HCC Thrive Safeguarding Policy

(to be read in conjunction with the HCC Safeguarding Policy)

Policy

Purpose and Scope

1. The purpose of this policy is to protect children, young people and vulnerable young adults with whom Thrive Youth Work comes into contact and to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding, allowing them to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding issues. This policy has recently been extended to include vulnerable young adults, reflecting our commitment to ensure a safe, supportive and protective environment for all individuals within the age range 11 – 25 yrs old. This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

2. This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers or anyone working on behalf of Thrive Youth Work.

3. Thrive Youth Work wants everything we do to help children and young people and vulnerable young adults develop as individuals and to feel able to contribute positively to society and the community in which they live. We believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and vulnerable young adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to act in ways that provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

4. Thrive Youth Work is committed to having in place procedures that help achieve this goal, as described in this policy.

Legal Framework

5. This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children, including Working Together 2013
- Updated Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) **and** Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2026)

6. The Children's Act 1989 defines a child or young person as a person under the age of 18. The Care Act 2014 defines safeguarding as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The Care Act 2014 defines an adult at risk as an individual aged 18 years or older who:

- Has care and support needs.
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and

- As a result of these care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

For further clarification, please refer to the HCC Adult Safeguarding Policy.

7. It is noted that, in the case of safeguarding children and young people and vulnerable young adults adults where a disclosure of information is required by Child Support Legislation, the disclosure will not be in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998. This will be the case even through the child or young person may object to the disclosure of their personal information or may not have provided any specific permission. Regulation 9A of the Child Support (Information, Evidence and Disclosure Regulation 1992) permits the disclosure of information given by one party to the other in certain circumstances.

Policy Statement

8. It is recognised that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989.
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have equal right to protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's/young people's welfare.

9. We will therefore seek to keep children and young people and vulnerable young adults safe by:

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely and ensuring all necessary checks are made
- adopting a code of conduct for staff and volunteers which reflects good practice
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, and volunteers
- adopting child protection procedures that allow us to respond appropriately to suspected or alleged abuse
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- sharing concerns with agencies that need to know and involve parents and children appropriately

10. **The named person responsible for safeguarding at Thrive Youth Work is Richard Schwier who collates and keeps all relevant records and reports to the HCC Safeguarding Trustee (as well as the Thrive Youth Work Senior Management Team) and the Board of Trustees on all relevant Safeguarding matters.**

11. We are committed to reviewing this policy and good practice annually.

Signed: Date:

Name: Position:

Context

Introduction

12. Thrive Youth Work undertakes a range of charitable activities, all of which involve working with children and young people, mostly between the ages of 11 and 18, from areas within or near Huntingdon. Where appropriate, Thrive will also work with vulnerable young adults living within or near the Huntingdon area.

13. It should be noted, that although it is preferable from a risk standpoint for staff and volunteers not to be alone with a child or young person, a vulnerable young adult, there are types of work that make this necessary. We accept such situations for certain designated activities, provided appropriate mitigation and risk management processes are in place.

Services

14. **Work in Schools** Work carried out in school buildings is defined as a regulated activity and should operate under the frameworks established by each school. Those charity staff leading work in schools will need to be aware of these frameworks. This means that the presence of school staff can be taken into account when assessing whether it is appropriate to work on a one-to-one basis with a child, for instance to provide mentoring support.

15. **Work in the Community** This includes work undertaken as part of our Youth Café and summer events projects as well as detached youth work. It also includes trips, excursions and camps organised with children ,young people and Vulnerable young adults. Where one-to-one work is necessary, it should be considered as "targeted interventions" and specific and appropriate risk assessment and monitoring processes will need to be put in place as set out below.

16. **One-to-one Sessions.** This work involves **ad-hoc** one-to-one meetings between children or young person , Vulnerable young adult and their mentor, who can be a volunteer. To ensure the safety of the young person specific and appropriate risk assessment and monitoring processes will need to be put in place as set out below.

17. **Events** This work involves the staging of events such as excursions, outward bound activities, and fundraising events to which children and young people and vulnerable young adults are invited.

Safer Partnerships

Introduction

18. Thrive Youth Work often operates in partnership with others, helping us to better serve the needs of the children, young people and vulnerable young adults. For safeguarding purposes, it is necessary to understand the nature of each partnership and ensure good and appropriate information sharing.

Partnerships

19. Thrive Youth Work is committed to working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies. The partnership is most effective when there are clear and known roles within the partnership and those involved in the partnership communicate effectively with each other.

20. Thrive Youth Work's partnerships can be informal or formal.

- Informal partnerships involve various parties working together without any formal definition or agreement. This generally involves there being a working relationship and some information sharing. In these circumstances safeguarding responsibilities remain wholly with Thrive Youth Work.

- Formal partnerships involve a more structured collaboration. A formal agreement needs to be made that clearly states roles and responsibilities of each party, including who is leading the project, what protocols are being used on the project, and how information will be gathered and shared. In these circumstances, safeguarding responsibilities will be clearly defined as part of the agreement and may or may not remain wholly with Thrive Youth Work.

Information Sharing

21. Effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective identification, assessment and service provision.

22. Early sharing of information is key to providing effective help where there are emerging problems, and foundational to providing effective child safeguarding services. Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) have shown how poor information sharing has contributed to the deaths or serious injuries of children.

23. Concerns about sharing information cannot be allowed to prevent the provision of appropriate safety and protection of children, young people and Vulnerable adults. To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements:

- No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child, young person or vulnerable young adult safe. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, they must share the information appropriately.

- Thrive has a clearly defined set of processes, procedures and principles, for sharing information internally, with external appropriate professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

24. The *Information sharing Advice: for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)* publication is used to support frontline practitioners working with child or adult services, regarding decisions to share personal information on a case-by-case basis.

What is Child Abuse?

