



## SAFEGUARDING BOARD ISLE OF MAN

Welcome to our third edition of the Safeguarding Board's Newsletter. In this edition we look at the role of Grainne Burns, (Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer for Education, Sport and Culture), revisit our training and recap some new initiatives this year.

# Newsletter

## Threshold and Continuum of Need

Threshold and Continuum of Need document was ratified in July 2024 and this has enabled us to launch this with partners to aid their understanding of applying the document to their

own practice. This guidance has been developed in consultation with partner agencies who work with children and young people and their families in the Isle of Man. The guidance outlines the way we can all work together, share information, and place the child and their family at the centre of our work, providing effective support to help them solve problems, find solutions and to access the right help at the right time to prevent escalation of need. The guidance is aimed to be used as a reference point by anyone from any sector or agency who may have worries about a child.



Safeguarding Together (March 2019) makes it clear that safeguarding children and promoting their welfare is the responsibility of all colleagues working with children and that they should understand the criteria for taking action across a continuum of need that includes; ensuring that children achieve the best outcomes; preventing the impairment of children's health and development ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; and, protecting children from abuse and neglect.

There have been a number of Threshold workshops facilitated by our Partners, held across the Island to enable professionals to engage with others and understand the different threshold levels and criterion. Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision. Fears about sharing information should not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

The Safeguarding Board has published the Information Sharing Protocol and Guidance to assist professionals when sharing information

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### Special points of interest

- Are you confident on when you can share information?
- Do you fancy becoming a pool trainer for the Board?
- The Board is on Facebook, have you liked our page?



## Child Exploitation Day

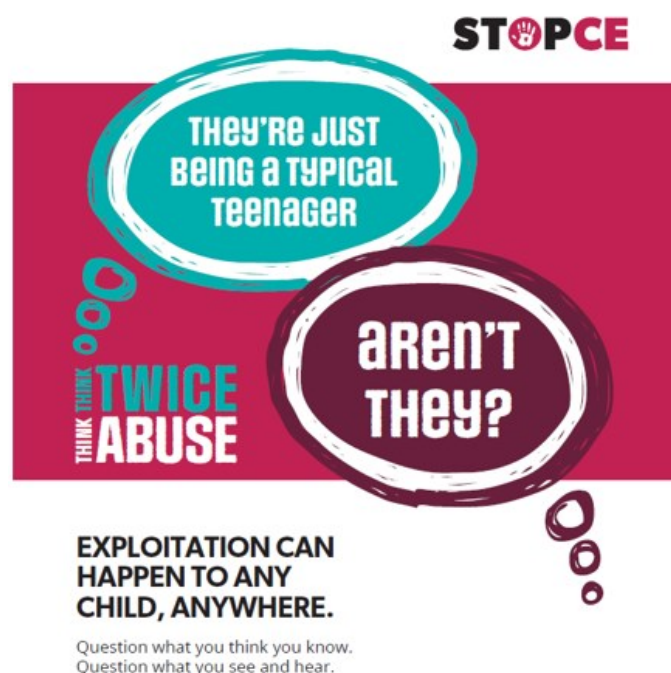
Child Exploitation Awareness Day happens on 18 March each year. The National Working Project (NWG) is a charitable organisation formed as a UK network of over 25000 practitioners who disseminates information to professionals working on the issue of child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation in the UK. The NWG organises Child Exploitation Day and its purpose is to raise awareness of Child Exploitation happening each day and the young victims of this. This year the Isle of Man Safeguarding Board helped to raise awareness of the warning signs of exploitation through posts on our Facebook page.

The campaign focuses on these key messages:

- Recognise and respond to all forms of exploitation.
- Transition periods are a time of increased vulnerability.
- The right support of children and families at the right time by the right people.



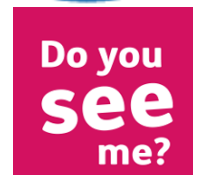
Children who are groomed and exploited often can't or don't speak about their fears. Looking out for signs and changes in children's behaviour is an adult's best chance of spotting the issues. Child Exploitation can be a particularly frightening subject for Parents leaving them feeling isolated and helpless. Knowledge is power and those wanting to find out more about Child Exploitation could look at the [Ivison Trust](#) website (formerly Parents Against Child Exploitation PACE) which has information about the signs of child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation and many articles of interest. In addition both professionals and parents may wish to access the [NWG \(National Working Project\)](#) and [STOP CE](#) websites for information, real stories and helpful guides.

