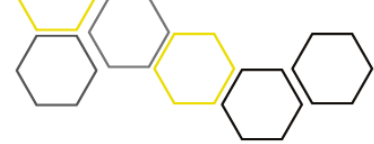


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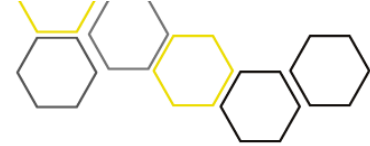


Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy



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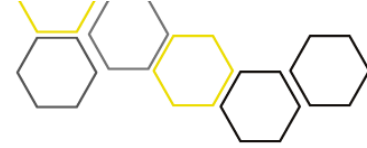
Control Record

Review History

Version	Date Reviewed	Brief Summary of Change	Owner's name
1	March 2021	New policy developed.	SLT
2	August 2023	Amendments: Clarified reporting process for a parent/guardian reporting child abuse.	SLT

Overview

Policy ID	14.2
Author	SLT
Publication date:	12/09/23
Approved by:	Board
Effective from:	12/09/23
For attention of and action by:	Board, Staff and Volunteers
Review date:	12/09/26



Purpose of Policy

Start360 (the organisation) and staff have a legal and moral duty, as per The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, working with children and young people to provide the best possible care for them in a safe and supportive environment.

This policy and procedure set out guidance in line with The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 to ensure good practice is always adopted throughout the organisation. We will ensure that the welfare of children and young people is treated as a priority and all children and young people are treated equally and that their views are heard.

There are five main elements to this policy:

- Enhance children and young people's self-esteem, self-confidence, assertiveness, communication skills, personal safety and respect for others by developing appropriate skills to make reasoned, informed choices, risk assessments, judgements and decision.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases, of abuse and putting the necessary support plans in place.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children, and young people.
- Ensuring all staff are provided with accurate and up to date information about children and young people and safeguarding issues.
- Develop effective relationship with all relevant statutory agencies.

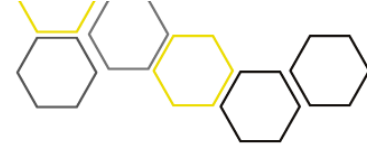
Good Practice

Good practice at Start360 when working with children and young people means that:

- That Start360 identifies a person with designated children and young people safeguarding responsibility within the organisation.
- That a planning meeting/telephone call takes place addressing responsibilities, health and safety, permissions for children and young people in relation to safeguarding and protection.
- That Start360 engages in effective recruitment, including appropriate vetting of staff and volunteers.
- That Start360 has the correct contacts with local authority social services, in case a concern has to be reported to them.

Good practice in a physical environment where there is contact with children and young people means:

- Ensuring that during groups sessions that a responsible adult is always present, therefore meeting their responsibility for ensuring the safety of those in the setting. This needs to be someone who knows the children and young people well and is able to observe their behaviour and any changes.
- That risks are constantly monitored throughout group sessions.



Good practice in physical contact means:

- That staff maintain a safe and appropriate distance from group participants.
- Only touching participants when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Seeking agreement of participants prior to any physical contact.
- Making sure disabled participants are informed of and comfortable with any necessary physical contact.

Good practice in interpersonal dealings means:

- Treating all children and young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each participant first, before achieving goals.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Making the groups sessions fun, enjoyable and promoting equality.
- Being an excellent role model for dealings with other people.
- Recognising that children or young people with disabilities may be even more vulnerable to abuse than other children or young people.

Good practice in managing sensitive information means:

- Having a policy and set of procedures for taking, using and storing photographs or images of children and young people.
- Careful monitoring and use of web-based materials and activities.
- Agreed procedures for reporting any suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Ensuring confidentiality in order to protect the rights of employees and volunteers, including safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided on staff/ volunteers as part of the recruitment process. (Data Protection Act 1998).

Good practice in professional development means:

- Keeping up to date with health and safety.
- Being informed about legislation and policies for protection of children and young people.
- Undertaking relevant development and training.