Introduction

25. Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

26. There are four main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect**. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including in youth work activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

27. Abuse in all its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

28. Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

Types of Abuse

29. **Physical Abuse** Where adults physically hurt or injure a young person (e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning). Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse.

30. **Sexual Abuse**

a. Occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

b. There is evidence that some people have used open events involving young people as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people.

31. **Emotional Abuse**

a. The persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

b. Within the area of emotional abuse, spiritual abuse is the imposition of another person's values and beliefs on those in their care or in some way under their control. This may involve proselytism or a failure to respect the young person's own spiritual beliefs or opinions.

c. Ill-treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

32. **Bullying**

a. Bullying may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time and often aimed at particular groups of people (e.g. because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation), where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

b. There are many types of bullying: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name-calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

c. Emotional abuse including bullying can be perpetrated face to face or remotely, for example by using mobile devices, email, instant messenger or social networking sites when it is known as "online bullying." Opportunities for this kind of bullying are growing as technology develops and as children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults make increasing

use of digital ways of interacting. As recent tragedies have highlighted, online bullying can have a devastating impact on young people, partly because it is possible to circulate unkind and harmful rumours, messages or images to large numbers of people very quickly. Such material can be very difficult to destroy.

33. **Neglect** Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Indicators of Abuse

34. Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour (e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Being prevented from socialising with others
- Displaying variations in eating patterns (including overeating or loss of appetite)
- Losing weight for no apparent reason
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt
- Self-harm.

35. Signs of bullying can include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to get involved in activities.
- An unexplained drop off in academic or other performance
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing (e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes)
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

36. It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

37. **It is NOT the responsibility of those working with/for Thrive Youth Work to decide that child abuse is occurring. It IS their responsibility to act on any concerns.**

Child Protection Procedures

Safer Staff and Volunteers

38. **Introduction**

a. Our workforce is our most important resource and it is therefore our aim to recruit and select the best people available, to provide the relevant knowledge, skills and abilities for the organisation.

b. We recognise that unsuitable people sometimes seek out opportunities via employment or volunteering to have contact with children in order to harm them. We will therefore take all reasonable steps to prevent recruiting such people.

c. As set out further in our Equality and Diversity policy, we will recruit, select and manage our staff in a way that complies with legislation designed to combat inequality and discrimination.

39. **Recruitment** We will:

- Advertise all posts through appropriate media in a way that ensures that we attract high-quality applicants
- Offer an informal meeting with two members of staff and if appropriate an opportunity to observe a Thrive Youth Work activity.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers complete our standard application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record
- Involve more than one person to short list applicants for interview
- Require that all employees and volunteers undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocols
- Obtain two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references MUST be taken up and confirmed through **email** contact
- Obtain evidence of identity and right to work in this country (passport or other Home Office designated documents or driving license with photo) and proof of any necessary qualifications **if the applicant is employed.**
- Require that all staff and volunteers have an up to date relevant DBS check including a check against the barred list if their post involves a regulated activity;
- Appoint all staff and volunteers on a trial period initially with a review before they are confirmed in post.

40. **Induction** All employees and volunteers will receive an appropriate induction which will include the following elements related to safeguarding:

- Introduction to Thrive Youth Work's safeguarding **statement** and procedures so that they are aware how to keep children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults safe in Thrive
- Instruction in the code of behaviour for staff
- Procedures around keeping records, confidentiality, and safe storage of information
- Whistle-blowing procedures
- Information about the new person's trial period and on-going supervision
- Information about any training they are expected to undertake

41. **Training**

a. The safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice so as to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child
- Work safely and effectively with children

b. All employees (including senior managers), and volunteers undertake relevant safeguarding training to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice in protecting children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults with whom we work.

Establishing Appropriate Behaviours

42. To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in their relationships with Thrive, staff and volunteers must operate within an accepted ethical framework, Thrive Youth Work's behavioural Code of Conduct, which is described below.

43. Following this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

44. All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Safeguarding Officer or, if necessary, using the whistle-blowing procedure.

45. Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures. Any breach of the code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency may result in them being asked to stop working with Thrive and will be reported to their management.

46. Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police, the local authority children's social care department and/or the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

Behavioural Code of Conduct

47. **Introduction**

a. When working with children and young people and vulnerable young adults all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust. It is important that staff and volunteers are aware that they are seen as role models by children and young people, and must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

b. The code of conduct requires the following from each member of staff or volunteer to, in summary:

- operate within Thrive broader Ethos and Values statement
- follow Thrive Safeguarding Policy and procedures at all times
- follow Thrive E-Safety Policy and report any breaches
- report all allegations/suspicions of abuse and do not allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

48. **Positive Relationships**

a. **DO:**

- listen to and respect children at all times
- treat children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults fairly, without favouritism, prejudice or discrimination
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults in planning activities wherever possible
- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- respect and be sensitive to young people's spiritual and cultural backgrounds.

b. **DO NOT:**

- patronise or treat children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults as if they are silly
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- reduce a young person to tears as a form of control
- let children and young people and vulnerable young adults have your personal contact details (mobile number or address)
- use personal social media or gaming accounts to communicate with young people.

