



**PLATANOS COLLEGE**

An outstanding school for  
pupils of all abilities

## **SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm.

This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at, Platanos College. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

**2018 – 2019**

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## Review procedures

This Policy is to be reviewed annually or as necessary with notification being given to the Board of Trustees on the results of any review.

If any amendments to the Policy are required as a result of a review, then these will be presented to the Board of Trustees for acceptance of the amendments.

Signature:	Signature:
Chair of Trustees	Headteacher
Date of approval:	

# Contents

i	Key contacts
<b>Part 1: Policy and principles</b>	
1	Introduction to safeguarding and child protection
2	General principles and aims of safeguarding and child protection
3	The legal framework and guidance
4	Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: information and definitions
5	A safer culture and good safeguarding practice
<b>Part 2: Child protection procedures and responsibilities</b>	
6	Processes for safeguarding young people
7	Roles and responsibilities
8	Child protection procedures and action
9	Safeguarding referral
10	Disclosure
11	Following disclosure
12	Concerns, complaints or allegations against staff
<b>Part 3: Appendices</b>	
1	Assessment framework triangle
2	Responding to concerns about a child
3	What happens next?

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## **i KEY CONTACTS**

---

### **Designated Safeguarding (and Looked After Children) Lead at Platanos College:**

Ms T. Williams

T: 020 7733 6156; Email: [safeguarding@platanoscollege.com](mailto:safeguarding@platanoscollege.com)

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at Platanos College:**

(There are several deputies at the college)

Mr L. Boyles

Mr R. Edwards

Mr G. Hobson

Ms K. Kellman

Mr. M. Augustus

T: 020 7733 6156; Email: [safeguarding@platanoscollege.com](mailto:safeguarding@platanoscollege.com)

### **Designated Trustee for Safeguarding:**

Mr H. Whyte (Platanos Trust, Clapham Road, London, SW9 0AL)

### **Local Authority contacts:**

**Lambeth Children's Services first response:** 020 7926 3100

**Lambeth out of hours:** 020 7926 1000

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**

T: 07720 828700; Email: [lado@lambeth.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:lado@lambeth.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Local Authority Safeguarding Lead:**

Sarwan Singh Jandu; T: 020 7926 9643; M: 07976 490051; Email: [sjandu@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:sjandu@lambeth.gov.uk)

Denys Rasmussen; T: 020 7926 8915; Email: [drasmussen@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:drasmussen@lambeth.gov.uk)

## **PART 1: POLICY AND PRINCIPLES**

---

### **1. INTRODUCTION TO SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

#### **What is Safeguarding?**

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and best outcomes and enter adulthood successfully.

#### **What is Child Protection?**

Child Protection forms part of the broader safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare. Child Protection is the process and procedure of protecting individuals identified as either likely to suffer, or suffering, from significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. This will be outlined further in this document.

#### **Child in Need**

A 'child in need' is defined under the Children Act 1989 (Section 17) as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services, or if the child is disabled.

#### **Significant Harm**

Significant harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or impairment of the health and development of a child or young person. Development includes physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. Health includes physical and mental health. This is viewed from the perspective of normal behaviour for a child of a similar age and understanding.

### **2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

- We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors and to promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns that they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others. This Policy is one element in our

whole school arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people to ensure they are protected from harm. This Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies which cover other areas of safeguarding and health and safety practice.

- All children and young people have a right to protection from abuse, violence and exploitation. Every concern, suspicion or complaint of abuse or significant harm from within or outside the school will be handled and taken seriously in all proper circumstances and referred to an external agency.
- Children and young people need protection and safeguarding for many reasons. There are a number of areas that need to be recognised, for example: physical, sexual and emotional abuse, poverty, disadvantage, exclusion and violence. Young people may be at risk from their peers as well as adults.
- Staff working in schools have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under the Children Act 2004 and in turn feel safe themselves from false accusation.
- The establishment should have a written policy on safeguarding/child protection that is implemented in conjunction with staff and is accompanied by full training. All staff should read the policy.
- The establishment should keep good records and be abreast of national guidance, including that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and current DfE and Ofsted guidance.
- The school aims to protect and promote the welfare of all its pupils regardless of their background and is partly based on the *Every Child Matters* initiative (with five outcomes). ***Although this was a past government initiative, the school believes that the principles themselves promote good practice.***
- The school will support each pupil as far as possible with the aim of achieving the following five outcomes for its pupils:
  - Stay safe – protected from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation. To have security, stability and to be cared for.
  - Healthy – be physically, mentally, emotionally and sexually healthy.
  - Achieve and enjoy – personal and social development and enjoy recreation.
  - Positive contribution – make a positive contribution including developing positive relationships, self-confidence and successfully dealing with significant life changes.
  - Economic well-being.

### **3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE**

- There is no single piece of legislation that covers Safeguarding and Child Protection.

- The statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection only apply in relation to pupils who are under the age of 18.
- The national child protection system was first based on the Children Act 1989. Crucially this determined that the child's welfare is paramount. It also introduced the concept of parental responsibility which sets out the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities of the parent or carer of a child.
- The Children Act 1989 (amended 2004) sets out in detail what local authorities and the courts should do to protect the welfare of children.
- This Policy also draws upon guidance contained in the 'London Child Protection Procedures' and current versions of DfE guidance documents: 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education', 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children' (DfE) provides definitions of child abuse and guidance on how professionals can work together.
- One of the recommendations of Lord Laming's report of the Victoria Climbié inquiry was for a simple guide to be compiled, outlining the child protection processes and systems for anyone working with children.
- The school must operate safe recruitment procedures, making sure that all appropriate checks are carried out (refer to the separate **Safer Recruitment Policy**).
- The school must identify a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is good practice to have a Deputy/Deputies as well.
- The Ofsted publications on safeguarding best practice and the inspection framework provide excellent guidance to schools in the development of good practice. Safeguarding practices and procedures are therefore also based on the Ofsted criteria and framework.
- The role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board under sections 13-16 of the Children Act 2004.

#### **4. SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN: INFORMATION AND DEFINITIONS**

All staff should understand current safeguarding and child protection issues, policies and guidance.  
**Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff.**

##### **The range of areas of general safeguarding in everyday school life**

- Health and safety (please refer to the Health and Safety Policy)
- School security
- First aid provision (please refer to the First Aid Policy)
- Use of physical intervention (reasonable force; see separate policy)
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions (refer to Policy Statement for Pupils with Medical Needs)
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND; see separate policy)
- Educational visits (refer to the Educational Visits Policy)
- Intimate care (see separate policy)
- Visitors (see separate policy)
- Local issues
- Safe recruitment and vetting (see Safer Recruitment Policy)

##### **Types of abuse**

Abuse can be:

- Physical abuse, for example punching.
- Emotional abuse, for example rejection and denial of affection.
- Sexual abuse, for example sexual assault.
- Neglect, for example failure to provide appropriate care including medical attention.