The Role of The Child Protection Officer

- Provide training to all Start360 staff including temporary staff and volunteers.
- Being able to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff.
- Responsibility for record keeping for all child protection concerns.
- Making referrals to social services or PSNI Public Protection Units.
- Liaising with ISA designated Child Protection Officers.
- Keeping the Chief Executive informed.
- Responsibility for the development and updating of Start360s Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy.
- Promoting a child protection safeguarding ethos within the organization.
- Reporting annually to the Board regarding child protection.
- Maintaining all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the child protection officer and Chief Executive).

Please note the Child Protection Officers in the organisation are Stephen Barr – 07545929260, and Kathleen Grego – 07545929259.

What is Child Abuse?

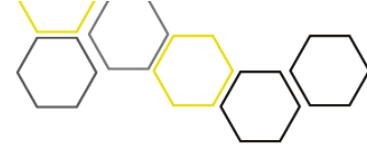
The following definitions of child abuse are taken from 'Cooperating to Safeguard Children', Volume 6 of the Children (NI) Order regulations and Guidance.

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to children or young people, or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or a cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.



Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of children or young people such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the children and young people's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children or young people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children and young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children and young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and substance misuse may expose children, young people and vulnerable adults to emotional abuse.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing children or young people and vulnerable adults to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children or young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet children or young people's physical/, emotional and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child or young person from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive.

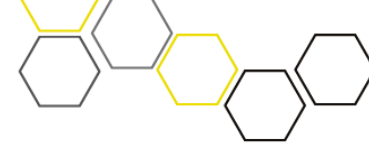
Domestic Violence

It is now recognised that children and young people who live in an atmosphere of domestic violence may be at risk. Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Bullying

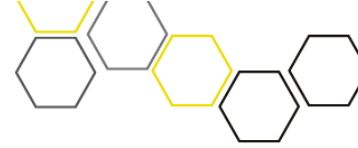
Although bullying is not defined as abuse, in its more extreme form it would be regarded as a form of abuse. It can take many forms, but Kidscape identifies the main types as:

- Emotional – excluding, being unfriendly.
- Physical – hitting, kicking, theft.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic – because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm. Spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyberbullying (e.g. text message, picture/ video clip and phone call bullying via mobiles, email, website bullying).



Types of Abuse and Physical Indicators

TYPES OF ABUSE	PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS
PHYSICAL ABUSE	Unexplained or reoccurring burns or bruises Unexplained lacerations Untreated injuries Human bite marks, bald spots or welts	Aggressive or withdrawn behaviour Improbable excuses for injuries Self-destructive tendencies Fearing or being reluctant to go home Wearing clothing inappropriate to the weather – possibly concealing part of the body
NEGLECT	Poor state of clothing; inappropriate dress Poor personal hygiene Untreated medical problems Constant hunger	Low self esteem Inability to form social relationships Compulsive begging, stealing or scavenging Tiredness, listlessness
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	Attention-seeking behaviour Poor relationships with peers Sudden speech disorder Signs of mutilation Signs of solvent abuse (smell of glue, drowsiness, mouth sores) Wetting and soiling Extreme physical, mental or emotional signs, eating disorders, physical dysfunctions such as stooping or vomiting	Neurotic behaviour (thumb-sucking, rocking, hair twisting) Fear (often disproportionate) of new situations Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations Reluctance for parental involvement or liaison
SEXUAL ABUSE	Difficulty walking or sitting Stained. Torn or bloody underclothes Injury, soreness or bleeding in genital or anal areas or in throat	Chronic depression and/ or suicidal tendencies Poor negotiation of social relationships Poor self-esteem, lack of confidence and self-devaluation Inappropriate or adult language or behaviours (sexually explicit language, seductive or precocious behaviour) Role reversal, displaying disproportionate concern for siblings Outbursts of anger or hysteria



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Exploitation	Power and dominant control of another person/s Manipulation Child labour Servitude Negative Hygiene Trafficking Financial Fraud CSE	The intentional ill-treatment or manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child/young person, to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child/young person, for personal gain.
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Recognising that Children and Young People Might be Experiencing Abuse

Determining whether abuse has occurred or not is a difficult task even for experts dealing with children and young people. Whilst it is not the role of staff to determine whether abuse has happened, you are in a position to notice injuries or hear what children and young people are telling you.