49. **Acting as role models**

a. **DO:**

- be an excellent role model providing examples of good conduct you wish children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults to follow, (this may include not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people)
- always ensure your language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- challenge unacceptable behaviour
- encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

b. **DO NOT:**

- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

50. **Physical proximity**

a. **DO:**

- ensure any contact with children and young people and vulnerable young adults is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project;
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly, with the consent of the young person and be neither intrusive or disturbing; never touch any child or young person in any area that would be covered by a bathing costume or kiss a child or young person. Workers should be sensible and sensitive to the needs of a child or young person when in their presence. Children and young

people and vulnerable young adults should be encouraged to sit near to or opposite you but never on you;

- always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets;
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people and vulnerable young adults and vulnerable young adults or if this isn't possible, that you are within sight or hearing of other adults, that other people have free access to the room/area where you are and that any doors to the room/area are left fully open; **(see below for guidance on exceptional activities where this is not possible)**
- where possible avoid giving lifts (in a vehicle) to a child or young person **(see the lone working policy)**
- if a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other staff know where you and the child are;
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy. Workers should remember to preserve a child's personal space when sitting near them;
- ensure when working with mixed groups of young people that **where possible** there is both a male and female member of staff present;
- ensure that at away events (e.g. residential camps) adults do not enter a young person's room without another member of staff present or invite young people to their rooms;
- never hit a child or young person or administer any form of physical punishment to them. If a situation arises that requires physical contact with a child (e.g. to break up a fight or to stop dangerous behaviour), utmost care should be taken and only the absolute minimum physical contact required to resolve the situation should take place, preferably witnessed by another leader.

b. **DO NOT:**

- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person. **Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff or volunteer and a child or young person using our services represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member or volunteer and is not acceptable and illegal and will be reported to relevant agencies immediately.**
- take young people to your home where they will be alone with you;
- share a room with a young person;
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- Do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves (e.g. getting changed after sports activity, drying hair, using the toilet etc.).

51. **Physical safety DO:**

- always ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose;
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the young person and do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive competition and not pushing young people against their will;
- If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident;

52. **Parental/carer involvement DO:**

- involve parents/carers wherever possible (e.g., where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents/carers to take responsibility for their own child). If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, staff/volunteers work in pairs (i.e. 2 adults present);
- obtain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements (e.g., overnight stays);
- where possible obtain written parental consent if Thrive Youth Work staff are required to transport young people in their cars;
- where possible secure written parental consent where Thrive Youth Work is acting in loco parentis, so as to receive permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises. Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, plus details of any treatment given.

Best Practice for Specific Exceptions

53. **Work in Schools**

a. Thrive, while working within a school establishment, will adhere to the school's relevant policies. Staff should seek clearly to identify the school's requirements and review these with school staff.

b. While doing specific 1-2-1 work in schools, best practice is that you obtain guidance from the school as to how they want you to work. Care should be taken in picking the type of room and the specific needs of the young person, taking into account any history of violence.

54. **Work in the Community (Targeted Interventions)**

a. Where a specific need for 1-2-1 support for a young person has been identified by the youth work team, young person, parents or partnership organisation, a key worker relationship may be set up between a youth worker and the young person, with the purpose of supporting that young person for a specific time.

b. Such targeted interventions should always be set up with parents'/carers' permission and it should be made clear what confidentiality and safeguarding means in this circumstance. The utmost care should be taken when meeting the young person, making sure parents/carers are informed that you are meeting the young person in an open public space and never alone in their home.

c. The youth worker must make sure that their line manager is informed about the 1-2-1 intervention and this will be discussed regularly in supervision. Senior managers should record how many young people are being worked with in this way on the targeted intervention sheet (Appendix 7) and should obtain contact details of parents/carers so that spot checks can be undertaken at random times in the year.

55. **Events** It is recognised that events are places where young people will come into contact with adults who do not specifically need DBS checks or other checks as part of safe recruiting. Therefore the supervision of children and young people and vulnerable young adults at events must be such that their safety is maintained throughout the event. Good practice would be to assign a specific staff member/accredited volunteer to supervise such young people at each event.

Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment

56. Thrive Youth Work is committed to the appropriate and safe use of photographic and filming equipment in connection with children and young people and vulnerable young adults at Thrive events or on Thrive projects. Guidelines on this area are set out in

APPENDIX 6

USE OF PHOTO/FILM EQUIPMENT.

E-Safety

57. The use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives; it is involved in how we as an organisation gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is also an intrinsic part of the experience of our children and young people, and is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused either by an adult or a young person, can be actually or potentially harmful to them.

58. Thrive Youth Work aims to protect children and young people and vulnerable young adults who receive Thrive services and who make use of information technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles and the Internet) as part of their involvement with us.

59. This is subject to a separate e-safety policy that should be referred to in conjunction with this policy.

Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

60. **Introduction**

a. It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Thrive in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by contacting the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the child or young person.

b. This applies **BOTH** to allegations/suspicions of abuse occurring within Thrive and to allegations/suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere. This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicions.

62. **Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse**

a. We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways: we may see it happening; we may suspect it is happening because of signs such as those listed above, or it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

b. In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a child or young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **Stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person. Whatever the child discloses, don't look shocked or use phrases such as "never", "are you sure?", or "that's horrible".
- **Reassure the child** that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell you.
- **Listen to the child**, showing that you are taking them seriously.

- **Keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict in this area and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. If you need to clarify your understanding, only ask questions where you repeat back to the child what you think they have said using their words and terminology.

- **Be honest about confidentiality**. If a child or young person asks you to keep what they want to say a secret, never promise to do this but tell them you are willing to listen. Tell the child that everything they tell you will be treated in strictest confidence (except if someone is hurting the child or if the child is in danger of hurting themselves or others, and with the child's permission if you believe you know someone might be able to help the child) and will only be relayed to people who need to know. Doing this will ensure that if a child discloses something that suggests abuse you are able to talk to someone else without breaking the confidence.
- **Ensure the safety of the child**. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a **safeguarding issue**. Following an allegation of abuse, do not stop a child or young person or vulnerable adult from returning home unless the Thrive Youth Work Senior Manager feels that doing so places the child or young person in further immediate danger. If this is the case, follow the advice given by the police or social services. Do not confront the alleged abuser, but leave further enquiries to the police and social services department. If you think the child may be in immediate danger, you should call 999.

- **Record all information**. Compile a written report of everything the child said to you whilst it is still fresh in your memory. Sign the report, recording the time and date. This may be used later as evidence (see below for the kind of information that should be recorded).

