



Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

At Thrive - A Countryside Classroom we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the setting's other policies and procedures. Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. At Thrive - A Countryside Classroom all staff, students and visitors are made aware and adhere to the policy.

This policy works alongside these other specific policies to cover all aspects of child protection:

- ☐ Online safety
- ☐ Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- ☐ Prevent Duty and Radicalisation
- ☐ Domestic Violence, Honour Based Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriages
- ☐ Looked After Children
- ☐ Staff behaviour
- ☐ Social Networking
- ☐ Mobile phone and camera
- ☐ Recruitment
- ☐ Disciplinary and grievance
- ☐ Promoting positive behaviour

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- ☐ Children Act 1989 and 2004
- ☐ Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- ☐ Children and Social Work Act 2017
- ☐ Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- ☐ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- ☐ Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019)
- ☐ Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- ☐ Prevent Duty 2015

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in relation to this policy is defined as:

- ☐ protecting children from abuse and neglect

- ☐ preventing impairment of their health or development ensuring that they receive safe and effective care.
- ☐ Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- ☐ Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- ☐ Create an environment which supports children to develop a positive self-image
- ☐ Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- ☐ Support staff to notice the softer signs of abuse and know what action to take
- ☐ Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- ☐ Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- ☐ Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- ☐ Always listen to children
- ☐ Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- ☐ Share information with other agencies as appropriate or as may be required.

The setting is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, Family Support, health professionals including Health Visitors or the police. All staff will work with other agencies including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed, in the best interests of the child.

The setting aims to:

- ☐ Keep the child at the centre of all we do, providing sensitive interactions that develops builds children's wellbeing, confidence and resilience. We will support children to develop an awareness of how to keep themselves safe, healthy and have positive relationships.
- ☐ Ensure staff are trained right from induction to understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children (peer on peer) through bullying or discriminatory behaviour

- ☐ Be aware of the increased vulnerability of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) / Additional Learning Needs (ALN) isolated families and vulnerabilities in families including the impact of toxic trio on children and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
- ☐ Ensure staff understand how to recognise early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures, including through annual safeguarding newsletters and updates
- ☐ Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, maintaining professional curiosity around welfare of children, sharing information and seeking the help that the child may need at the earliest opportunity
- ☐ Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures
- ☐ Make any referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the **Mid and West Wales** Safeguarding Children Board
- ☐ Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- ☐ Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times
- ☐ Keep the setting safe online using appropriate filters, checks and safeguards, monitoring access at all times and maintaining safeguards around the use of technology by staff, parents and visitors in the setting.
- ☐ Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of setting staff
- ☐ Identify changes in staff behaviour and act on these as per the Staff Behaviour Policy
- ☐ Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children, or living or working on the setting premises including reporting such allegations to CIW, Local Authority Officer and other relevant authorities
- ☐ Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the setting and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- ☐ Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the **Mid and West Wales** Safeguarding Children Board.

Contact telephone numbers

CIW 0300 7900 126

Local Authority children's social care team 01545 574000 out of hours 0845 6015392

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**

NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline **0800 028 0285**

NSPCC Childline **0800 1111**

Types of abuse and particular procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a

family, institution, or community setting by those known to them or more rarely a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

- ☐ Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- ☐ Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- ☐ Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- ☐ Repeated injuries
- ☐ Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- ☐ Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

- ☐ Low self-esteem
- ☐ Fearful
- ☐ Wetting and soiling
- ☐ Recurrent nightmares
- ☐ Aggressive behaviour
- ☐ Withdrawing communication
- ☐ Habitual body rocking
- ☐ Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- ☐ Over-friendliness towards stranger
- ☐ Excessive clinginess
- ☐ Persistently seeking attention.

Peer on peer abuse

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children, and will take advice from the appropriate bodies on this area, to support for both the victim and the perpetrator as they could also be a victim of abuse too. We know that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

Physical abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been physical abuse to a child, which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an

area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Fabricated illness

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent or carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation, they may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances or they may interfere with medical treatments. Fabricated illness is a form of physical abuse and any concerns will be reported following our safeguarding procedures

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries – these should also be logged and discussed with the setting manager or room leader.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. This form of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by some ethnic groups. When the procedure happens is dependent on the community and it may occur shortly after birth, during childhood during adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, urinary infection, septicaemia, incontinence, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death.