The school recognises that child abuse can occur in a more complex form, such as abuse through social networking websites and female genital mutilation (FGM). For these reasons, such topics of safeguarding and child protection are regularly raised throughout the school during staff/pupil training and school assemblies.

##### **Signs of abuse**

Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

- The pupil says he/she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- No reasonable explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- A sudden change in the pupil's behaviour; the pupil's behaviour is either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour.
- The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.



- The pupil's development is delayed.
- The pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty or hungry.
- The pupil is reluctant to go home or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers.

### **Physical abuse**

Examples of physical abuse (not an exhaustive list):

- Actual or likely physical injury to a young person or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- Factors may include deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Fabricated Induced Illness (FII).
- Female genital mutilation.

### **Emotional abuse**

Examples of emotional abuse (not an exhaustive list):

- Actual or possible likelihood of severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioural development of a young person caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category would be used when emotional abuse is the main sole form of abuse. Because it is invisible, emotional abuse is the most insidious (gradual but harmful) and under recognised form of child abuse.
- Emotional abuse is a '*pattern of a relationship*' rather than an incident of abuse, frequently conveying to the young person that they are worthless, unlovable or inadequate.
- Behaviour from parent(s)/carer(s) might include lack of emotional availability and interest in the child.
- Inappropriate expectations and interactions being placed on the young person in relation to their age and level of development.
- Overprotection that limits exploration and learning.
- Preventing a young person from participating in normal social interaction.
- Corruption or exploitation such as in the case.
- Parental or carers behaviour may include terrorising (over 1/3 cases come into this category). Serious bullying, causing concern and fear of danger for the young person. Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another person.
- This can occur through various mediums including online social media networks.

### **Sexual abuse**

Examples of sexual abuse (not an exhaustive list):

- Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a young person.

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may or may not involve sexual contact and may occur via the internet).

## **Neglect**

Examples of neglect (not an exhaustive list):

- Persistent, severe and longstanding failure to meet a young person's basic needs or a failure to protect the child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation.
- Extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive. This can also occur in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

## **Specific safeguarding areas or issues**

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying (including prejudice-based and cyberbullying; see separate policy)
- Internet safety (e-safety; see separate policy)
- Racist abuse
- Faith abuse
- Disability abuse/special needs
- Alcohol abuse
- Peer on peer abuse (including sexual violence and harassment)
- Homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Harassment and discrimination
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Trafficking
- Drug and substance misuse
- Fabricated or induced illness (FII)
- Domestic violence (DV) and abuse
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Mental health
- Extremism and radicalisation (see separate policy)
- Private fostering
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Children missing from education
- Looked after children
- Homelessness
- Honour-based violence
- Children with family members in prison
- Child criminal exploitation: county lines

### **Further definitions and information: Online Safety (E-Safety)**

The use of technology and social media has become a significant component of safeguarding children. Child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, sexual grooming - technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such the school will ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. The approach to online safety is to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

Pupils will be taught to recognise risk and build resilience in order to manage risk themselves where appropriate to their age. Pupils will be encouraged to use the internal systems, for example the pastoral manager, learning mentor, trusted staff, to whistle blow or raise issue of safety in confidence.

### **Further definitions and information: Peer on peer abuse**

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. The school takes peer on peer abuse seriously. It should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Different forms of peer on peer abuse include (but not limited to):

- Bullying / cyber bullying
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexual touching
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Subjected to initiation rites/rituals of violence

It is recognised that (statistically) girls are more likely to be victims (and boys perpetrators) but all forms of peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and must be treated seriously.

Child protection procedures and anti-bullying procedures and practices are in place to minimise the risk of such abuse.

Allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and treated as a safeguarding/child protection matter as according to this policy.

It must also be remembered that children who harm others are likely to have considerable needs themselves and may have witnessed violence in the family or have been exposed to physical or sexual harm, or may have committed other offences.

Support and processes are in place to support victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by such abuse. This is implemented/organised by the DSL:

- Support through social services
- Counselling
- Educational psychologist and other professional services and agencies
- Restorative justice (if appropriate)
- Pastoral care and support plan by the school

### **Further definitions and information: Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)**

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

FII covers a wide range of symptoms and behaviours involving parents/carers seeking healthcare for a child. This ranges from extreme neglect to induced illness.

Behaviours include the parent/carer who:

- Persuades healthcare professionals that their child is ill when they are perfectly healthy;
- Exaggerates or lies about their child's symptoms;
- Manipulates test results to suggest the presence of illness;
- Deliberately induces symptoms of illness.

The reasons for FII are unclear. It could be that the parent/carer enjoys the attention of playing the role of a 'caring' parent. Some parents/carers may have borderline personality disorders characterised by emotional instability, impulsiveness and disturbed thinking, and may have unresolved psychological and behavioural problems.

### **Further definitions and information: Looked After Children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The school will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe.

We will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

Virtual school heads receive pupil premium plus additional funding based on the latest published numbers of children looked after in the authority. The designated teacher for looked after children will work with the virtual school head to discuss how that funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

### **Further definitions and information: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. The Policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Awareness of these additional barriers is reflected in the training for staff.

### **Further definitions and information: Children missing from education**

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.

It is essential that staff are alert to signs to look out for and individual triggers to be aware of, when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

The school will inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- has been permanently excluded.

The school will inform the LA as above, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education and follow up any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect. The school will also inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly,

### **Further definitions and information: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care, and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

This is also commonly linked with **child trafficking**. Child trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and/or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

### **Further definitions and information: Domestic Violence**

The definition of Domestic Violence (DV) includes any pattern of controlling or coercive or threatening behaviour (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between those aged 16 or over who are or who have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The definition of harm as amended in the Adoption & Children Act 2002:

Impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another particularly in the home, even though they themselves have not been directly assaulted or abused.

The school recognises that DV will have an impact on aspects of a child's life. The harm suffered will vary according to the child's resilience or otherwise to his or her particular circumstances. We recognise that the victim's capacity to protect their child/ren is diminished through anxiety about their own circumstances.

We will allow an opportunity for the abused partner (predominantly the woman but not exclusively so) to disclose the harm. We will ensure that all information is dealt with securely and sensitively and refer the matter to children's social care where there is a child/ren at risk of significant harm and/or neglect.

### **Further definitions and information: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time of the procedure and in later life ('Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation').

Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

The UK Government has issued guidance on FGM. It is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM.

Signs that a child is at risk of FGM or that FGM has already taken place:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM
- In conversation a child may talk about FGM
- A child may express anxiety about a special ceremony
- The child may talk or have anxieties about forthcoming holidays to their country of origin
- Parent/carer requests permission for authorised absence for overseas travel or you are aware that absence is required for vaccinations
- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change, especially after a return from holiday (which is addressed by the school's robust attendance policy and monitoring)
- Spending long periods of time away from the class during the day
- A child who has undergone FGM is a child protection issue. Consideration might then also include younger siblings for example.

Where there is a concern with FGM, a discussion or referral to our Designated Safeguarding Person should be made.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to also personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

(\*Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the publication 'Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation' (p.11-12)).