- **Report the incident**.. Where possible this should be the **Thrive Youth Work lead workers on site**. If a child or young person or Vulnerable young adult discloses suspected abuse, inform the Thrive Youth Work Senior Manager on site as soon as possible if they were not present when the disclosure was made and then report the incident to the Safeguarding Officer (for further advice on reporting incidents see below).

c. In dealing with any allegation of abuse it is vital:

- **not to jump to conclusions** about others without checking facts
- not to exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- **not to rely on your reputation** or that of the organisation to protect you

63. **Recording Information**

a. To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish between your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

b. Information, which should be set out in the log of concern form as seen in Appendix 10, should include the following:

- The name, age and date of birth.
- The home address and telephone number.
- Whether the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information.

- A description of any visible bruising or injury (e.g. location, size etc.), and any indirect signs (e.g. behavioural changes).
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child, young person or vulnerable adult account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details.

64. **Reporting the Concern**

a. All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected about a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

b. Thrive Youth Work expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken. If the nominated Safeguarding Officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department, or the police. Telephone numbers and web portal addresses can be found in your local directory or in the appendices below.

c. Reports to statutory bodies should be made using the Cambridgeshire County Council Safeguarding children and child protection referral portal:

https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Make_a_professional_referral_to_Cambridgeshire_County_Council_Children_Services

OR Call the Customer Service Centre on 0345 045 5203

Website Address: https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/concerned/

d. Adults at Risk should be reported to 0345 045 5202, out of hours tel: 07765 898732, Email: referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

65. **Complaints against employees or volunteers**

a. Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- **Criminal**: in which case the police are immediately involved.
- **Child protection**: in which case the social services (and possibly the police) will be involved.
- **Disciplinary or misconduct**: **the Thrive Youth Work manager and HCC Elders will be involved.**

b. As mentioned previously in this document, Thrive Youth Work are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

c. Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

d. **NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident; it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

e. Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- Thrive will refer the matter to the social services department.
- The parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- HCC Senior Leader will be notified, and will decide who will deal with any media inquiries and will implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings.
- The Safeguarding Officer will notify the relevant organisations the employee/volunteer in question works with.
- If the Safeguarding Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to the HCC Senior Leader who will refer the matter to Social Services.

f. Allegations of abuse are sometimes made some time after the event. Where such an allegation is made, you should still follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services as others may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children.

g. **The employer must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of an allegation being made and prior to any further investigation taking place. See the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board portal:**

https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/lado/

Email:

- **LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**
- **LADO@peterborough.gov.uk**

Telephone contacts:

- **01223 727967 – Cambridgeshire**
- **01733 864038 – Peterborough**
- **Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team:**
  - **0345 045 5203 Cambridge**
  - **01733 864180 Peterborough**

66. **Internal Inquiries and Suspension**

a. Thrive Youth Work's Safeguarding Officer will make an immediate decision, in consultation with the HCC Senior Leader and Safeguarding Trustee, about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

b. Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or police inquiries, **the Thrive Manager, HCC Senior Leader and HCC Trustees** will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, especially where there is insufficient to uphold any action by the police. In such cases Thrive Youth Work's Senior Management Team must reach a decision based upon the available

information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

67. **Concerns Outside the Immediate Youth Work Environment (e.g. parent or carer)**

a. Report your concerns to the **HCC Safeguarding Trustee.**

b. If the Safeguarding Officer is not available, contact your local social services department or the police immediately.

c. Social Services and the Safeguarding Officer will decide how to inform the parents/carers.

d. The Safeguarding Officer should also report the incident to the HCC Senior Leader. The Senior Management Team will ascertain whether or not the person(s) involved in the incident plays a role in the organisation and act accordingly.

e. Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.

68. **Confidentiality**

a. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Safeguarding Officer
- The parents/carers of the child
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services and/or the police
- Where appropriate, volunteers who may be involved in the child
- The HCC Senior Leader
- The HCC Trustee safeguarding lead
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child). You should seek the advice of Social Services on who should approach the alleged abuser.

b. All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

Monitoring

69. As noted above, excellent recording of incidents or suspected or actual abuse is essential.

70. Responsibility for monitoring safeguarding issues rests with the trustees but day to day monitoring is delegated to the **Thrive Manager**. At each trustees' meeting, a report on safeguarding performance and issues will be given including a report, if it is the case, that there are no issues currently being dealt with. If major events take place between trustees' meetings, the Chair of Trustees will be informed by the **HCC Senior Leader or HCC Trustee Safeguarding Lead** and they will together decide what further communication needs to take place to other trustees.

71. The Safeguarding Officer will inform the **HCC Senior Leader and HCC Trustee Safeguarding Lead** of any major safeguarding issues which arise immediately and agree to a course of action with them. The **HCC Safeguarding Trustee** will also prepare a quarterly report for **HCC Trustees** summarising any new incidents

reported in that quarter and the progress made in dealing with previously reported cases which are still open.

Avoiding Accidents and Running Safer Activities

72. The following legislation sets a context of safe working practices:

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992

73. Each lead youth worker is expected to develop and implement their own safe working practices as appropriate with the above in mind.

74. Risk Assessment and Hazard Management are perhaps the most obvious aspects of Health and Safety that have a bearing on youth work. Consequently, prior to any work commencing, a detailed risk assessment should be carried out, with any potential risks to health identified and control measures should be introduced to keep such risks to a minimum (an example of this and a proforma can be found below). These assessments should be on-going and regularly revised, at least annually. On-going risk assessments must be carried out taking account of near misses, physical changes to the environment, working patterns, change in targeted groups/individuals or staff.

75. Some of the factors that should be taken into consideration are the built environment in which workers will be operating and the particular group of young people with whom we are working.

76. After the assessment of the contextual circumstances and the vulnerability of staff has been carried out, operating guidelines should be drawn up, with workers being fully briefed as to the rationale behind them and their roles and responsibilities in adhering to them.