Abuse of Children/ young people may come to your attention in a number of different ways:

- Concerns about appearance, behaviour or physical condition.
- Other children or young people may bring something to your attention.
- Another adult may bring something to your attention.

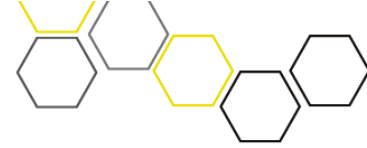
Signs to be alert to:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries on a regular basis.
- Sexually explicit language or actions if not age appropriate.
- Sudden changes in behaviour or the way a pupil presents in class.
- Reluctance to go home or running away from home – attendance problems.
- Something children or young people may say, e.g., inconsistencies in explanations.
- A change that is noticed over time, e.g., losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Parents show little or no concern about the child or show little warmth or empathy.
- Self-Harming.
- Eating disorders – weight loss.
- Stealing/ lying, attention seeking.
- Low self-esteem.
- Children and young people's friends' express concern.
- Crying.

It is also important to remember that children, young people could display some or all of these signs and there may be a non-abusive reason behind them. On the other hand, children and young people may show no symptoms but you may feel that something isn't quite right.

If you have concerns about children or young people, it is your responsibility to report these to the designated Child Protection Officer who will then review the raised concerns.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and young people to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm. In these circumstances bullying should be considered as child abuse and treated as such



Who Abuses?

Most children and young people are abused by adults they know and trust. Abuse can happen within all sections of society and children and young people can be abused by family members, friends, peers and/or strangers. Perpetrators of abuse will use a variety of methods to gain access to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

How to Respond to a Disclosure

Receive

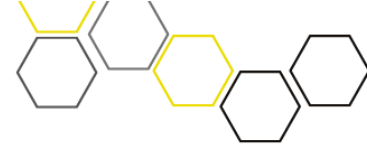
- Listen, DON'T interview for details, and try not to show shock or disbelief.
- Show and tell that child/young person that you are taking what they say seriously (Keep your own reservations for later – YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO GET IT WRONG).
- Make accurate notes using children and young people's own words.
- Feel privileged that children or young people have trusted you and has felt able to open up to you.

Reassure

- Reassure children and young people but do not never make promises that you may not be able to keep.
- Maintain confidentiality, explain that it is not possible to keep information a secret, but you will only tell those who will be able to protect children and young people.
- Stress that they are not to blame, and they are right to tell.
- Stay calm and ensure that the child or young person is safe and feels safe.

Respond

- Establish that abuse is suspected, without interrogating the child or young person.
- DO NOT ask leading questions, try to establish briefly the what, when, where and who BUT NOT the why or how.
- Do not make a judgmental comment about the alleged offender, the child may love him/her and may one day be reconciled.
- Explain what will happen next and to whom you have to talk.
- Keep in contact with the child or young person – he/ she trusted you will value your support.
- DO NOT rush.



Record

- Make notes at the time using the child's or young person's own words, without comments or translation and write up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy original notes – you may be asked later for these.
- Note the time, date and place.
- Record any non-verbal behaviour.
- In the case of physical abuse any injuries/ bruises may recorded on a diagram (do not ask them to show you or remove any clothing).

Report

- Report the information to the designated Start360 Child Protection Officer using the appropriate Disclosure Document (see Appendix 4).

If can be a worrying time when dealing with child protection issues and you may worry about whether you are doing the right thing or not. However, if you have any concern at all, this cannot be ignored. The long-term lasting effects of child abuse can be devastating on children and young people's adult life, the most serious effect is that the child or young person could die. We have a duty of care to protect children and young people from abuse.

Procedures For Reporting Suspected (Or Disclosed) Child Abuse

Parent or Guardian (see Appendix 1)

Any concerns a parent or guardian may have will be taken seriously; any concerns should be reported to the designated Child Protection Officer.

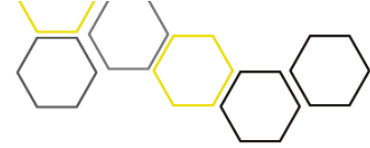
If you are reporting suspected or disclosed child abuse and this relates to the Child Protection Officer, please raise these concerns directly with the CEO.

