



**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS
POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GUIDANCE ON WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Policy Statement

1.1 Our Duty of Care

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures to be adopted by both councils in ensuring the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in its care.

Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils (the Councils) recognise that, whilst carrying out their normal duties, some members of staff and appointed volunteers are responsible for, or work with, children and young people. In most instances, this is very rewarding and satisfying work and plays an important role in helping them to develop social and physical skills. However, working for a District Council implies trust and respect which can manifest itself as a child feeling comfortable enough to disclose an incident of previous abuse or make it easier for someone in a responsible position to abuse that trust.

The Councils want to be certain that all the services they provide to children and young people, vulnerable adults, their families, parents and carers are designed to ensure that they are treated with respect and kept safe from harm. This document is designed to help employees and volunteers to fulfil this aim and set out procedures to cover the recruitment policy, standards of service and means of reporting concerns.

It is intended that all employees and volunteers working with children and young people, their families, parents and carers will receive appropriate training to assist them

- in the recognition of abuse
- to adopt sensible working practices
- to identify 'appointed persons' within the Councils, whom staff can contact about safeguarding issues.

For the purposes of this policy, as in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, a **child** is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

This is the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures to be used by all Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Council employees. It is the responsibility of all employees to implement the procedures. It is supplemented by essential reading as detailed in references at the back of the Policy.

1.2 Principles

The Councils recognise that:

- The welfare of children and young people, their families, parents and carers is the primary concern
- All children and young people whatever their age, ability, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have equal rights to protection from abuse
- It is the responsibility of the statutory agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns
- All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

1.3 Summary of The Councils' Responsibilities

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Every Child Matters is a set of reforms supported by the Children Act 2004. Its aim is for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

This means that every LA working with its partners and through children's trust partnerships are working to find out what works best for children and young people in its area and acting on it.

1.4 To achieve the above the Councils will:

- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children and young people, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people and disabled adults and celebrate their results and achievements
- It is a shared multi agency responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns
- Require employees to adopt and abide by this Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Good Practice Guidelines (at induction)
- Respond to allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures
- Monitor and evaluate the policy annually or in the light of any changes to the Councils or any significant incident
- Ensure that all contractors/partners working with the Council meets the safeguarding standards expected by the Councils

1.5 Areas of Specific Responsibility

Listed below are some services which have a more direct relationship with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families. However child protection concerns may be raised and referrals made by members of any team which come into contact with these groups with via home visits or in a public reception. In the event of a safeguarding investigation either district council may be involved in any enquiry if there has been involvement in any aspect of service provision to the child or family involved.

The Assistant chief Executive and the Head of Strategic Housing and Tenant Services hold key roles of responsibility for both councils, championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. They also ensure attendance at appropriate regional and county multi agency meetings.

The Services for All group also maintain an overview of safeguarding to ensure ongoing compliance.

1.5.1 Housing

The Housing Options and Homelessness teams at the Councils are very often the first point of contact with vulnerable families and as such, over the years they have amassed a wealth of experience in recognising potential safeguarding issues. They have a sound track record of making referrals to the appropriate agencies and flagging up any issues of concern about families or individual children.

The Housing Management team at Waveney has a proactive role in engaging with council tenants and their families on a daily basis across the whole of the district. There is contact with children of tenants and young people through visits to properties, or seeing them on estates. We work with statutory and voluntary agencies in dealing with issues arising from these two groups, with the main purpose of ensuring they behave in an acceptable way and do not breach tenancy obligations. In this way we can ensure that appropriate support can be directed as necessary.

1.5.2 Community Development/Community and Economic Services

The two teams work proactively to encourage young people to get involved, it is at the heart of community development to encourage all ages and backgrounds to work together. We recognise that working WITH young people can only be positive.

A significant source of the team's involvement is through the work of the Anti Social Behaviour Unit. This is the multi-agency group that works to provide a coherent inter-agency approach to the anti-social activities of all sectors of society, including people under the age of 18. The Youth Offending Service, Suffolk Police, the Education Welfare Service and Social Services are represented at the group and take a very active part in making decisions affecting clients under 18 years, whether they are the victims or perpetrators of the behaviour in question. (See 1.5.5 below).

1.5.3 Sports and Leisure Development

The Sports and Leisure Development Teams provides opportunities for young people to engage in physical activity. It offers grassroots through to performer activity for every level of athlete. It is every child's right to expect a professional and safe sporting experience and the teams work with community clubs in developing policies and procedures to support its aims.