77. Good practice health and safety guidelines for youth workers include:

- Not to operate with less than two workers and trying to be in sight of each other unless delivering a 1-2-1 session which has appropriate consent;
- Have a contact number for a line manager;
- Inform the line manager of the specific locations and times to be worked;
- Inform the line manager when making a home visit and report back when finished;
- Avoid attracting unnecessary attention by wearing/carrying valuables;
- Do not transport young people in own vehicles or allow them to be carried in vehicles driven by the young people with whom they work, except in emergencies or specific reasons agreed with the line manager first. Workers will need to familiarise themselves with the relevant Thrive Youth Work policy covering insurance and transport guidelines;
- Always carry a mobile phone ready for use in case of emergency;
- Not to take unnecessary risks and recognise their own and their colleagues limitations;
- Always work within the law and within Thrive Youth Work policies and procedures;
- Bring Health and Safety matters and other concern to the attention of their line manager, so that appropriate risk assessments can be updated and action can be carried out
- All attire must be appropriate for work, and to avoid attire with offensive or inappropriate drawing or sayings

78. **In line with our Lone Working Policy, all Thrive staff must complete the movement board for their line manager and administrative support, detailing when they intend to be delivering youth work and where else they will be. Any changes must be notified to their line manager as soon as possible.**

Appendices:

1. Key Referral Contacts
2. Referral Flow Chart
3. Initial Assessment
4. Action to Safeguard
5. After the Strategy Discussion
6. Use of Photo/Film Equipment
7. Risk Assessment
8. Targeted Intervention Tracking
9. Log of Concern Form

APPENDIX 1

KEY REFERRAL CONTACTS

Cambridgeshire County Council Safeguarding children and child protection portal
https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/children-s-social-care/safeguarding-children-and-child-protection

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board portal
https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board Training
https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/home/multi-agency-safeguarding-training/

Referral Contact for Reporting Child or Young Person
https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Make_a_professional_referral_to_Cambridgeshire_County_Council_Children_Services
OR Call the Customer Service Centre on 0345 045 5203

Referral Contact for Reporting Employee or Volunteer
https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/lado/

- Email:
    - LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
    - LADO@peterborough.gov.uk
- Telephone contacts:
    - 01223 727967 – Cambridgeshire
    - 01733 864038 – Peterborough
    - Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: 0345 0455203 Cambridge, 01733 864180 Peterborough
    - Police 999

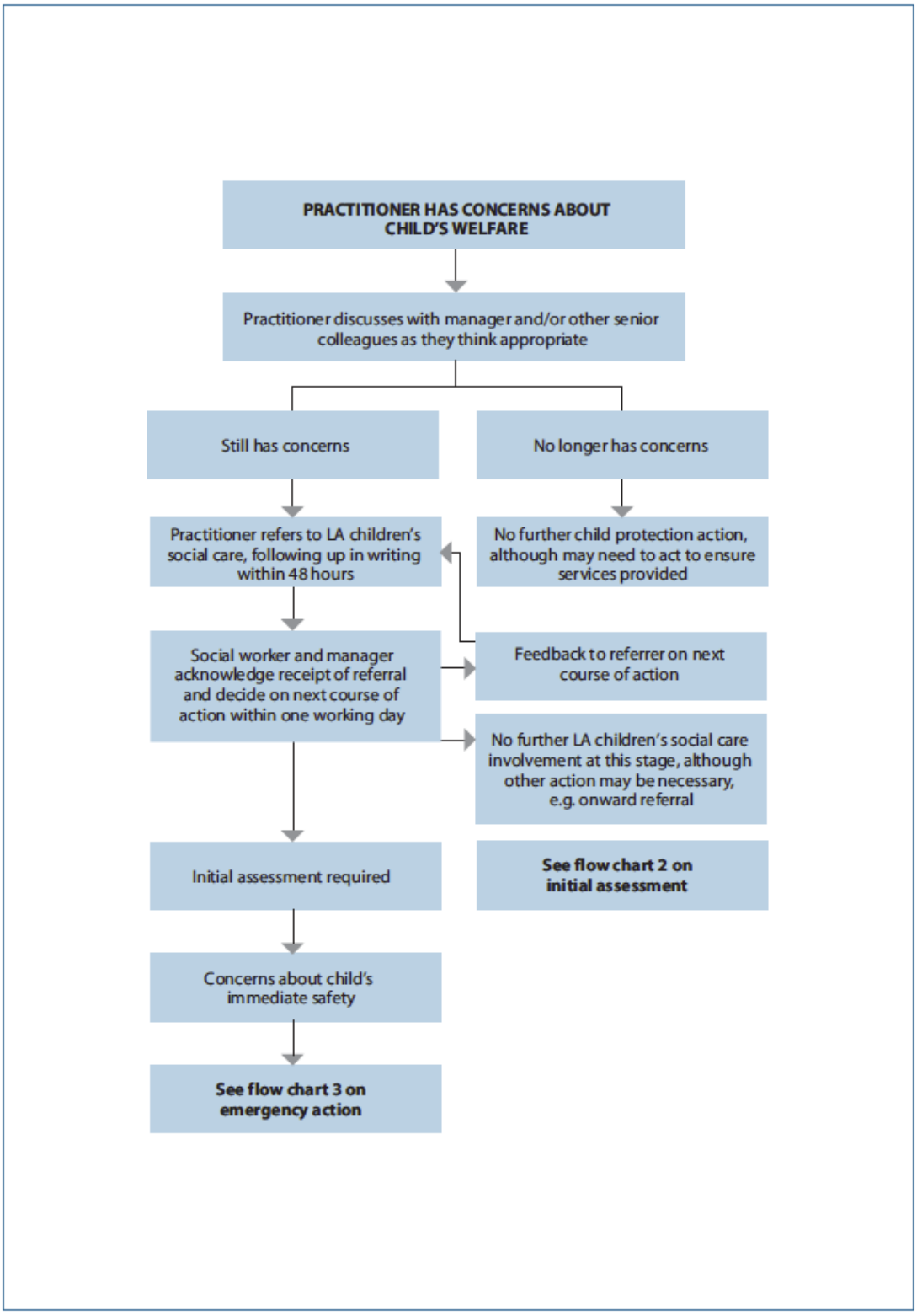
For reporting adults at risk: 0345 045 5202, Out of hours Tel: 07765 898732, Email: referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2