If you have concerns about a child or family you should contact children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. We have a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen to children in the setting due to their age, we will ensure any signs of this in young adults or older children are followed up using the usual safeguarding referral process.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,

watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Action must be taken if a staff member witnesses an occasion(s) where a child indicates sexual activity through words, play, drawing, has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or has an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language for their developmental age. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge, and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing, the procedure below will be followed.

Procedure:

- ☐ The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- ☐ The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- ☐ The observed instances will be reported to the setting manager
- ☐ The matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team
- ☐ A sensitive and confidential discussion will be held with the parents/carers of any other children party to inappropriate play.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is defined as a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

We will be aware of the possibility of CSE and the signs and symptoms this may manifest as. If we have concerns we will follow the same procedures as for other concerns and we will record and refer as appropriate.

Emotional abuse

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Emotional abuse as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on

the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Signs that children are being emotionally abused may include: shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention, not having a close bond with their parent/carer, seem unconfident or anxious or being aggressive towards others.

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is an effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill-treatment or rejection. Children may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

- ☐ The concern should be discussed with the *setting manager/*room supervisor/*registered person
- ☐ The concern will be discussed with the parent
- ☐ Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records
- ☐ If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances and/or the concerns relate to the parents, the matter will be referred to the local authority children's social care team.

Neglect

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Neglect as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment

of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at setting unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at setting in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at setting. They may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been any type of neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) can be described as an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from big cities into smaller towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Customers will live in a different area to where the dealers and networks are based, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Signs that a child may be involved in County Lines could be a change in behaviour, suddenly having more money or possessions, change in friendship group, withdrawing from family

life, sudden change in appearance, unexplained physical injuries, staying out late or a lack of interest in school and previous positive activities.

Cuckooing.

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit them as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties. Signs that this is happening to a family property may be an increase people entering or leaving the property, an increase in cars or bikes outside the home, windows covered or curtains closed for long periods, family not being seen for extended periods, signs of drug use or an increase in anti-social behaviour at the home.

If we recognise any of these signs we will report our concerns as per our reporting process.

Contextual safeguarding-

As young people grow and develop, they may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their family. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, we will work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to work together safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns.

Domestic Abuse / Honour Based Violence / Forced Marriages

We look at these areas as a child protection concern. Please refer to the separate policy for further details on this.

Procedure:

- ☐ The concern will be discussed with the parent
- ☐ Such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.

If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the local authority children's social care team will be notified.

Parents should please inform the setting prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the setting on the day so the setting management are able to account for a child's absence. This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police (In Prevent priority areas the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support).

Reasons for referral may include a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a

child in their care. We have a Prevent Duty and Radicalisation policy in place. Please refer to this for specific details.

Online Safety

We take the safety of our children very seriously and this includes their online safety. Please refer to the Online Safety policy for further details.

Human Trafficking and Slavery

Please refer to our Human Trafficking and Slavery policy for detail on how we keep children safe in this area.

Adult sexual exploitation

As part of our safeguarding procedures we will also ensure that staff and students are safeguarded from sexual exploitation.

Upskirting

Upskirting involves taking a picture of someone's genitals or buttocks under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate or distress the individual. This is a criminal offence and any such action would be reported following our reporting procedures

Child Abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB)

Child abuse linked to CALFB can happen in families when there is a concept of belief in:

- ☐ witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs),
- ☐ the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context);
- ☐ ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies;
- ☐ use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation

This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune.

Reporting Procedures

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding coordinator (DCSO) as soon as possible.

- ☐ Staff will report their concerns to the DCSO (in the absence of the DCSO they will be reported to the Deputy DCSO)
- ☐ Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely

- ☐ For children who arrive at setting with an existing injury, a form will be completed along with parent's/ carers explanation to how the injury happened. Staff will have professional curiosity around any explanations given, any concerns around existing injury's will be reported
- ☐ If appropriate, any concerns or incidents will be discussed with the parent/carer, such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and Data protection guidelines.
- ☐ If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given then the following procedures will take place:

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- ☐ Contact the local authority children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice immediately or as soon as it is practical to do so, if it is believed a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police. If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children then the DSCO will follow the reporting allegations procedure (see below).
- ☐ Inform CIW
- ☐ Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- ☐ Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team)
- ☐ The designated safeguarding lead will follow up action taken by the LA social children's care team if they have not contacted the setting within the statutory timeframe.

Keeping children safe is our highest priority and if, for whatever reason, staff do not feel able to report concerns to the DCSO or deputy DCSO they should call the Local Authority Children's social care team or the NSPCC and report their concerns anonymously.