The Isle of Man Safeguarding Board is planning some further training for practitioners on Child Exploitation in the coming training year. Keep an eye on the IOMSB website and Facebook page for details.



**SAY SOMETHING, IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS.**

## Up coming events

<p><b>April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month...#PassItOn!</b> They say knowledge is power, so this April we're asking everyone to share important information about bowel cancer. Will you help #PassItOn?</p>		<p>April</p>
<p><b>#CarersWeek 2025!</b> This year's theme is 'Caring About Equality' with its focus on greater equality for unpaid carers. Further information at <a href="http://www.carersweek.org">www.carersweek.org</a></p>		<p>9-15 June</p>
<p><b>Learning Disability Week</b> The theme this year is "Do you see me?" which is all about people with a learning disability being seen, heard and valued</p>		<p>16 June</p>

## News from the Training Centre

The training schedule for April 2025- March 2026 is being finalised and will be published on the Safeguarding Board's website. The core and specialist training offer is, as ever, in line with the Board's priorities. Self-Neglect had been identified as an issue following a recent SCMR and specialist training was commissioned and delivered by Sylvia Manson, who ran a number of Self Neglect workshops for partners working with adults who engage in assessing, planning, intervening and evaluating the needs of adults where there are self-neglect concerns. The main themes for the day were to define self-neglect, address ethics and values, explore safeguarding principles, and review the IOM Self-Neglect Pathway. Another Safeguarding consultant Siobhan Burns was also commissioned to deliver Domestic Abuse training on behalf of the Safeguarding Board. This course aimed to give delegates an understanding of domestic abuse and coercive control and then reflect on the impact of domestic abuse on adults and children.

As always booking for all training is via application form available from the website or by emailing [safeguardingboard.co@gov.im](mailto:safeguardingboard.co@gov.im)



young people in relation to safe peer group associations.

A current priority for the board is vulnerable adolescents and as such have developed a number of learning initiatives around child exploitation. We have commissioned Hannah Bates an experienced social worker, with over 22 years experience, primarily in children's safeguarding to lead professional conversations and oversee project work with professionals on exploitation. Initiating discussions around what colleagues can do to disrupt exploitation with the focus being on perpetrators as well as places/spaces but also how colleagues can support



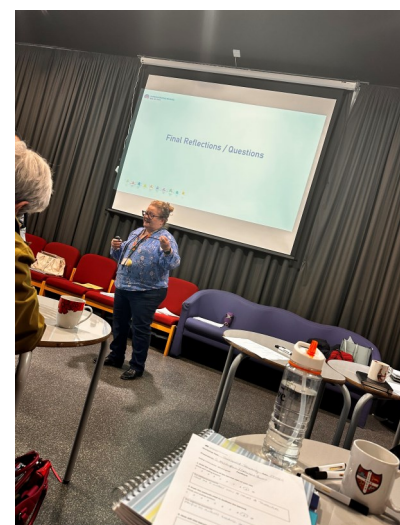
## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Board is reliant on our multi-agency pool trainers to support delivery of our core training offer, however there is a need for pool trainers from adult service providers. If you are driven by a passion for helping others and a desire to share your knowledge and would like to join the team of 'pool' trainers then please contact the business team for an application form.

Additional training was also offered to professionals across our partner agencies. We also coordinated

Core Groups and Conferences and Designated Safeguarding Lead training, as well as professional curiosity workshops. As you may be aware the Threshold and Continuum of Need document was ratified in July 2024 and this has enabled us to launch this with professionals to aid their understanding of applying the document to their own practice. In all six Threshold workshops have been held in locations around the Island and attended by over 100 delegates. In November 2024 we also saw learning opportunities for practitioners from our partners during 'Safeguarding Week' engaging in workshops, forums and various evening events. It is our intention to see more of the same this year.

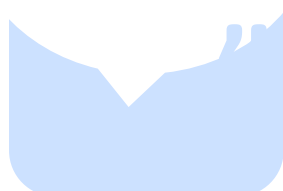
Peer evaluations allow up to measure the effectiveness of our Training. We already have evaluation forms completed onsite and a number of follow up evaluation interviews seeking to measure the impact on practice are now an expectation. Training needs to be changing and allow transformative practice for front-line practitioners. If you book onto an Isle of Man Safeguarding Board course you could be contacted for feedback.



