



Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

We recognise that safeguarding, and child protection is an essential part of our duty of care to all children and all staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can develop. We understand that safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of all children is everyone's responsibility and everyone has a role to play in protecting children. We recognise that our setting is part of a wider safeguarding system for children and work closely with other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and will consider the wishes of, and at all times, what is in the best interests of each child.

Definitions

'**Safeguarding**' is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) as;

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

'**Child Protection**' is the intervention that occurs when children have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

'**Child**' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

'**Parent**' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, step parents and foster carers.

'**Staff**' or '**members of staff**' refers to the staff in this setting.

Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to;

- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to demonstrate our commitment to keeping children safe;
- Provide all employees with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm;
- Provide stakeholders (parents, for example) with clear information relating to our safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- Ensure that all staff understand, can recognise and can respond to the indicators of abuse; and
- Ensure that children are protected from maltreatment or harm.

We are committed to the following principles;

- All children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Children should feel safe and secure.
- We are all responsible for keeping children safe and have a responsibility to act if we think a child is at risk of harm.
- Working with other agencies is essential to promote safeguarding and to protect children from harm.
- Early help and providing support to families and/or children as soon as a problem emerges is essential to improving outcomes for children and families.

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Our safeguarding aims are to;

- work to identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm or abuse and act to protect them;
- work with relevant services and agencies to ensure that children are protected from harm;
- provide a caring environment for children, which is safe and secure;
- teach children how to keep themselves safe;
- ensure that we adhere to safer recruitment guidance and legislation, deal promptly with allegations of abuse against staff and take bullying and harassment seriously;
- train staff effectively in all safeguarding issues and in their responsibilities for identifying and protecting children that are or may be at risk of harm;
- ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead Amy Garton undertakes appropriate training and updates it regularly;
- recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse, but be aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to special educational needs or disabilities;
- maintain a robust recording system for any safeguarding or child protection information; and to
- regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that children are protected to the best of our ability.

Statutory Framework

We adhere to the following statutory guidance;

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018);
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017).

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Amy Garton.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
- Train all staff on safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Liaise with the Local Authority and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)';
- Identify if children may benefit from early help;
- Make referrals to Coventry's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where children are at risk of significant harm.
- Liaise with Coventry City Council Prevent Officer for general support or advice.
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- Undertake appropriate training to equip them with up to date knowledge and skills to carry out their role;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for safeguarding files;
- Attend multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings as necessary;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding';
- Liaise with the Local Authority CQRAs regarding safeguarding cases and issues as appropriate.

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Role of staff

All staff play an important role because they work closely with children and are in a position to identify concerns early in order to provide help for children. All staff:

- Have a responsibility to maintain a safe environment for all children;
- Should know what to do if a child tells them that he/she is being abused or neglected;
- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse;
- Will be made aware of; the safeguarding and child protection policy and systems that support safeguarding and child protection;
- Will receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities;
- Should know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure;
- Will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in it;
- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care (through the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- Should be prepared to follow whistleblowing procedures or make referrals to MASH and/or the LADO if they have concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Should be prepared to make referrals to MASH if they do not believe the Designated Safeguarding Lead has responded appropriately to concerns about children.

Types of Abuse

As outlined above, all staff will be trained in indicators of abuse and should be able to recognise signs of abuse. We recognise that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are complex and can rarely be covered by one label. Abuse can take many forms and can involve directly inflicting harm on a child, or failing to protect a child from harm. The four main types of abuse that staff are trained to recognise are;

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect.

Types of abuse (Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018)

Type of abuse	Information
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or

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Type of abuse	Information
	protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care (through the MASH) and any member of staff can make this referral. Staff should refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead first, but in exceptional circumstances may be required to make a referral themselves.

Staff, parents and the wider community should report any concerns that they have about the welfare of children, however minor or seemingly insignificant, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We recognise that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, we will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child;

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

We recognise that abuse can take many different forms. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy will also receive training on the following issues and action will be taken if we believe that a child is at risk of or is the victim of;

- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- child sexual exploitation;
- emotional abuse;
- neglect;
- bullying, including cyber- or online-bullying;
- criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines);
- domestic abuse;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- faith-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- gangs or youth violence;
- gender-based violence;
- hate;
- honour-based violence;

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- radicalisation;
- relationship abuse;
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including peer on peer abuse);
- sexting;
- trafficking and/or modern slavery.

