include key details such as:
 - Date and time of incident or disclosure
 - Names of individuals involved
 - Nature of the concern or allegation
 - Actions taken
 - Any referrals made or support offered
 - Follow-up steps required

Confidentiality and Access

- All records will be stored securely in line with GDPR and the Centre's Data Protection Policy
- Access to safeguarding records is restricted to the Centre Coordinator and the Chair of Trustees

Notification to NACCC

- NACCC will be notified of any domestic abuse incidents that impact the safety or suitability of contact arrangements
- Notifications will be made through the appropriate NACCC reporting channels
- The Centre will cooperate fully with NACCC in any follow-up, review, or audit processes