Training in action

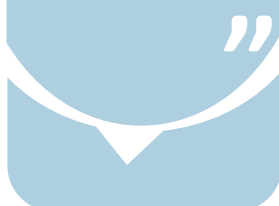
“

I have better knowledge of the services available on the Island



“

The Domestic Abuse Training was very informative and engaging



“

I gained a deeper insight of the importance of a collaborative multi-agency approach in order to improve outcomes for children and families



# A Day in the Life of .....

## Grainne Burns

Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer for Education, Sport and Culture

The Isle of Man Safeguarding Board is made up of statutory partners. As a way of demystifying what each agency contributes to the work of the Safeguarding Board, it is the intention to publish a series of articles about colleagues and what their roles entail.

The fundamental aim of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Lead for DESC is to provide a single point of contact for schools/services and partner agencies such as Police, Children & Families and Health, and to provide specialist advice, support, supervision and training for DESC personnel on safeguarding children matters.

It all sounds very grand but on a day-to-day operational basis it means that I solve problems. Colleagues throughout the department bring safeguarding issues, worries or problems they are encountering with children, families or staff, and drawing on experience, training and knowledge I support them to make decisions on the next steps to take. Some of those steps can lead to difficult conversations with young people or Parents, or referrals to other agencies but are critical to ensure that children are not placed at increasing risk of harm, some are signposted to other services.

My name is Gráinne Burns, and I am the current officer in post. I started in 'safeguarding' over 30 years ago as a residential social worker, moving into education as a Youth Officer within the Youth Service and fully into safeguarding on a full-time basis in 2015.

## What a working day looks like

My day will usually start with checking messages and triaging priorities. Sometimes this may mean making last minute changes to diary fixtures to fit in urgent needs of schools or services. Thankfully remote working allows for checks before leaving home to ensure visits can be prioritised, and I can get there quickly rather than go to the office. There are usually meetings already scheduled in the diary daily – some internal to education and some multi-agency or cross government meetings. I work very closely with sub-groups of the Safeguarding Board and will often support their work by carrying out audits within education that will help the Safeguarding Board understand that processes within education are compliant with policy and procedures, and staff are fulfilling their safeguarding duty whilst recognising that safeguarding is not the core business of schools, MSR, Youth Service and Culture Division. I will also bring relevant data or information to the subgroups to inform the priority work of the safeguarding board.

Over the year, I facilitate training for colleagues in schools and Culture to ensure they are competent in carrying out their duty to safeguard children. Sport have invested in a specific basic level trainer but I support other areas such as Welfare Officer training to sport across the island. I also work with colleagues from across agencies to co-facilitate some of the Safeguarding Board multi-agency training and have a strong interest in continuing to develop training on a range of subjects that build knowledge and skill in dealing with complex issues presented by children, young people and families. New emerging themes are often identified from Serious Case Management Reviews, and strategies, new ways of working and training often evolve from these events, and I am involved in the planning and development of this work when related to children. Safeguarding is not static and as such we need to continually update and upskill to manage the presenting challenges.

I manage the team of Education Welfare Officers also. This is a small team of people tasked with supporting attendance at school. Poor attendance can create a vulnerability for children as research will clearly say that there is a direct correlation between school attainment and school attendance. Children may not attend school for a range of reasons – anxiety, mental health issues, neurodiverse issues, emotionally based school avoidance or refusal, issues with peers, impact of parental issues on the child to name a few. All of these can be viewed as safeguarding concerns as they increasingly lead to other issues, such as poor mental health, risk to exploitation, deteriorating relationships with peers and adults, getting into trouble with the Police. Some of these vulnerable children are open to other agencies and it is imperative that we all work collaboratively to mitigate or remove the risk of harm.

I could not do this job on my own and it is the collaboration of a small team of people within education that ensures that we consider all aspects of an issue such as special educational needs, whether a child is looked after or subject to child protection or child with complex needs planning or in need of alternative education provision. From time to time, we need legal advice to ensure we are considering the nuances of legislation in our decision making.









Education is a universal service and work with most young people across the island, many of whom will never encounter other agencies. This position also means we are a reporting agency and not an investigative one. Schools know their students well and can add a rich account of children's lives to assessments being carried out by other Professionals. It is crucial we all work together in the best interests of the children and families we are in contact with.

## In the news....

The hit Netflix series 'Adolescence' sheds light on a chilling reality: young men are being drawn into extremist ideologies through toxic masculinity and misogyny—often in ways that many adults don't even recognise.