### **Further definitions and information: Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

If any member of staff receives a disclosure or is aware that a Forced Marriage is about to happen this must be disclosed to the Designated Safeguarding Person without delay for appropriate action to be taken. Where there is a risk that a child may be or has been taken out of the country, the school will contact the Forced Marriage Unit as well as local authority social care.

FMU contact: 020 7008 0151, or email: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk).

### **Further definitions and information: Honour-based violence**

‘Honour-based’ violence encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called ‘honour-based’ violence are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and will be handled and escalated as such.

### **Further definitions and information: Children staying with host families (homestay)**

This relates to where the school makes arrangements for children to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the children may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related. Such arrangements could amount to “private fostering” under the Children Act 1989 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, or both.

Where a private fostering arrangement is made by the school and the school has the power to terminate the arrangement, then it could be the regulated activity provider for the purposes of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, section 82

Where the school is the regulated activity provider, it will request a DBS enhanced check (which will include barred list information) to help determine their suitability for the arrangement. However, where the parents make the arrangements themselves, this will be a private matter between the child’s parents and the host parents and in these circumstances the school will not be the regulated activity provider.

If the school arranging for their children to stay with families overseas should be aware that the DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas. Host families in other countries, therefore, cannot be checked in the same way by local authorities as schools and colleges in this country when children stay abroad. We will work with partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to a visit.

In any instance, as policy the school itself will not arrange private fostering arrangements or arrange stays with host families for its pupils.

### **Further definitions and information: Private Fostering**

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not the child’s parent or immediate close relative. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and the ‘carer’ for 28 days or more. **Such private fostering arrangements must be reported to the relevant local authority.**

Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

### **Further definitions and information: Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the **Local Housing Authority** so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals



and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

#### **Further definitions and information: Child criminal exploitation (county lines)**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the **National Referral Mechanism** should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

## 5. A SAFER CULTURE AND GOOD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE

### Prevention

- Through the creation of an open culture which respects all individual's rights and discourages discrimination and bullying of any kind.
- Through a positive school atmosphere with teaching and pastoral support for pupils, and identifying designated child protection staff with overall responsibility for child protection.
- Through our Pastoral Team Form Tutors, offering all pupils an opportunity to talk and discuss any worries or concerns.
- Monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping in a secure place clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences.
- Work with parents to build an understanding of the School's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
- Use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Include in the core and enhanced curriculum opportunities for PSHE and SEAL which will equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe and develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.
- Make the safeguarding/child protection policy accessible to staff, parents/carers and visitors.
- All staff, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies, should consider the context and wider external factors impacting on children's welfare (**contextual safeguarding**).

### Early help

Any child may benefit from early help. All staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan).
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.

- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is a privately fostered child.

### **Protection**

- Ensure every member of staff know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- To be vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so the information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals.
- Provide and support child protection training regularly to school staff and, in particular, to designated teachers to ensure that their skills and expertise are up-to-date. Targeted funding for this work is solely used for this purpose.
- Contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support.

### **Support**

- Have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried or in difficulties.
- Providing support to any pupil or member of staff who may have been abused, and to parents/carers.
- Take particular care that pupils with SEN, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are able to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.
- Have clear guidelines on handling allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures.
- Ensuring that when a pupil with a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and the child's social worker is informed.
- Staff will be supported through regular training and opportunities to discuss their queries and concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

### **Training**

The school recognises that safeguarding issues can occur in different complex forms and situations as mentioned above. For these reasons, comprehensive training covering all such topics/issues is

provided to staff and pupils regularly and awareness is raised throughout the school through various methods.

Safeguarding training and raising awareness for both staff and pupils:

- Whole school training and induction training for all staff annually or as necessary.
- Whole school awareness training/workshops for pupils annually.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead training for DSL and deputies at least once every two years relevant to their role and when required in response to new guidance and legislation to reflect the changing issues.
- Training and raising awareness through workshops and assemblies.
- Curriculum teaching opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum (e.g. online safety in PSHE, ICT and other subjects).

The training will ensure that:

- All staff are aware and alert to the current safeguarding issues and risks.
- All staff are aware of the school's child protection procedures and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are well equipped to address concerns and implement policies and procedures.
- In-depth to cover all areas as they arise, including for example (but not exclusive to) recognising forms of child abuse, e-safety, female genital mutilation (FGM), extremism and radicalisation etc.
- The DSL and deputies to recognise the additional risks that children with SEND face (e.g. online) and able to support SEND children to stay safe.
- Timely and appropriate preventative action can take place to address concerns.
- Authorised staff are well equipped to have preventative discussions with parents/carers, where appropriate, whose children might be at risk of a child protection issue.
- Pupils are well informed of the current safeguarding issues (through assemblies, PSHE and other curriculum areas).

### **Safer recruitment and selection**

The school will follow all guidelines and regulations on safer recruitment practice and vetting (see separate **Safer Recruitment Policy**).

The recruitment of staff will follow Government guidelines in line with the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment' documentation and the school's Safer Recruitment Policy. All individuals including volunteers (where necessary) will be subjected to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check (formerly known as a CRB check) and will be checked against the DBS Barred List (list of names barred from working with children) prior to their appointment. These checks will be updated regularly. Individuals barred from working with children and young persons will not be knowingly employed by the school. The school will immediately cease to employ an individual if it is later discovered that the individual is included in any of the above barred lists. For supply staff, the school will require the agency to provide evidence of DBS checks.

Teacher status checks will also be conducted on applicants against the DfE / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) database for any suspensions or prohibitions and to verify individual records (and QTS). The school will take all reasonable steps to establish this before employment. Any offer of employment will always be made on a conditional basis, subject to the relevant checks being carried

out and the receipt of satisfactory references (references will be obtained prior to interview where practically possible and open testimonials will not be relied upon).

The school will contact TRA Teacher Services to check if a proposed governor/trustee is barred as a result of being subject to a section 128 direction.

A Single Central Record will be kept of all vetting checks, which will include verification of identity and the date these checks were made. Records on any relevant qualifications and permission to work for non-EU nationals will also be kept. The school will only use agencies that rigorously check their supply staff. Staff joining the school will familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding/Child Protection policies of the school.

It is mandatory that at least one person on any interview panel has completed Safer Recruitment training. Details of all staff and governors who have completed this training are held at the establishment.

### **Professional confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with the pupils in school, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is the benefit of the child.

All personal information should be treated as confidential and particular care taken with sensitive information. Information must be treated on a “need to know” basis. **Staff should only involve those who need to be involved when a disclosure is made.** Relevant factors include:

- What is the purpose of the disclosure?
- What is the nature and extent of the information to be disclosed?
- To whom is the disclosure to be made (and is the recipient under a duty to treat the material as confidential)?
- Is the proposed disclosure a proportionate response to the need to protect the welfare of a pupil to whom the confidential information relates?