At any time start360 would advocate parents and/or guardians may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit.

Where Start360 has concerns or has been given information by someone other than a member of Start360's staff (see Appendix 2)

Where staff become aware about concerns or are approached by a child or young person, they should not investigate, this is a matter for social services. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the appropriate Child Protection Officer, discuss the matter in full and make a full report, including any notes that have been made.

These notes should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to



the Child Protection Officer. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Child Protection Officer will decide whether in the best interest of the child or young person, if the matter needs to be referred to social services, if there are concerns that the child may be at risk, Start360 is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately. The Child Protection Officer will seek forward disclosures through appropriate Gateway Teams disclosure protocol. The safety of children and young people is our first priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Child Protection Officer will inform:

- Social Services – Gateway Teams appropriately

Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of Start360's staff (see Appendix 3)

If a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of Start360 staff, the Chief Executive and Designated Child Protection Officer must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Child Protection Officer). Where the matter is referred to Social Services/Police, the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with the child or young person and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services and or Police.

If a complaint is made against the Chief Executive, the Start360 Child Protection Officer must be informed immediately. The Start360 Board Chairperson will be informed and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

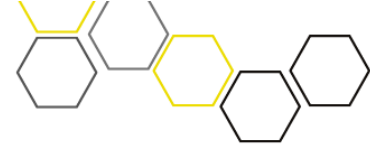
If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/ she has concerns about a child or young person or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the Start360 Child Protection Officer.

Where a complaint has been made about a volunteer (see Appendix 4)

Any complaint about the conduct of a person working at Start360 in a voluntary capacity should be treated in the same manner as complaints against a member of staff, and the above procedures followed.

Complaints Procedure

If you are not satisfied with the way in which a Child Protection complaint has been dealt with by the Start360 Child Protection Officer, please refer to our complaint's procedure.



Useful Telephone Numbers and Contacts

Gateway Teams

Belfast Trust

Tel: 028 9020 4550

South and East Belfast

Duty Social Worker Tel: 028 9020 4550 (Ormeau Road)

Out-of-hours emergency duty team Tel: 028 9056 5444

South Eastern Trust

Tel: 0300 1000 300

Out-of-hours: 028 9056 5444

Western Trust

Tel: 028 7131 4090

Southern Trust

Gateway Team, Craigavon – Tel: 028 3834 3011

Gateway Team, Newry – Tel: 028 3082 5152

Northern Trust

Gateway Service (0300 1234 333) gives options to contact appropriate Team.

Out-of-hours Emergency Social Work Service (028 9446 8833)



USEFUL WEBSITES

Anti bullying

- Bullying Online: www.bullying.co.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- Anti-bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk

First aid

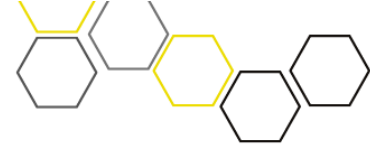
- British Red Cross: www.redcross.org.uk
- St John's Ambulance: www.sja.org.uk
- Department for Education: www.gov.uk/government/publications (Department for Education)