From secret emoji codes to online radicalisation, extremists are using hidden tactics to groom vulnerable youth. It's time for us all to stay informed and vigilant. If anything it has just pulled back the curtain on something every parent, educator, and mentor needs to know – the hidden language of emojis, particularly when dealing with young people.

If you are concerned, speak up and speak out

	Red Pill	a red pill signifies 'seeing the truth'. It's used to speak about waking up to supposed hidden 'truths' about women and society – these tend to be misogynistic
	Blue Pill	The opposite of the red pill. It represents those who are 'blind to the truth' and still believe in mainstream views about relationships and gender.
	Dynamite Emoji	this is an 'exploding red pill' to signify someone is a radicalised incel.
	Kidney Bean	A symbol linked to incel culture, sometimes mocking women.
	100 Emoji	this is tied to the '80/20 rule', the belief that 80% of women are only attracted to 20% of men.
	Black Hole	this is used to represent depression and negative online spaces
	Tornado	this can be used to show chaos, feelings of overwhelm, mental distress
	Skull	this can signal feelings of self-harm – but it can also be used to mean someone is laughing, or dark humour.



## In other news

In March and May the Safeguarding Board are coordinating 6 days of training (with a further 1/2 day reflection to follow in November).

So far we have had nearly 75 delegates attending the workshops. Delegates have expressed their appreciation for the course content, the engaging delivery, and the valuable insights gained.

***"I thoroughly enjoyed the learning, both the material and how it was delivered with opportunity for reflection and discussion."***  
Social Work Manager.

### SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM RISK OUTSIDE THE HOME – A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Helen Grey has been a qualified Social Worker for over 15 years and has held diverse roles at manager and senior leader levels in statutory child and family social care settings; Helen has led Safeguarding Practice Reviews and has completed significant post-qualification professional development with a focus on understanding the impact of trauma and therapeutic social care practice.



 **Helen Grey**  
LIGHTS ON LEARNING

Adolescents can encounter significant harm in settings and relationships outside their families. Addressing this harm often necessitates a different approach compared to situations where the risk of harm is within the family. This training sets out how this approach responds to local challenges and develops practitioners' knowledge, skills, and confidence to deliver innovative practice together as partner agencies towards the shared goal of protecting young people allowing them to reach their full potential.



New training calendar for April 2025  
– March 2026 is now live—please [click here](#) or visit our [website](#)



#### Day 1 - Consists of

- What do we mean by risk outside the home- Definitions of extra-familial abuse.
- Redefining child protection practice – current theory and research that informs practice.
- Understanding young people's lived experience - understanding attachment and trauma and the world of adolescence.
- Signs and indicators of extra-familial abuse.
- The principles of trauma-informed practice.

#### Day 2 - Consists of

- How to apply professional curiosity to protect young people.
- Applying methods to assess risk and mitigate risk.
- Safety Mapping and safety planning.
- Application through the use of scenarios and case examples.
- Link the learning to the local partner agency responsibilities and risk outside the home response procedures.



# What to do if you have a safeguarding concern



## What to do if you are aware of something that worries you.

If there is an imminent risk to life then call 999.

If you are a child or young person and are concerned that yourself or a friend may be being abused, there is advice available on our [website](#). There is always someone to talk to and you can contact either of the numbers below and speak to a trained professional about your concerns.

If you work for or volunteer with an organisation and you are concerned about the safeguarding or protection of a child, you must inform your line manager or the safeguarding officer/lead in your organisation - and you should record that you have shared this with them.

If you are a member of the public then it is your duty to report it directly to Children and Families Division or the Police.

### 'Doing nothing is not an option.'

(01624) 631212 (Isle of Man Police Headquarters) out of office hours and ask to speak to the on-call social worker.

In an emergency always call the police on 999.

If you work for or volunteer with an organisation and you are concerned about the safeguarding of a vulnerable adult it is your responsibility to inform your line manager or the safeguarding officer in your organisation - 'doing nothing is not an option' and you should record that you have shared this with them.

If you are a member of the public then it is your duty to report it directly to the Adult Safeguarding Team (Manx Care) or the Police.

This email address is monitored by the Adult Safeguarding Team in Manx Care during office hours.

If you need to contact the Safeguarding Board, the easiest way is to email:

[Safeguardingboard.co@gov.im](mailto:Safeguardingboard.co@gov.im)

This is not monitored outside of office hours and is not to be used to report specific safeguarding concerns.



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