These contact numbers are displayed on the setting information board and in the office

Local Authority children's social care team **01545 574000** out of hours **0845 6015392**

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**

NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline **0800 028 0285**

NSPCC Childline **0800 1111**

Responding to a Spontaneous disclosure from a child

If a child starts to talk openly to a member of staff about abuse they may be experiencing then staff will;

- ☐ Give full attention to the child or young person.
- ☐ Keep body language open and encouraging.
- ☐ Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today'
- ☐ Take time and slow down: we will respect pauses and will not interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace.
- ☐ Recognise and respond to their body language.
- ☐ Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you.

- ☐ Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.
- ☐ Reassure the child that they've done the right thing in telling you. Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault.
- ☐ Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure. This could make things a lot worse for the child. (information taken NSPCC)

Any disclosure will be reported to the setting manager or DSCO and will be referred to the local authority children's social care team immediately, following our reporting procedures.

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the setting manager or DSCO. This record should include:

- ☐ Child's name
- ☐ Child's address
- ☐ Age of the child and date of birth
- ☐ Date and time of the observation or the disclosure, location.
- ☐ Exact words spoken by the child (word for word) and non-verbal communication.
- ☐ Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- ☐ Exact observation of any incident including any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- ☐ Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the *manager/*DSCO/*supervisor, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately. It's not the setting role to investigate, it's the role of statutory services to complete this.

Staff involved in a safeguarding case may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The setting expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child or member of staff.

Informing parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local authority children's social care team/police does not allow this to happen. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the local authority. All staff, students and volunteers are bound by confidentiality and will not be discussed out of work or this will become a disciplinary matter.

The Setting has due regard to the data protection principles as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). These do not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal information, even without consent if this would put the child at further risk. We will follow the principles around data collection and information sharing and ensure any information is recorded and shared in an appropriate way

Support to families

The setting takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students and volunteers within the setting.

The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Record Keeping

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate and in line with guidance of the local authority with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

The Setting keeps appropriate records to support the early identification of children and families that would benefit from support. Factual records are maintained in a chronological order with parental discussions. Records are reviewed regularly by the DSCO to look holistically at identifying children's needs.

Allegations against adults working or volunteering with children

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the setting premises, regardless of whether the allegation relates to the setting premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

This will include when a member of staff is alleged to have:

- ☐ behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- ☐ possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- ☐ behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the owner, registered person or DSCO

The Local Authority Officer (LAO), CIW and the RSCB will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- ☐ The LAO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- ☐ If as an individual you feel this will not be taken seriously or are worried about the allegation getting back to the person in question then it is your duty to inform the LAO yourself directly
- ☐ A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LAO, CIW, RSCB) to determine how this will be handled
- ☐ The setting will follow all instructions from the CIW and RSCB and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- ☐ Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LAO support and advice
- ☐ The setting reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation. Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliant with the law.
- ☐ All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- ☐ Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- ☐ Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. CIW will be notified immediately of this decision. The setting will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for barring consideration
- ☐ All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary re-investigation
- ☐ The setting retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- ☐ Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- ☐ Counselling will be available for any member of the setting who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the setting and the parents.
- ☐ A return to work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident, this may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

If a member of the team feels that the allegation had not been taken seriously or feels they wish to make an allegation outside the setting, they should contact the LAO directly and the setting supports this by providing this number and the NSPCC Whistleblowing number in this policy and in the staff area.

Monitoring children's attendance

We are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern.

Parents should please inform the setting prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the setting on the day so the setting management are able to account for a child's absence.

If a child has not arrived at setting within one hour of their normal start time the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

Looked after children

As part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this we ask that we are informed of:

- ☐ the legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- ☐ contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)
- ☐ the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- ☐ the details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- ☐ any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Please refer to the Looked After Children policy for further details.

Staffing and volunteering

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the setting to care for children and who has an enhanced check with barring list check (children) from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We do not allow volunteers to be alone with children or any other adult who may be present in the setting regardless of whether or not they have a DBS certificate.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the setting. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LAO (local authority officer), the local authority children's services team, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and CIW to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

Ongoing suitability of staff is monitored through:

- ☐ regular supervisions
- ☐ peer observations

- ☐ annual declaration of staff suitability
- ☐ safeguarding competencies
- ☐ regular review of DBS using the online update service

Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have named persons within the setting who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinate child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinators (DSCO), there is always at least one designated person on duty during all opening hours of the setting.