REFERRAL FLOW CHART

Taken from: HM Government, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (Every Child Matters, DfE), p16. ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5 ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5

Flow chart 1 – Referral

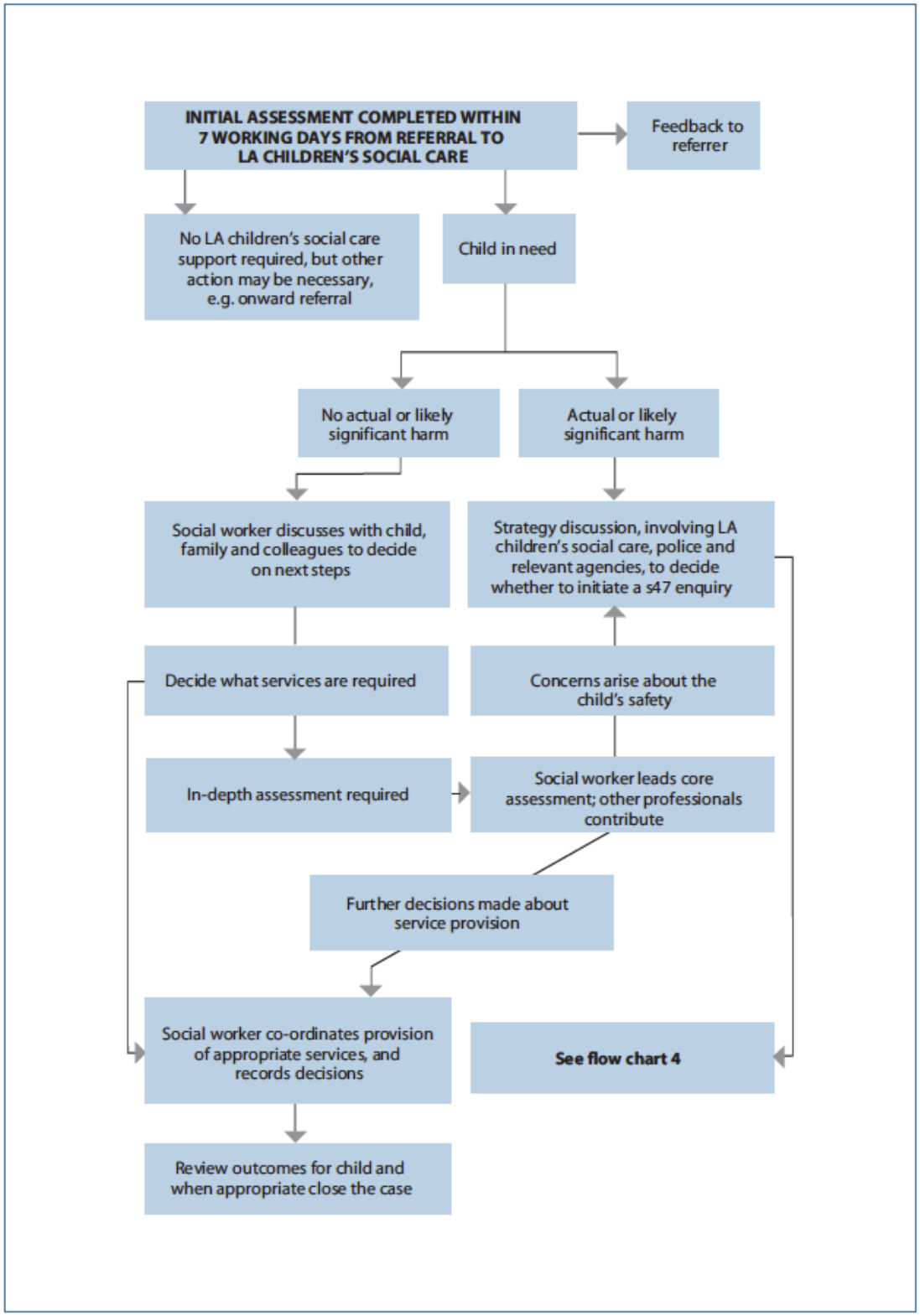


APPENDIX 3

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Taken from HM Government, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (Every Child Matters, DfE), p16. ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5 ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5