Any child residing with someone other than an immediate family member for more than 28 consecutive days is considered to be privately fostered. We will refer any children who are living in a private fostering arrangement to the Local Authority.

We are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have “due regard” to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. We will refer any concerns to Channel and to the MASH.

Although anyone can make a referral to Children’s Social Care, where possible there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead makes a referral to children’s social care or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories.
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- Any significant changes in a child’s presentation;
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- Any disclosures of abuse that children have made;

There will be occasions where a child discloses abuse directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of staff. If this happens, the member of staff will;

- listen carefully to the child and believe what they are saying;
- not promise confidentiality, as information may need to be passed on so the child and family can receive additional support;
- only ask for clarification if something is unclear and will not ask ‘leading’ questions;
- report disclosure to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible, certainly by the end of the day;
- only discuss the issue with colleagues that need to know about it; and
- will write up the disclosure for the child’s records.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make a decision about the action that needs to be taken following a member of staff raising a concern about a child, or following a direct disclosure. The DSL may;

- Manage support for the child by working with parents directly;
- Seek advice from the social worker advice line in the MASH;
- Suggest an Early Help Assessment to provide multi-agency help to a family;
- In cases where children are deemed to be at significant risk of harm, the DSL will refer cases to the MASH for statutory intervention. Parental consent will be obtained wherever possible before referring cases to the MASH. However, if we are worried that telling parents will mean the child is at greater risk of harm, we may do this without informing them.

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- If parents do not consent to a referral but the DSL believes that a child is at significant risk of harm, a referral will still be made to children's social care.

For further information about the Coventry Safeguarding Children Protections's 'Right Help, Right Time' guidance, which we will use to make decisions about protecting children, please visit <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/righthelprighttime>.

See appendix 1 for flowchart of actions that will be taken where there are concerns about a child (taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018).

In cases where we become aware that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on a female below the age of 18, we have a duty to report this to the police without delay and will do so.

We understand that both adults and other children can perpetrate abuse, and peer on peer abuse is taken very seriously. Peer on peer abuse can include bullying, cyber-bullying, physical abuse, sexting, sexual violence and/or harassment and initiation/hazing ceremonies. We recognise that safeguarding issues can manifest as peer on peer abuse.

We will ensure all staff understand what is meant by peer on peer abuse.

In the event that an allegation of peer on peer abuse is made, we will investigate this fully.

In the event that an allegation of peer on peer abuse is made, victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported appropriately.

We will never pass off peer on peer abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery ('sexting')

'Sexting' refers to any sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery between children. This includes;

- A person under the age of 18 creating and sharing sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18;
- A person under the age of 18 sharing sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult;
- A person under the age of 18 being in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

Any incidents or suspected incidents of 'sexting' should be reported to the DSL without delay. Once reported to the DSL, the DSL will decide on the appropriate course of action.

The DSL recognises that safeguarding incidents can be associated with factors outside the setting and may take place outside of setting. We will always consider contextual safeguarding factors when responding to safeguarding incidents.

Any incidents of 'sexting' involving the following will result in a MASH and/or Police referral;

- Adult involvement;
- Coercion or blackmail;
- Children under the age of 13;
- Extreme, or violent content;
- Immediate risk of harm.

Staff will not view images or videos on pupil devices. See Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy and E-Safety policy for further information.

We will work with parents as necessary if their child is involved in 'sexting'.

We operate a culture of safeguarding and young people should feel confident to disclose if they have sent an inappropriate image of themselves.

To raise concerns about children, members of staff should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by telephone to discuss the referral. They should then complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and submit this to the MASH. The school will follow up referrals if we do not receive feedback from social care.

MASH Telephone number: 02476 788 555

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MASH online referral form: <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren>

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 02476 832 222

Prevent/Channel Referrals: Refer to MASH and to CTU_GATEWAY@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

If a child's situation does not appear to be improving following a referral, the DSL may re-refer the child. We will also consider using the [CSCP's Escalation Policy](#) to ensure that our concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the child.