Protecting children online

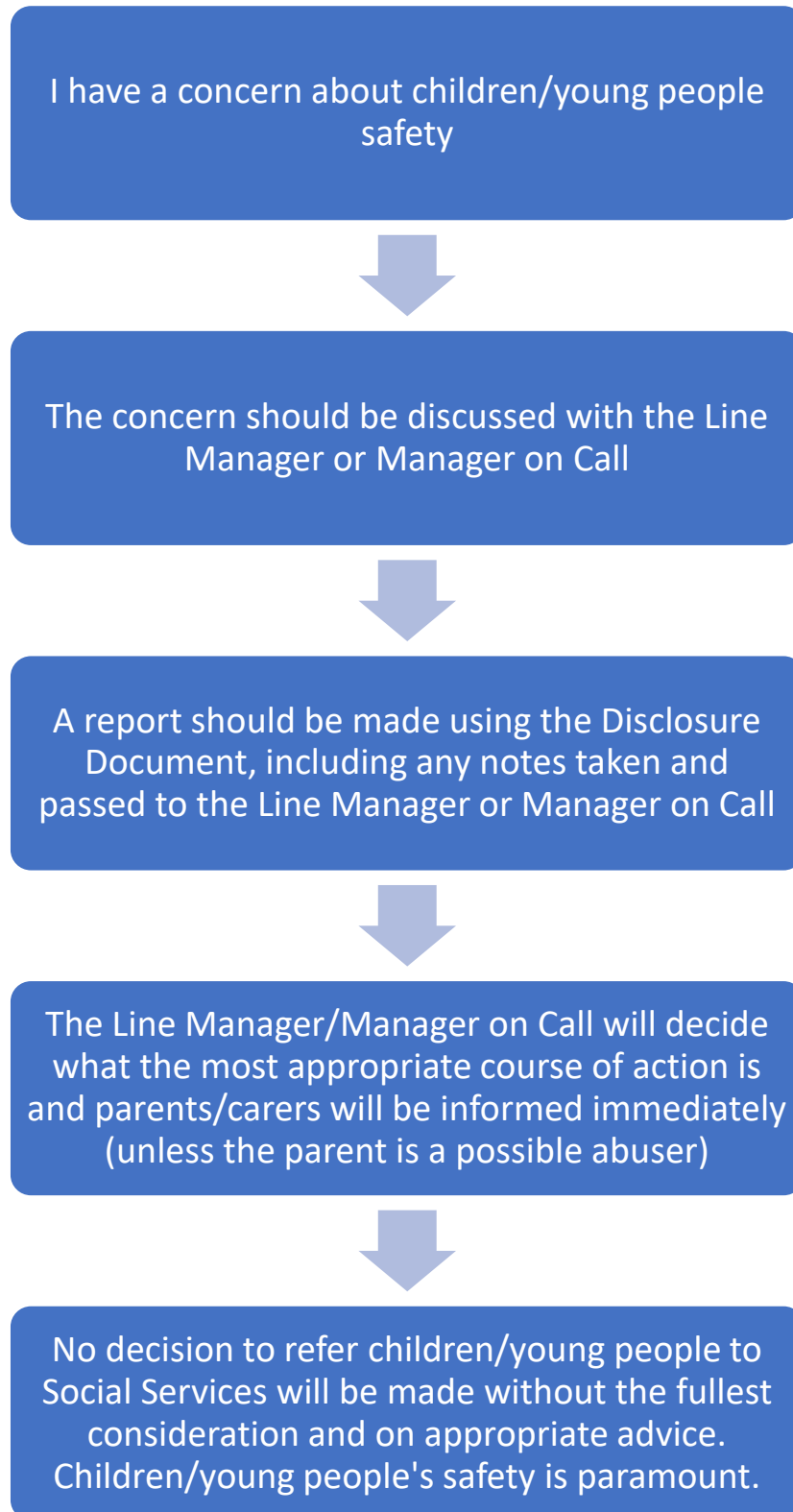
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP): www.ceop.police.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk
- Stop it Now! www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Department for Education: www.gov.uk/schools-colleges
- Get Safe Online www.getsafeonline.o

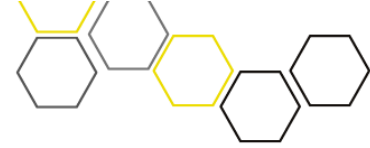
Appendix 1 – How to Report or Raise a Concern About Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult’s Protection (Parents)