These designated persons will receive comprehensive training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year.

If the staff feel that a safeguarding concern is not being taken seriously within the setting, we encourage them to call the LSCB or the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline in order to protect the children in their care.

The setting DSCO's liaise with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the local authority children's social care team, undertakes specific training, including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge update of all staff on the team.

The Designated Safeguarding/child protection Co-ordinator (DSCO) at the setting is: **Abby Jacques-Clare**.

The role of the DSCO:

- ☐ Ensure that the settings safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed and developed in line with current guidance and develop staff understanding of the settings safeguarding policies.
- ☐ Take the lead on responding to information from the staff team relating to child protection concerns
- ☐ Provide advice, support and guidance on an on-going basis to staff, students and volunteers.
- ☐ To identify children who may need early help or who are at risk of abuse
- ☐ To help staff to ensure the right support is provided to families
- ☐ To liaise with local authority and other agencies with regard to child protection concerns
- ☐ Ensure the setting is meeting the requirements of the EYFS Safeguarding requirements
- ☐ To ensure policies are in line with the Local Safeguarding procedures and details.
- ☐ Disseminate practice, s and updates to legislation to ensure all staff are kept up to date with safeguarding practices.
- ☐ To manage and monitor accident, incident and existing injury's and ensure accurate and appropriate records are kept.

- ☐ Attend meetings with the child key person
- ☐ Attend case conferences and external safeguarding meetings as requested by external agencies.

The Setting safeguards children and staff by;

- ☐ We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- ☐ Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and are given guidance to challenge any incorrect information
- ☐ We give staff members/volunteers and students regular opportunities during supervisions and having an open door policy to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as whether anyone they live with in a household has committed an offence or been involved in an incident that means they are disqualified from working with children
- ☐ This information is also stated within every contract for members of staff, of which they must sign 2 copies, one for the employer, one to retain their own records
- ☐ We request DBS checks on a **3 yearly** basis/or we use the DBS update service to recheck staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children on the same basis and with the individuals consent
- ☐ We abide by the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and any CIW/Estyn guidance in respect of obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- ☐ We ensure we receive at least two written references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us
- ☐ All students will have enhanced DBS checks with barring list check (children) conducted on them before their placement starts
- ☐ Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- ☐ We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern by complying with the duty to refer that individual to the DBS
- ☐ We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- ☐ All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- ☐ As a staff team we will be fully aware of how to safeguard the whole setting environment and be aware of potential dangers on the setting boundaries such as drones, Pokémon hotspots, strangers lingering. We will ensure the children remain safe at all times

- The Staff Behaviour Policy sits alongside this policy to enable us to monitor changes in behaviours that may cause concern. All staff sign up to this policy too to ensure any changes are reported to management so we are able to support the individual staff member and ensure the safety and care of the children is not compromised
- staff are made aware not to contact parents/carers and children through social media on their own personal social media accounts and they will report any such incidents to the management team to deal with.
- All staff have access to and comply with the whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner to named person (name), to CIW representative. We encourage a culture of openness and transparency and all concerns are taken seriously
- Signs of inappropriate staff behaviour may include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images. This is not an exhaustive list, any changes in behaviour must be reported and acted upon immediately
- All staff attend regular supervision meetings where opportunities are made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any need for further support
- The deployment of staff within the setting allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

We also operate a Phones and Other Electronic Devices and Social Media policy which states how we will keep children safe from these devices whilst at setting. This also links to our Online Safety policy.

Our setting has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the owner/DSCO/registered person at the earliest opportunity.

Early help services

When a child and/or family would benefit from support but doesn't meet the threshold for Local Authority Social Care Team, a discussion will take place with the family around Early help services.

Early Help provides support as soon as a concern/ area of need emerges, helping to improve outcomes and prevent escalation onto Local Authority services. Sometimes concerns about a child may not be of a safeguarding nature and relate more to their individual family circumstances. The setting will work in partnership with parents/carers to identify any early help services that would benefit your child or your individual circumstances, with your consent, this may include family support, foodbank support, counselling or parenting services.

Employees, students or volunteers of the setting or any other person living or working on the setting premises

We have a Staff Behaviour Policy in place that supports us to monitor staff and changes in their character. Staff are aware of the need to disclose changes to circumstance and use the

whistle blowing policy where required.