We are committed to supporting families as soon as possible when a problem arises. It is more effective to support a family through early help than reacting to a problem later. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers have a role to play in safeguarding children. We will work with our local family hub to support families in the community to improve outcomes for children.

Record-Keeping

A written record of all safeguarding and/or child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made will be kept in individual children's files. These will be locked in the office filing cabinet.

Information required to keep children safe will be shared with other agencies.

We will seek at least two emergency contacts for every child.

We will only take photographs of children when consent has been sought from parents and when the reason for doing so is clear and communicated to parents. Images of children will not be stored on personal mobile phones.

All data processed is done so in line with the General Data Protection Guidelines. Please see the following policies for additional information;

Online Safety

Staff and children's use of the internet will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parental controls have been activated on networks to prevent access to inappropriate material.

Parents will be informed if children attempt to access inappropriate material online in the setting.

Any concerns about children's online activity should be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All staff will ensure that their social media profiles are private and it is prohibited for these staff to be 'friends' or 'follow' parents on social media.

Any contact between parents and staff should be using the appropriate channels.

Safer Recruitment

We are committed to providing children with a safe environment, in which they can learn. We take safer recruitment seriously and all staff are subject to the following checks;

- Identity check;
- DBS clearance;
- Barred List check;
- Reference check (two references required);
- Right to work in the UK check;
- Further checks for those who have lived outside the UK;
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 checks (as required).

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A record of all checks on members of staff will be held in their personal folders and on the single central record for the setting.

All new staff will be required to obtain DBS clearance. We reserve the right to re-check DBS clearance for any assistants where information is received that indicates that they may pose a risk to children.

We take proportionate decisions on whether to check individuals beyond what is required.

All safer recruitment practices comply with statutory guidance.

Procedures are in place to ensure that only those who have been subject to the necessary checks have unsupervised contact with children.

Allegations against Persons in a Position of Trust

We take all allegations against persons in a position of trust seriously and will manage them in line with CSCP Guidance, 'Managing Allegations against Staff and Persons in a Position of Trust'. Persons in a position of trust include all staff, students, volunteers and those living and/or working on the premises.

Concerns should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (Angie Bishop) and can be reported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff, parents or members of the public. See appendix 2 for the 'Professional Abuse Flowchart'.

If a child has suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral or referral to the police will also be made.

In the instances where an allegation is dealt with internally, the Local Authority designated officer will provide information and support in managing the allegation.

A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or Ofsted will be made if a person in a position of trust is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns, or would have been removed if they had not have resigned.

Whistleblowing

We operate a culture of safeguarding and all staff should report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or our safeguarding processes to Amy Garton.

All concerns will be taken seriously.

In the event that an individual is unable to raise an issue with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they should contact Ofsted for additional guidance on whistleblowing procedures.

Further information can be found in 'Managing Allegation Guidance for Adults who work in Early Years Settings and Childcare Providers in Coventry'.

Children Looked-After

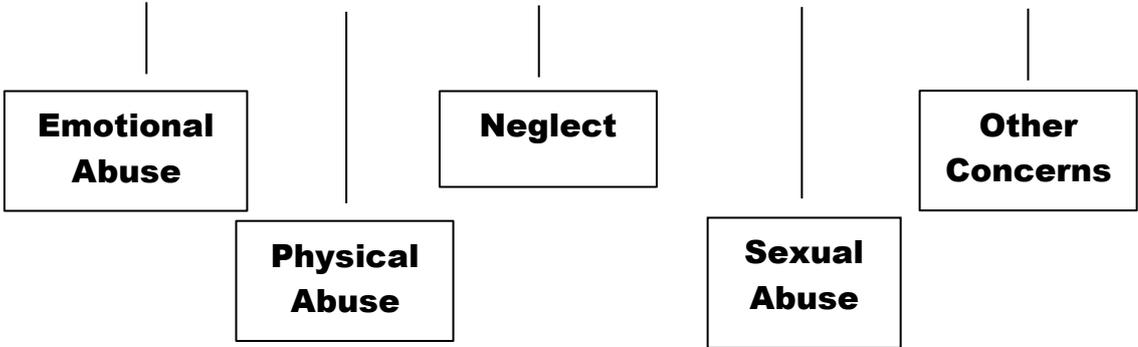
The most common reason for children to be looked-after is because they have experienced abuse and/or neglect. We recognise that children looked after may have additional vulnerabilities and are committed to working with other agencies to ensure that Looked-After and previously Looked-After children receive the best possible support and care.