Any child or young person wishing to disclose information must be informed that the member of staff has a professional responsibility to share any relevant information with other professionals who can help. No pupil should be promised that anything they say will be kept confidential if the matter is related to child protection or abuse. It is essential for the member of staff to tell the pupil that they will record anything the pupil says to ensure an exact record as possible is kept for future reference. At the same time, staff should only disclose the information to the relevant people (i.e. Designated Person).

The manner in which this message is conveyed to the young person should be done to reassure that the professional is acting in their best interests. Only people who need to know will be informed in the school such as the Designated Person responsible for safeguarding young people.

### **Staff code of conduct**

All staff are expected to adhere to a Code of Conduct and children will be treated with respect. Whilst it would be unrealistic to prohibit all physical contact between adults and children, staff should avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation and should exercise caution in these situations and when they are alone with pupils. For example,

when giving first aid and it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for this treatment, there should be another adult present where possible.

Where a child may require regular, intimate care, the parent(s)/carer(s) will be asked to sign a form giving their permission. Similarly, another member of staff will be present where possible. Children will also be asked whether they would like an adult of the same sex to be present when possible.

Where incidents occur that might otherwise be misconstrued or where it becomes necessary to physically restrain or use force to control a child for their own safety and the safety of others, to prevent a criminal act, or to maintain good order, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and parent(s)/carer(s).

Staff should be aware of the possible risks that might arise from contact with pupils outside of school. This should not occur without prior consent and authorisation. No staff member is allowed to accompany or take pupils out for any reason, at any time, including weekends, without permission from the school and the parent(s)/carer(s). The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher will always be made aware of any such contact.

Staff are reminded of the need to maintain professional boundaries and the exchange of personal information or contact with pupils outside of the school is not permitted. Staff must not give out their personal details or contact information to pupils and neither should staff accept personal contact information from pupils.

Such instances of all the above would result in a serious breach of the Code of Conduct and safeguarding procedures and is deemed gross misconduct.

***Staff must (not exhaustive list):***

- Treat all children equally and with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children (or where the staff member or volunteer is under 18) or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others. If you are asked to talk in private ensure someone else knows where you are and leave a door ajar or stay in clear view, always make a note of the conversation, tell the child or young person they are free to leave or stop talking at anytime
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Be aware that physical contact with a child may be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children
- Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.

***Staff must not (not exhaustive list):***

- Engage in sexual activity with a young person (even if they are over 18) you have met through your duties within the organisation, this would be an abuse of trust.
- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside set activity hours.
- Give out personal contact details or contact them unnecessarily outside of activity hours.
- Give child gifts personally, any appropriate gifts such as token birthday gifts should come from the organisation. You should not accept gifts from children unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration. All gifts must be reported to your activity leader.
- Lend or borrow any money or property.

- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/ make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Rely on your good name or that of the organisation to protect you.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'.
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.
- Allow abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying or horse play.

### **Photographs/images**

Photographs and images of pupils in school events or carrying out other school activities will often be on display around the school or used for promoting the positive image of the school. Parents/carers will be asked for consent. If images of pupils are requested for other purposes e.g. newspaper publication, consent will also be requested. If pupils are asked to take part in TV programmes there will be liaison with the Child Employment Officer as necessary as well as a request for consent from parents/carers.

### **Data Protection Act**

The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates the handling of personal data. Essentially, this is information kept about an individual on a computer or in a manual filing system. The Act lays down requirements for the processing of this information which includes obtaining, recording, storing and disclosing it.

If making a decision to disclose personal data the Data Protection Act 1998 must be complied with. This includes eight data protection principles. There should not be an obstacle if:

- There are particular concerns about the welfare of the pupil;
- Information is disclosed to social services or to another professional organisation e.g. the police;
- The disclosure is justified under the common law duty of confidence.

Professionals can only work together to safeguard children if there is an exchange of relevant information between them. This has been recognised in principle by the Courts. Any disclosure of personal information to others (including social services departments) must always have regards to both common and statute law.

Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent from the subject of that information. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances consent may not be possible or desirable but the safety and welfare of a child dictates that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case according to the particular facts of the case and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

### **Child Protection Conferences**

A Child Protection Conference may be convened by Social Services to which all involved agencies would be invited.

Where a case involves a pupil in our School a representative is usually invited to attend the meeting. The Headteacher or other Designated Safeguarding Lead may attend – the choice of this representative will depend on the circumstances of each individual case.

Staff may be requested to provide a report for a Child Protection meeting. Any report should be relevant, concise and professional. All reports should be submitted in the first instance to the Headteacher or, if not available, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All staff that are required to attend such meetings, prepare reports and maintain relationships with parents during and after a referral has been made will be fully supported by staff with specialist child protection training.

### **Inter-agency work**

The school will ensure that it contributes to inter-agency working in line with the statutory guidance “*Working together to safeguard children*”. The school will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

All schools should allow access for children’s social care to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

### **Records**

Accurate records will be kept of all child protection concerns or incidents relating to individual children, secure and separate from educational records. All records will be confidential and only accessed by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and authorised senior staff members where appropriate.

The school will not agree to disclose without the order of the Court where possible. Where a child moves from Platanos College, any child protection records will be forwarded to the receiving school. A copy of the records will be kept until the child reaches the age of 25 years and will then be destroyed, according to the recommendations of the Records Management Society Guidelines for School Records version 3.1.

### **Monitoring**

All child protection incidents at the school will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures and a report to the Governors. The Governors will ensure that any weaknesses in the child protection arrangements are changed without delay.

Policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and in accordance with new guidelines and regulations as these become available.



## **PART 2: CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

---

### **6. PROCESSES FOR SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE**

There are four key processes that underpin work with young people in need and their families. Each needs to be carried out effectively in order to achieve improvements in the lives of young people in need.

- Assessment of needs
- Planning of services
- Intervention
- Reviewing of services

School personnel will need to develop skills that enable them to look for changes in behaviour. These need to be personal, for example an exuberant child becoming withdrawn or a normally quiet child becoming more excitable.

- The role of school staff is to make a referral, **not** to conduct an investigation.
- Always act promptly.
- In order for an individual to obtain the help they need, the following referral process needs to be observed.



## 7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school:

**Ms T. Williams**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school:

**(There are several deputies at the school)**

**Mr L. Boyles**

**Mr R. Edwards**

**Mr G. Hobson**

**Ms K. Kellman**

**Mr M. Augustus**

Designated Trustee for Safeguarding:

**Mr H. Whyte**

### Responsibilities: Board of Trustees/Governors

1. The board of trustees will ensure that the school meets its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding and protecting children in line with the provisions set out in the statutory guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*'.
2. The board will challenge the school's senior management team on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.
3. The board will review this policy every year and may amend and adopt it in accordance with any new legislation or guidance.
4. The board will ensure that the following are in place:
  - Safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place are consistent with the local authority safeguarding children board procedures and national guidance.
  - A staff code of conduct including policies covering staff/pupil relationships and communication and staff use of social media.
5. The board will ensure that a senior member of staff is appointed the Designated Safeguarding Person with responsibilities for carrying out the statutory duties as set out in this policy.
6. The school has a Designated Governor/Trustee for Safeguarding responsible for advocating child protection and safeguarding issues within the school. This person will liaise with the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Person and report to the board on safeguarding matters.