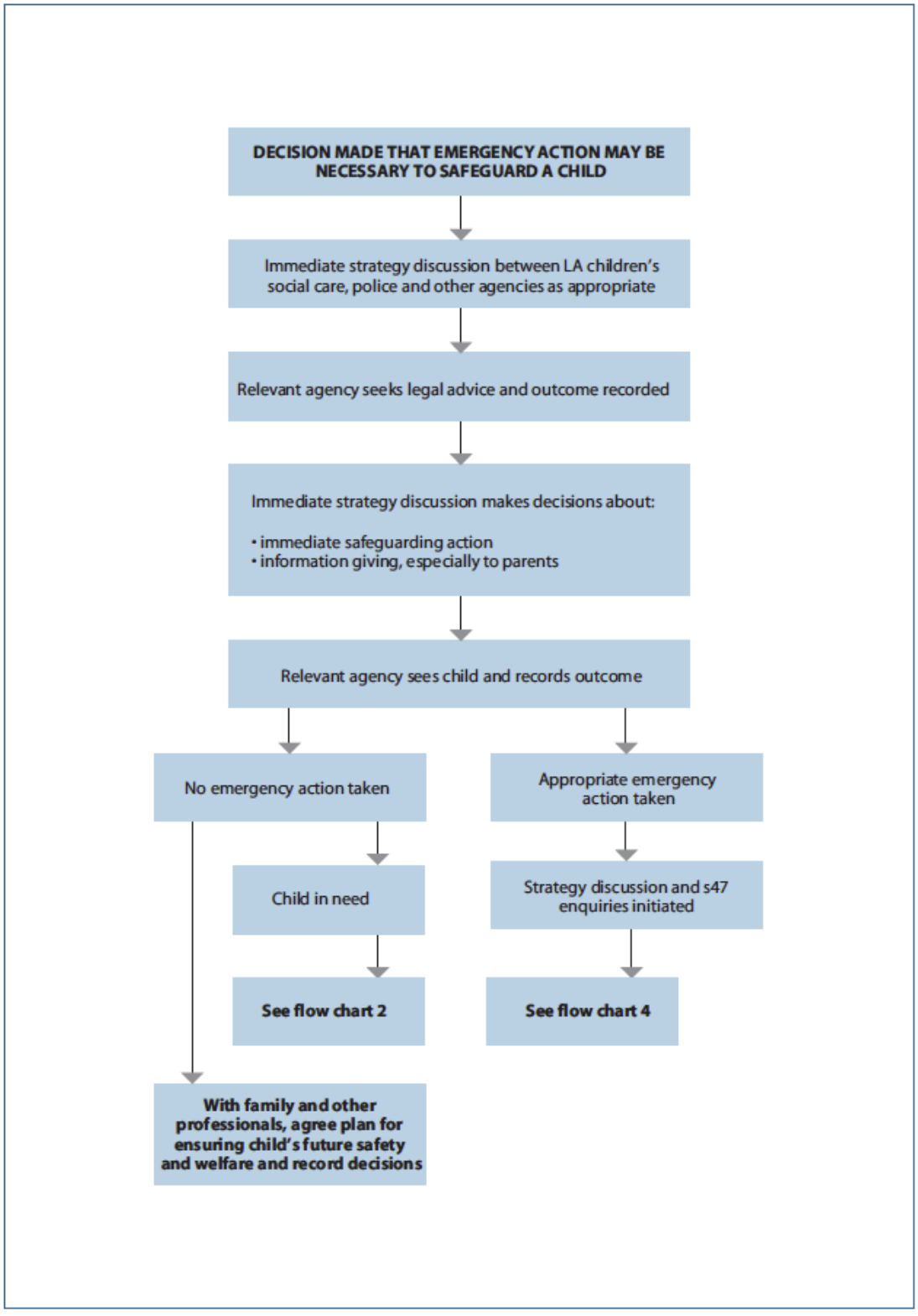
Flow chart 2 – What happens following initial assessment?



ACTION TO SAFEGUARD

Taken from HM Government, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (Every Child Matters, DfE), p16. ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5 ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5

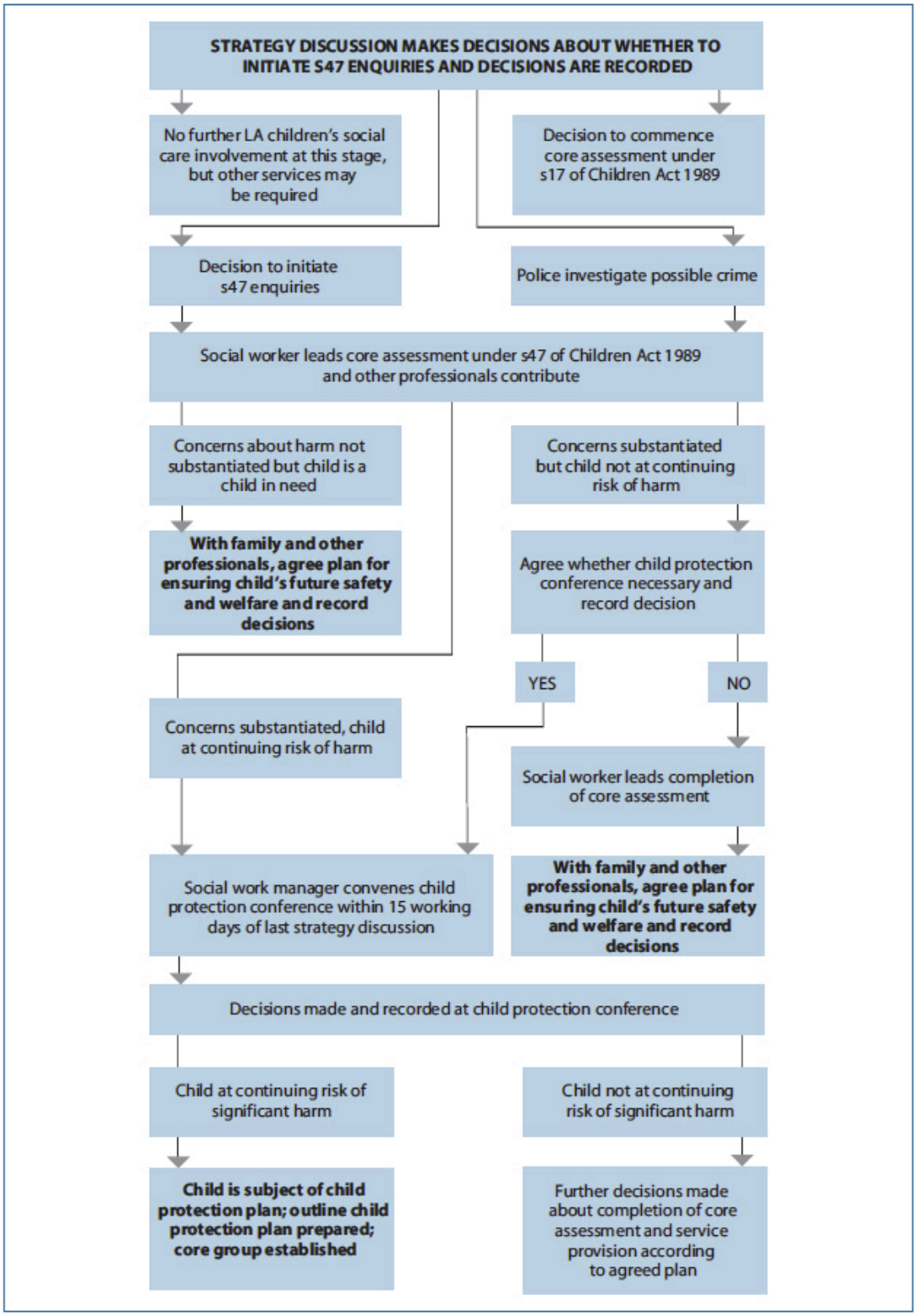
Flow chart 3 – Urgent action to safeguard children