We are committed to working with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children.

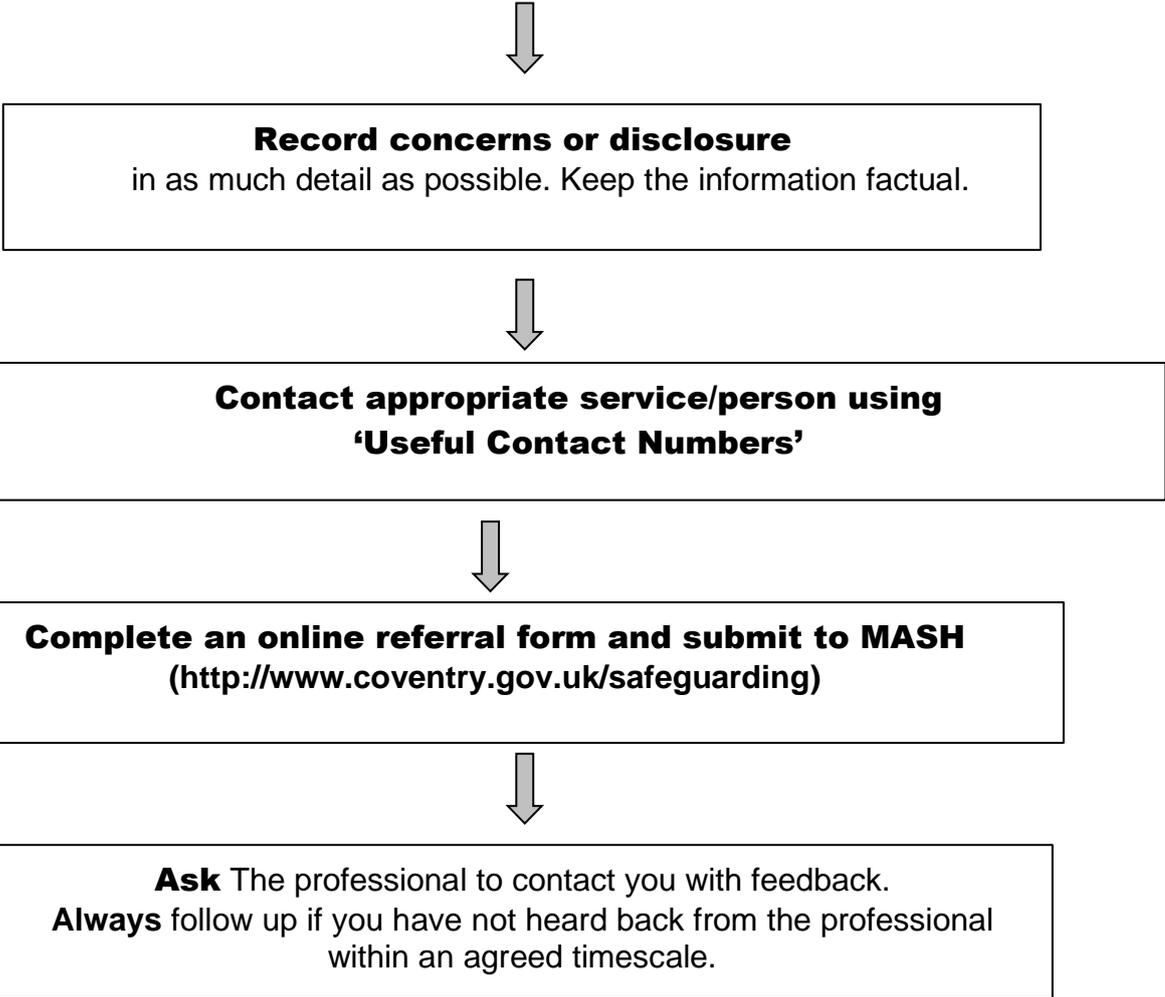
Actions where there are concerns about a child

Children have an absolute right to be safe and live without fear

Concerned about a child's safety?