### Responsibilities: All staff/practitioners/volunteers/members of the organisation

1. All staff must read and be familiar with the current version of the DfE guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (Part 1).

2. All staff have a responsibility and a role in safeguarding children, identifying concerns, sharing information (with the appropriate people) and taking **immediate** and appropriate action according to the school's procedure.
3. Be familiar with safeguarding and child protection and follow the school's procedures and protocols in this regard to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and know who to contact (identities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies) to raise concerns about a child's welfare.
4. Be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. **If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputies).**
5. Be familiar with the school's behaviour policy, staff code of conduct and disciplinary rules and similar policies.
6. Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from **early help** and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
7. Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse.
8. All adults in the school are required to be vigilant and report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Headteacher. All children have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. All members of the school have a responsibility to be mindful of these issues related to children's safety and welfare and a duty to report and refer concerns, however minor they may appear to be (**NB:** it is not the role of the school staff reporting the concern to investigate those concerns, but to seek clarification and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead).
9. Report instances or suspected cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the police. The school acknowledges that this is mandatory.

### **Responsibilities: Headteacher**

To ensure that all procedures are monitored and implemented as according to the policy and statutory requirements.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy will normally always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputies) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff can contact the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher and any action taken will be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

### **Responsibilities: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

All schools should have a senior member of staff who has designated responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and who must receive appropriate training in dealing with child protection concerns.

1. Act on all reported concerns immediately and appropriately.
2. Lead and initiate early help as and when appropriate.
3. Referring a child, if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the multi-agency safeguarding hub/social services of the local authority. Referrals should be made in writing, using the multi-agency referral form.
4. Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
5. Keep the Headteacher informed of any safeguarding/child protection issues.
6. Acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns and provide advice.
7. Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
8. Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
9. Ensuring that either they or the class teacher attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents.
10. Organising child protection induction, and update training at least every 3 years, for all school staff.
11. Promoting good safeguarding practices and raising awareness throughout the establishment.
12. Providing, with the Headteacher, an annual report for the Governing Body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and by all staff and governors; number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised).
13. Should consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a pupil leaving, in addition to the child protection file.
14. Be aware of all specific safeguarding issues.
15. Be aware of the contact details and referral routes of the Local Housing Authority to be able to raise concerns. Referrals to the Local Housing Authority should not replace referrals to children's social care where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.

### **Responsibilities: Designated Teacher**

There must be an appointed designated teacher. The appointed designated teacher is to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after.

## **8. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AND ACTION**

### **Procedures for all staff/volunteers/visitors with a safeguarding concern**

1. Must be vigilant in order to identify potential incidences of abuse or neglect.
2. Report instances or concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, if unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Headteacher. Do not investigate the concerns, but report.
3. Must keep an accurate written record of the conversation (including full names, date(s), time(s), location (if applicable), verbatim dialogue).
4. Should request medical attention if required without delay. All evidence (e.g. notes and computers) must be safeguarded and preserved. **Please refer to the Health and Safety and First Aid Policy.**
5. Must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
6. Must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.
7. Must not ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer.
8. Must complete any documentation for external agencies where appropriate.

### **Procedures for the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

1. To co-ordinate actions in the school with the Headteacher and liaise with the relevant external agencies where necessary over suspected or actual cases of child abuse once reported.
2. Follow up and document reported concerns and assess whether a referral is necessary.
3. To identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and decide when to make a referral and to ensure that staff observe and implement the school's procedures.
4. Will take into account the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to Children's Social Services or the police. The school has no discretion in this matter.
5. Will take into account the wishes of the pupil who complained provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes.
6. Will take into account the wishes of the pupil's parents provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary to override parental wishes in some cases. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, he/she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision.

7. Will consider the duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.
8. To keep full records of reports and referrals made.

*Note(s):*

*If a pupil is felt to be in need of protection and becomes the subject of a Child Protection Plan, parents/carers should regard the school as a source of help and support.*

*It is important to remember that a referral or consultation with Social Care/Family Services is an expression of concern about a child's welfare. It is not an accusation or a presumption of responsibility about a parent or carer.*

*In the course of an investigation, social workers or the police may wish to speak with a child, without parental knowledge or consent. The Headteacher, acting in "loco parentis", has the discretion to agree to this to enable the authorities to explore concerns and determine whether there are grounds for further action. In these cases the Headteacher will ensure that the child's welfare is secured and he/she has access to a trusted adult.*

## **9. SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL**

### **If you are responsible for making referrals:**

- Know who to contact in police, health, education, school and children's social care to express concerns about a child's welfare.
- Refer any concerns about child abuse or neglect to children's social care or the police.
- Have an understanding of the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, which underpins the processes of assessing needs, planning services and reviewing the effectiveness of service provision at all stages of work with children in need and families. (The dimensions of the Common Assessment Framework (2006b) are based on those in the Assessment Framework.)
- When referring a child to children's social care you should consider and include any information you have on the child's developmental needs and their parents'/carers' ability to respond to these needs within the context of their wider family and environment. This information may have been obtained during the completion of a Common Assessment (2006b).
- Similarly, when contributing to an assessment or providing services you should consider what contribution you are able to make in respect of each of these three domains.
- Specialist assessments, in particular, are likely to provide information relevant to a specific dimension, such as health, education or family functioning.
- See the child and ascertain his or her wishes and feelings as part of considering what action to take in relation to concerns about the child's welfare.

### **Referral to children's social services:**

- Referral to children's social services will be made using a multi-agency referral from (MARF).

## **10. DISCLOSURE**

### **Disclosure may arise in a number of ways**

- Raising a concern with a student based on observation.
- Student approaching a member of staff.
- Colleague or peer sharing information.

### **Managing disclosure: what do children need?**

- Please consider what children and young people need to safeguard them from harm and promote their welfare, and what factors can help or hinder a young person's development.
- Think about children's physical, emotional and learning needs.
- Also consider any specific needs for disabled children or those from black or ethnic minority families.

### **Guidance on managing a disclosure**

- Depending on your role, you do not need to find out all of the details prevailing in a situation since the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will follow up the situation. **Refer the concern to the DSL (if you are not the DSL).**
- Stay calm and reassuring. Listen to and take the information given to you by the young person seriously.
- Confirm in a positive manner that the young person has done the right thing in telling you about their concern.
- Convey verbally and by non-verbal communication that you know how difficult it might be for them to tell you about such difficult experiences.
- If taken by surprise, try and find a space where information can be discussed in privacy as soon as possible.
- Address the issue of confidentiality and the possible involvement of others where appropriate, so that the young person is made aware of your responsibilities.
- Be supportive and give realistic encouragement.
- Avoid asking leading questions such as "Who did that?", "Tell me their name?".