We also operate a Phones and Other Electronic Devices and Social Media policy which states how we will keep children safe from these devices whilst at setting. This also links to our Online Safety policy.

Online Safety

We take the safety of our children very seriously and this includes their online safety. Please refer to the Online Safety policy for details on this.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the setting manager or Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO). This record should include:

- ☐ Child's name
- ☐ Child's address
- ☐ Age of the child and date of birth
- ☐ Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- ☐ Exact words spoken by the child
- ☐ Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- ☐ Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses
- ☐ Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- ☐ Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

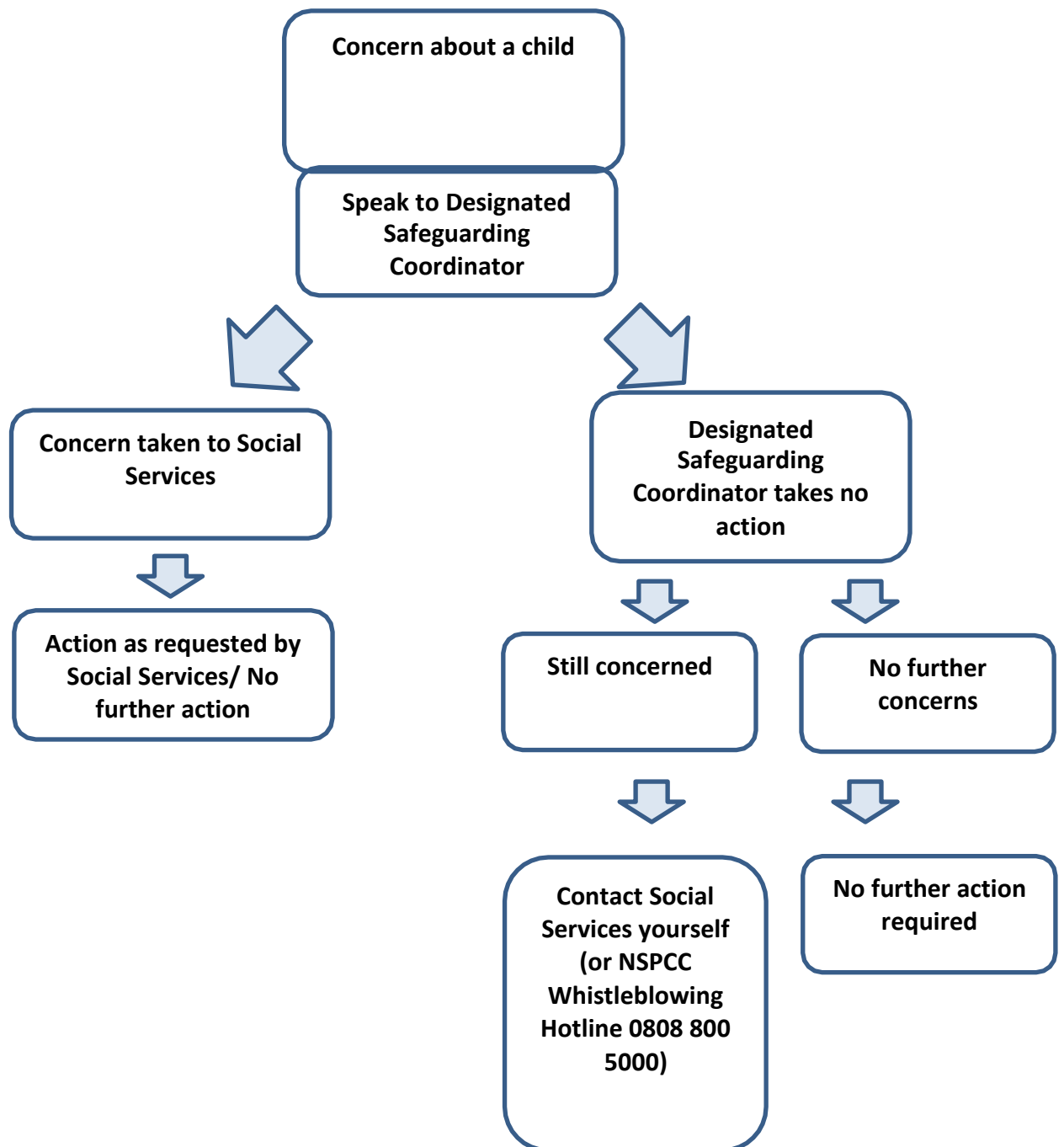
These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the *manager/*DSCO/*supervisor, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