AFTER THE STRATEGY DISCUSSION

Taken from HM Government, 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (Every Child Matters, DfE), p16. ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5 ISBN: 978-1-84478-867-5

Flow chart 4 – What happens after the strategy discussion?



APPENDIX 6

USE OF PHOTO/FILM EQUIPMENT

The following guidelines should be followed at all times:

- Use of a parental permission form to obtain consent for a child to be photographed/videoed should always be sought.
- Obtain the child's permission to use their image.
- Avoid using children's names (first name or surname) in photograph captions. If the child is named, avoid using his or her photograph. If the photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities – swimming, drama, gymnastics and athletics for example – present a much greater risk of potential misuse.
- Ensure correct use of images of children on the organisation's website. Images accompanied by personal information, e.g. 'this is X who likes to collect stamps' – could be used by an individual to learn more about a child prior to grooming them for abuse.
- Make clear in writing our expectations of professional photographers or the press who are invited to an event, in relation to child protection.
- Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children.
- Do not approve photography sessions outside the event or at a child's home.
- If at any time people who are not part of the charity, or who are not authorised by charity, try to take photos of the projects being run or the young people in attendance, they should be challenged by the team leader. If they refuse to stop, you should contact the police.

All parents and performers should be made aware when Thrive Youth Work staff will be using video or photography equipment as part of the event being run. Furthermore, before undertaking this activity in a school setting, the permission of the school should be sought.

Technology

In a fast moving world with constant technology advances, it is important to remain vigilant and consider carefully the use of mobile phones and social media. Review your guidelines every 6 months and ensure that they are communicated and followed.

APPENDIX 7

RISK ASSESSMENT

School/area:				Assessment date:
Activity:				Date reviewed:
No. of Pupils		No. of Staff		Completed by:
Person in charge of activity:				Reviewed by:

Hazard List significant hazards that may result in serious harm or affect several people.	**Level of risk** (Low, Medium, High) Risk = likelihood x consequence	**Who may be affected?**	**Control measures** List existing controls or note where the information may be found. (e.g. information, instruction, training, systems or procedures).	**Any further action** List the risks that are not adequately controlled and proposed action where it is reasonably practicable to do more.	**Review procedures**

APPENDIX 8

TARGETED INTERVENTION TRACKING

Child or Young Person's Name	YP Contact	Parent/Carer Name	Parent/Carer Contact	Date 1-2-1 Started	Date 1-2-1 Ended	Permission Letter Signed and Seen

APPENDIX 9

LOG OF CONCERN FORM

Logging a Concern about a Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk

(Insert Church name and address)	Date of this Log:	dd/mm/yy
	Time of this log:	00:00
Child/Vulnerable Adult's Full Name:		
Address:		Phone no:
		DoB:
		Gender
Date of Concern/Incident: dd/mm/yy		Time of Concern/Incident: 00:00
Your Name:		Your role:
Describe the incident as **factually** as possible. Include who was involved, exactly what happened, where it happened, when it happened, and the source of the information (e.g. witnesses). Remember to describe clearly any behavioural or physical signs you have observed, using the body map overleaf as necessary.		

Were there any witnesses to the incidents?

Check to make sure your report is clear now – and will also be clear to anyone reading it in the future. Use a continuation sheet as necessary.

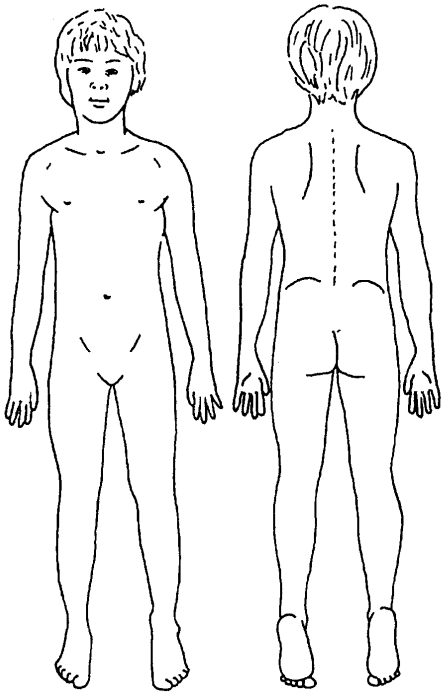
Have the parents been contacted? Yes ☐ No ☐ If so what was said?

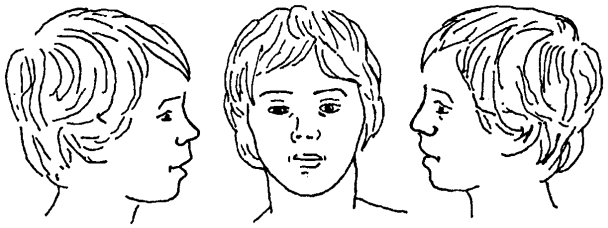
Has anyone else been consulted? Yes ☐ No ☐ if so, record details

Has anyone alleged to be the abuser? Yes ☐ No ☐ If so record details

Signature of reporting person:

Form received by: (Safeguarding Officer)	
Date:	Time:
Proposed action by the Safeguarding Officer:	





Body Map