- However, some questions may need to be asked especially relating to the young person's safety for example, "Are you going to be safe when you leave school?", "Who will be at home tonight?".
- If it seems important to have more information ask more open questions such as "Are you able to tell me more?".
- Reflect back what the young person has said rather than asking direct questions.
- Avoid interrupting the young person during a disclosure.
- Some situations may need immediate action and may not be able to wait such as reporting a very recent sexual or physical assault where the young person may still have useful forensic evidence on their person, in which case the designated person and the police may need to be contacted.
- Reassure the pupil and avoid blame.

## **11. FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE**

### **Do**

- Be alert to signs of abuse and neglect. It can happen anywhere.
- Be prepared to respond calmly. Children are more likely to allow you to help them if you are prepared to listen and appear not to panic.
- Keep a clear record of your concerns and what action you took.
- Make yourself aware of school procedures for responding to suspected abuse.
- Consult your Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school (or the social services depending on your role).
- Where circumstances allow be honest as possible with parent(s)/carer(s) about your concern and actions.

### **Do not**

- Promise the child that you will not tell anyone else. Instead explain that to help them stop the abuse you will need to talk to other people.
- Try to "go it alone". Children are best protected when all agencies do work together.

### **Receive and reassure**

- Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the traumatic nature of disclosing. Children may retract what they have said if they meet with revulsion or disbelief.



- Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “Why didn’t you tell me before?”
- Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It is essential to be honest with the child, so do not make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g. “I’ll stay with you” or “Everything will be all right now”.
- Don’t promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.
- Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays. For example, you could say: “You’re not to blame” or “You’re not alone, you’re not the only one this sort of thing has happened to”.
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
- Empathise with the child - don’t tell them what they should be feeling.

### **Reaction**

- React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter; but do not “interrogate” them for full details.
- Do not ask “leading” questions such as: “What did he do next?” (this assumes that he did!) or “Did he touch your private parts?”. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like, “Anything else to tell me?”, “Yes?” or “And?”.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator: the pupil may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat everything to another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.
- Inform the designated teacher for child protection.
- Try to see the matter through yourself and keep in contact the pupil.
- Ensure that if a Social Care Interview is to follow, the pupil has a “support person” present if they wish (possibly yourself).

### **Record**

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
- Record the date, time, place, and who else was around; any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the family uses their family’s own private sexual words, record the actual words use, rather than translating them into “proper” words.

- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.
- Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

### **Support**

- Make sure that you continue to support the child, providing time and a safe space throughout the process of investigation and afterwards.
- Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the child to colleagues.

### **Acting on concerns**

- Children have a right to be safe and well.
- Adults have a responsibility to safeguard children.
- You have one small piece of the jigsaw.
- Abuse and neglect are damaging.
- If children and families are given help it can stop a child from being harmed.
- Child abuse and neglect continue because of the secrecy and silence that surround them.
- Children rarely lie about abuse.
- An abuser may abuse many other children who also have a right to protection.

### **Making a referral**

- This is my worry
- This is what I have seen and/or heard: when, who from and where
- This is what I have done
- What more do I need to do?
- Are parent(s)/carer(s)/child aware of this referral?
- How will you let me know what is going to happen next?
- What is your name?
- Who should I speak to if I am not happy with what you say or do?

### **Making a referral: additional information**

- Do you know if there are professionals involved (e.g. a psychologist, school nurse, health visitor)?
- Is the child disabled and in what ways?
- How do the child and family communicate, in what language?
- Do they use other ways of communicating, e.g. signing?
- Do you know the name and address of the child's GP?
- Put your concerns in writing within 48 hours.

## **12. CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS OR ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

1. This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a staff member, governor/trustee, visiting professional or volunteer has:
  - a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may harm a child;
  - b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
  - c. Behaved in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children or may pose a risk of harm to children.
2. Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff in schools to abuse children.
3. The school takes all complaints made against members of staff seriously. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents/carers and staff to share any concerns.
4. All staff must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individuals' behaviour towards children immediately. Allegations or concerns about colleagues (including volunteers) and visitors must be reported directly to the DSL and Headteacher unless the concern relates to the DSL/Headteacher.
5. All concerns/complaints regarding child protection will be brought immediately to the attention of the Headteacher who may consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Designated Governor/Trustee where appropriate. **A separate Concerns and Complaints Policy is also available where applicable.**
6. If the subject of complaint is the Headteacher, it should be brought to the attention of the Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive and/or Chair of Trustees/Designated Trustee who may consult the LADO if appropriate.
7. If the subject of complaint is a Governor/Trustee, it should be brought to the attention of the Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive and/or LADO.
8. Where it appears that a criminal offence may have been committed, this will be reported jointly to the police.
9. Staff who are formally disciplined for any abuse of pupils (or who resign before disciplinary action can be instigated) will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and TRA for possible inclusion on their list of persons barred from working with children and young people.
10. To ensure that a thorough investigation takes place, the person in question may be required to leave the premises during the course of the investigation.
11. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice/behaviour. All such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. All staff can raise concerns with the school or Trust. The whistleblowing policy is available in exceptional circumstances.

**PART 3: APPENDICES**

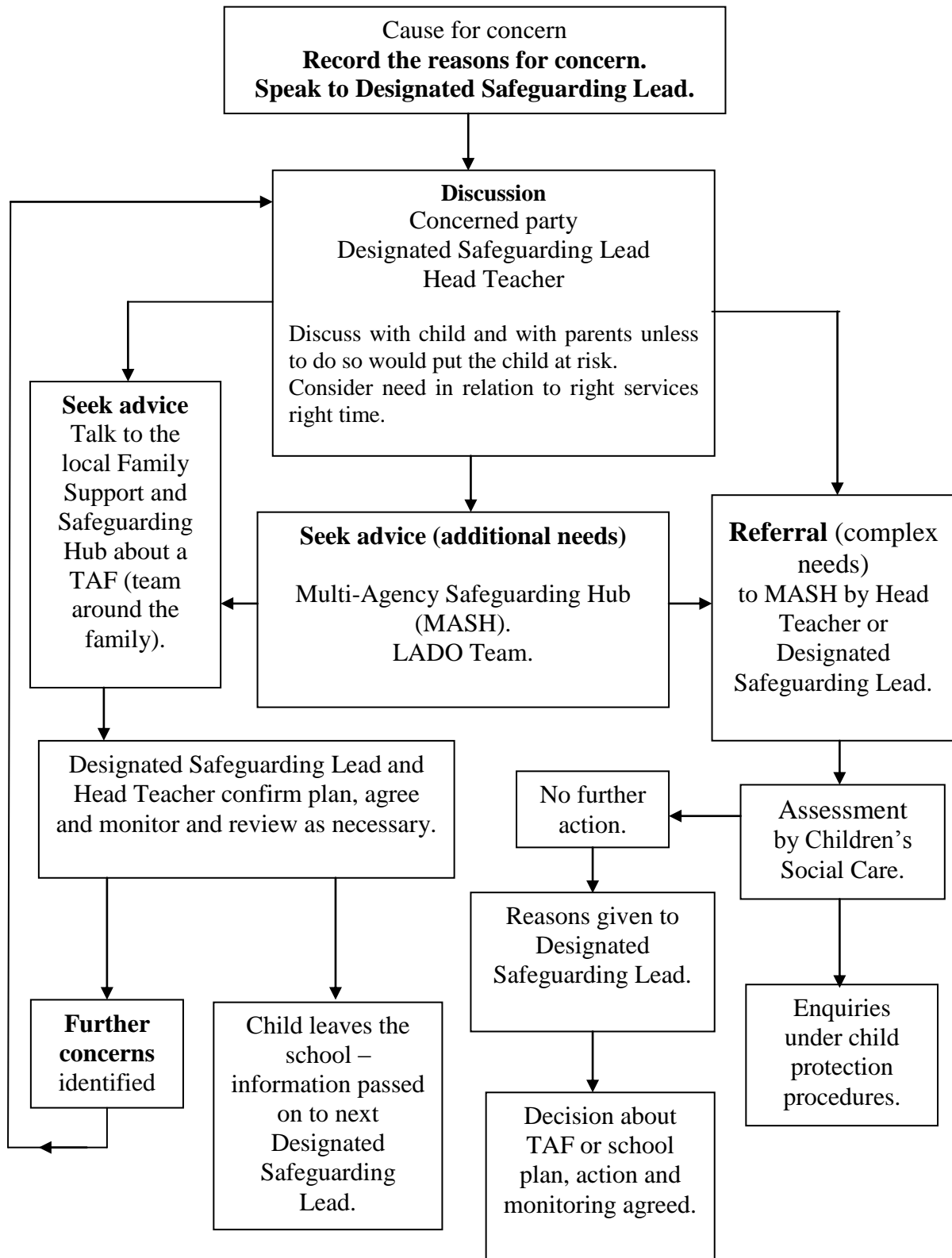
**APPENDIX 1  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK TRIANGLE**