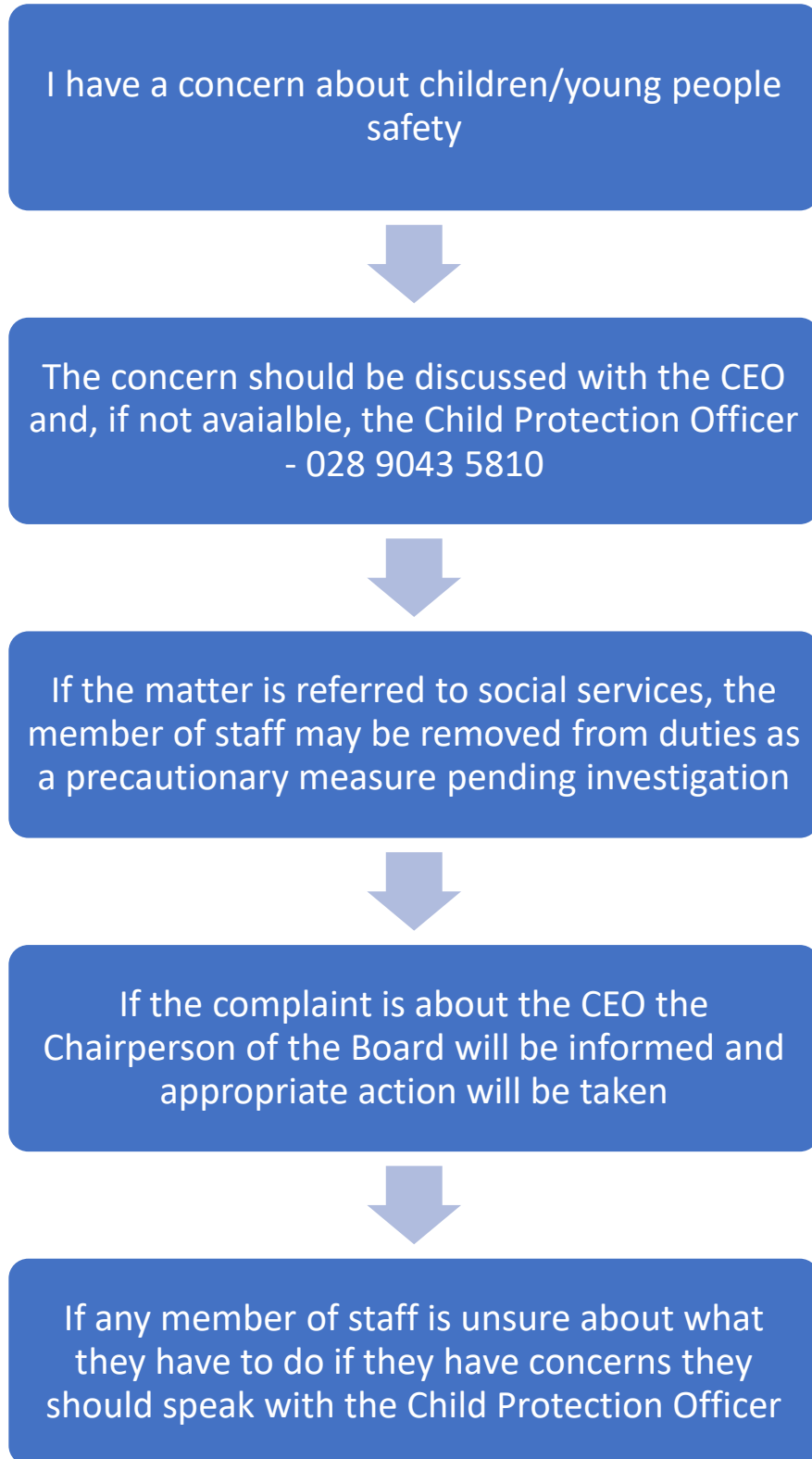


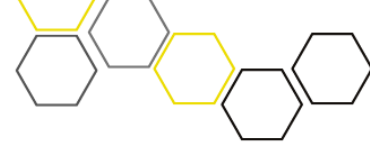
Appendix 2 - How to Report or Raise a Concern About Child Protection (Where Staff Have a Concern)





Appendix 3 - How to Report or Raise a Concern About Child Protection (Complaint About a Member of Staff)





Appendix 4 – Disclosure Document



Disclosure Document

Date	Time	Where disclosure occurred		
Staff member's Full Name	Name of Manager contacted	Names of Others contacted? (GP, S.S.etc)		
Client's Name	Age	Gender	Client referral ID	
Describe the nature of the Incident/Disclosure (facts only, in time order)				
Action Taken (e.g. which risk assessment was completed, is a safety contract in place, consult, who contacted, in time order)				
Other Agreed Action (Client/manager/staff member, other agency)				
Signed (staff member)Date...				
To be completed at next appointment	Agreed Action Complete?	YES	NO	
If not what remains outstanding?				
Signed (Staff member)			Date	

Signed (Manager)

Date