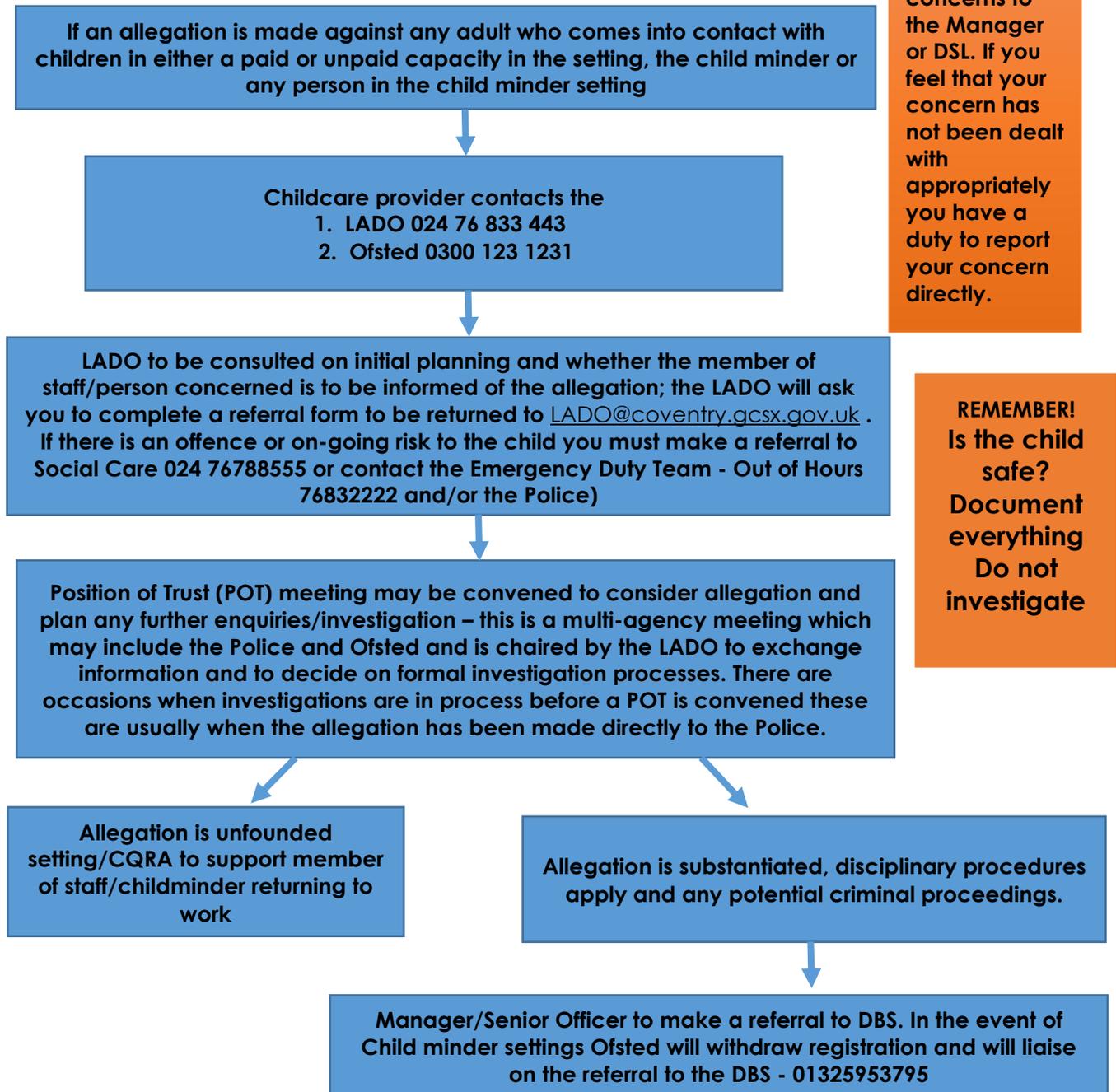
What Do I Do?



Appendix 2 Professional Abuse Flow Chart

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children.



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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team, Owner & Pre-school Leader, or in line with legislation.

Next review date: November 2020