What are the kinds of things that worry us?

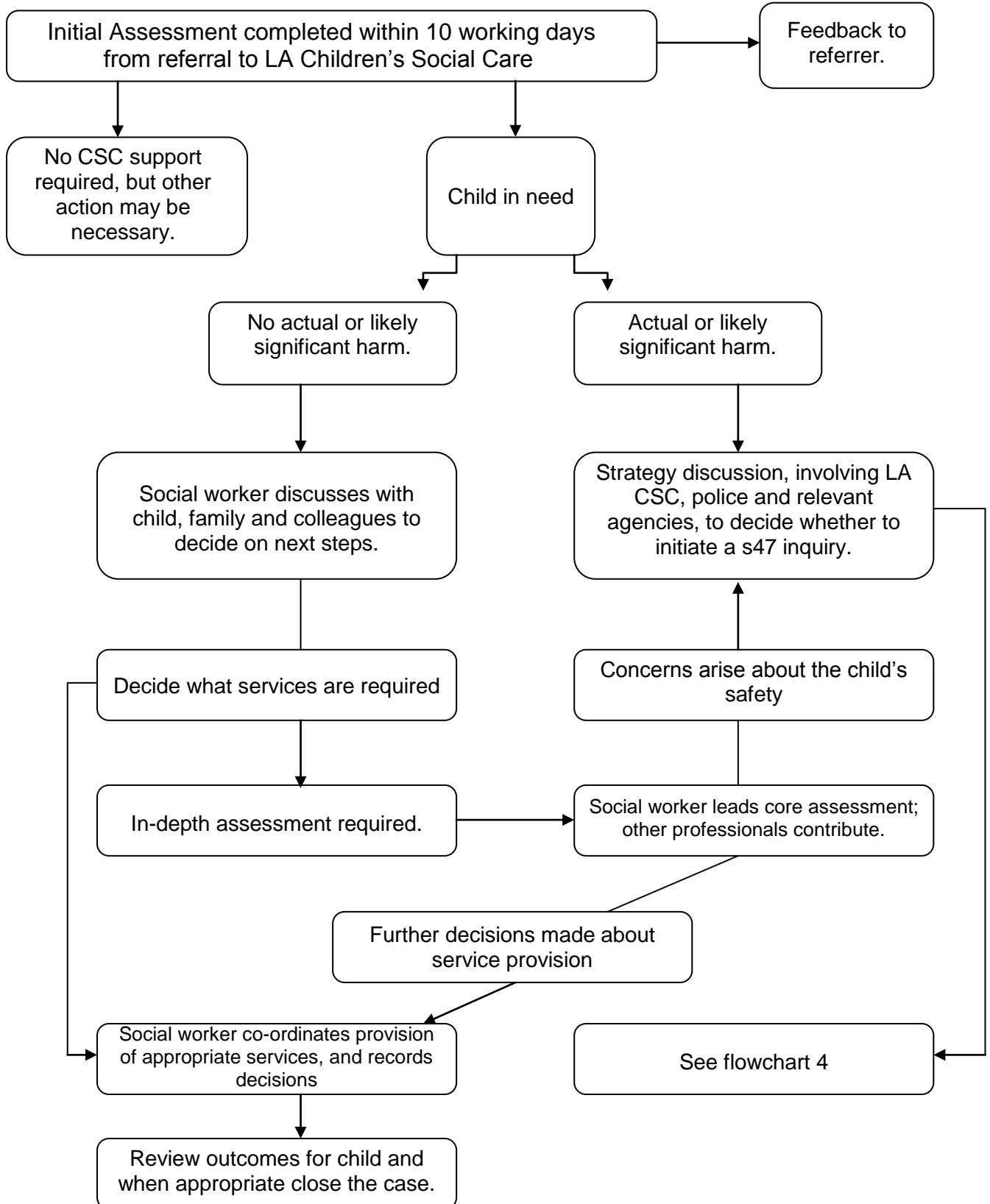
From the DfE *'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families'* (although archived guidance, it nevertheless provides a helpful source of information and guidance).