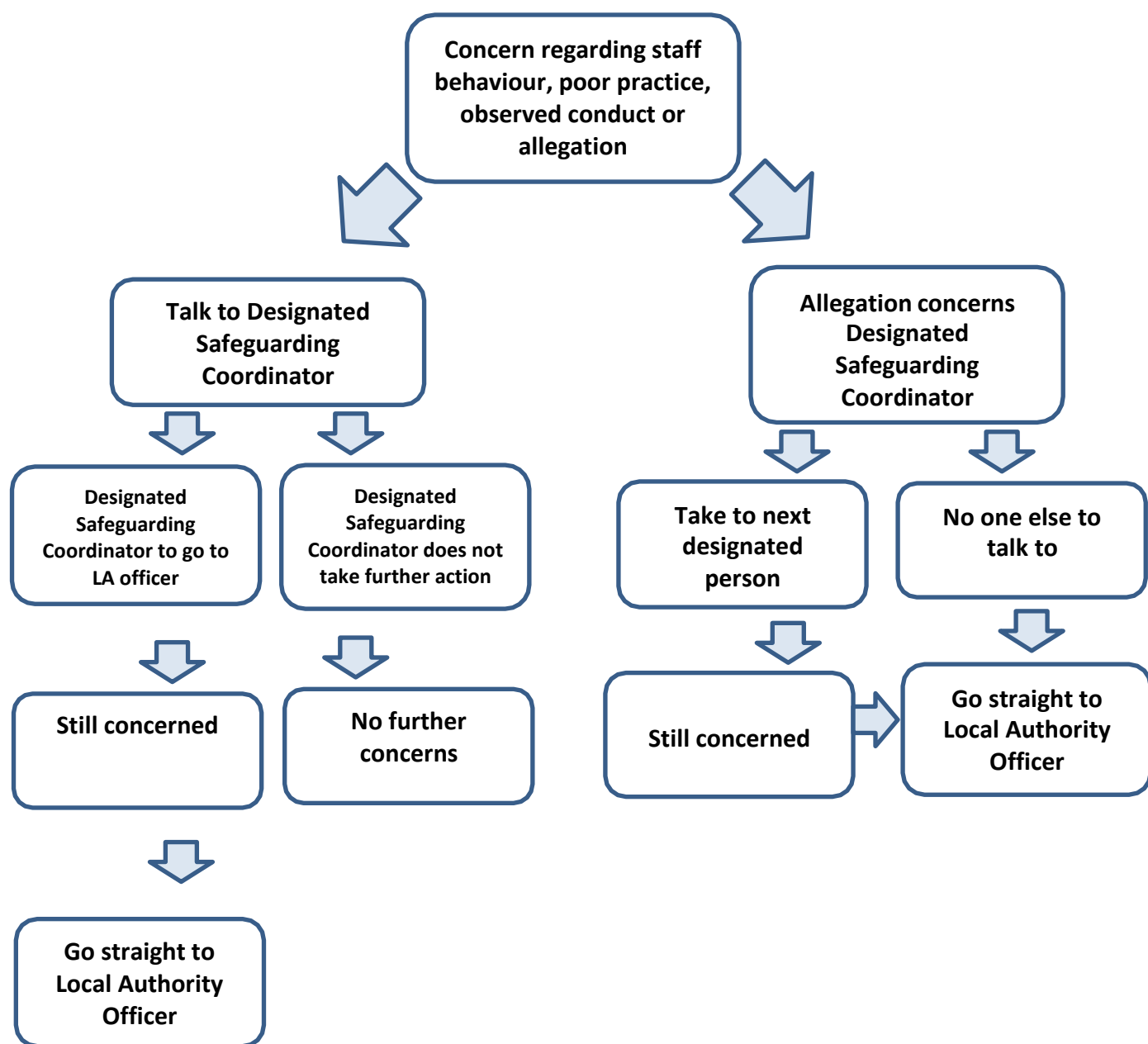
It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the LSCB and CIW. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The setting expects all members of staff to co-operate with the LSCB and CIW in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent's or staff's supposed or actual behaviour.

Child Protection flowchart – concern about a child



Child Protection flowchart – concern about a member of staff



This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the setting	Date for review
April 2024	Abby Jacques-Clare	April 2025