**APPENDIX 2  
RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

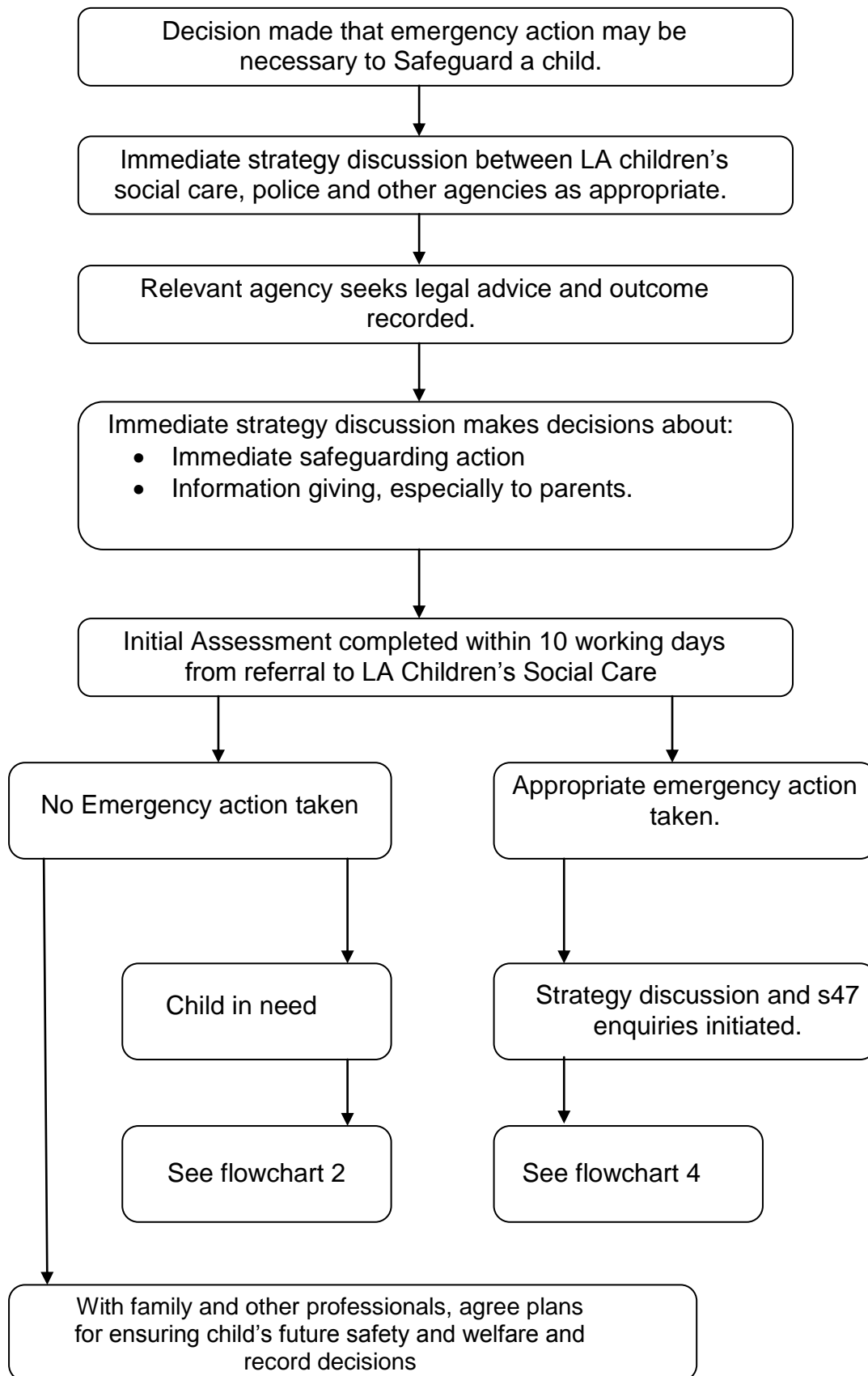


### APPENDIX 3 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

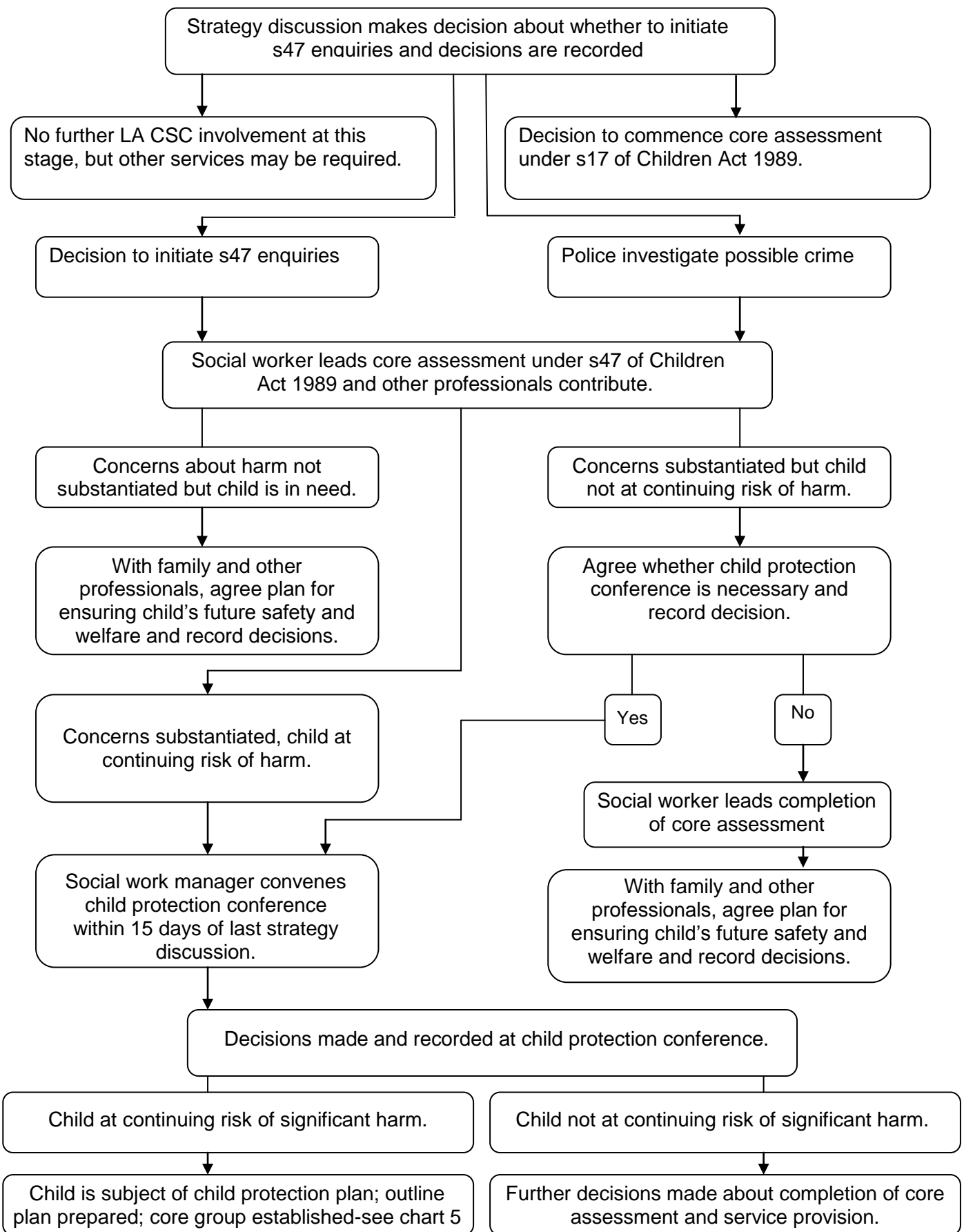
The following flowchart (2) is from “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” and shows what happens after a referral to Social Care has led to an “initial assessment”.



The following flowchart (3) is from “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” and shows what happens after a referral to Social Care has led to an “urgent action to safeguard children”.



The following flowchart (4) is from “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” and shows what happens after a Strategy Discussion.





The following flowchart (5) is from “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused” and shows what happens after a Child Protection Conference.