1.5.4 Licensing

Virtually all of the legislation where the team has an administration or an enforcement role makes reference to children and their well-being or safety. In particular, the Licensing Act 2003 has as one of its four objectives, "the protection of children from harm" whilst the police act as the responsible authority in these matters the team will report any concerns to the appropriate person or organisation.

The Gambling Act 2005 again makes reference to children in the third of its licensing objectives namely "protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling" again the team will pass on any concerns of which they become aware to the relevant person or organisation.

All of the drivers who apply to become licensed Hackney or Private Hire Drivers must supply a satisfactory enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check. There is an appropriate system in place to deal with drivers who are convicted of any offences during the term of their licence.

Appropriate members of the teams will receive level 1 training, as deemed necessary according to the way in which the service is delivered.

1.5.5 Environmental Services

The extent and nature of the involvement of this service with children and young people varies greatly according to the circumstances of our involvement. They may be victims or perpetrators.

The Councils' activities occasionally have a more direct effect on people under 18 years of age. Certain criminal sanctions may, in law, be applied to children as young as 10 years old. In general, government guidance recommends consultation with the Youth Offending Service and the Police to agree special procedures to be adopted in such cases. These are necessary to ensure compliance with legal duties regarding the safety and welfare of children under the Children Act 2004. We fulfill this requirement by referring all matters relating to people under the age of 18 to the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, which enables partner agencies to identify any issues and provide appropriate advice. The Councils' enforcement policies reflect this approach.

2. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Everyone who works with children needs to be aware of the government legislation and guidance that aims to protect children from harm.

2.1 The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 1989 provides Local Authorities (social services departments) and others with powers and duties to protect children whilst at the same time providing safeguards for both children and parents against excessive or unwarranted intervention.

There are a number of general principles, which need to be borne in mind when considering any part of the legal framework. The child's welfare is of paramount importance.

Under section 47 of the Children Act, a Local Authority must make enquiries regarding a child's welfare where:

- they are informed that a child who may be considered at risk who lives or is found in the area is
 - a) The subject of an Emergency Protection Order, or
 - b) In police protection, or
- the Council has reasonable cause to suspect that a child living or found in their area is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

The enquiries will enable the Local Authority to decide whether they should take any specific action to safeguard and/or promote the child's welfare.

All investigations will be carried out by Children's Social Care and the Police where necessary and will be in accordance with local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. For this reason, if you become aware of something that may need further investigation, do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself.

2.2 The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Protection of Children Act 1999 has four principle objectives:

1. To place the previous Department of Health's Consultancy Index (a list of people who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children) on a statutory basis and to require certain child care organisations to refer the names of anyone considered unsuitable to work with children for inclusion on the new list (called the Protection of Children Act List)

2. To provide rights of appeal against the Protection of Children Act List and the Department for Education and Skills List 99
3. To require regulated child care organisations to check the names of anyone they propose to employ in posts involving regular contact with children against both Departmental lists and not to employ them if they are listed.
4. To allow the Criminal Records Bureau to act as a central Access point for criminal records information and the above two lists.

2.3 The Children Act 2004 – Section 11 Statutory Guidance

Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children came into force on 1 October 2005. It details how both district councils already contribute to the lives of children and young people and what is expected of them, including:

1. Senior Management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting well-being
2. A clear statement of the Council's responsibilities towards children, made available to all staff
3. Clear lines of accountability for work on safeguarding and promoting well-being
4. Using safe recruitment procedures for those coming into contact with children and young people
5. Appropriate training for all staff
6. Effective working relationships within the council and with other agencies to safeguard and promote well-being and to share information effectively

2.4 Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person over 18 years who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

No Secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies to protect vulnerable adults from abuse.

This statutory guidance came into effect in 2000, so that local councils with social services responsibilities, local NHS bodies, local police forces and other partners could develop local multi agency codes of practice to help prevent and tackle abuse. Its main recommendations include:

1. Defining who is a vulnerable adult, what abuse is, who the abuser may be and what degree of abuse justifies intervention
2. Roles and responsibilities within and between agencies
3. Training for staff and volunteers
4. Procedures for responding in individual cases
5. Rigorous recruitment policies and guidelines on good practice for staff and volunteers

2.5 Other Documentation

The Councils will ensure that its policy and procedures follow the guidance given in relevant Government documents, including:

- Every Child Matters: Change for Children (2003)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2003)

3. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The following rigorous arrangements apply, within the Councils to all posts where an employee, member or volunteer will be working with children in an unsupervised manner, or who are responsible for recruiting to such posts.

Where any of the following procedures have not been completed, an employee, member or volunteer working with children must be restricted such that, at all times, they are supervised by someone who has had an enhanced check.

Staff recruited prior to the establishment of the CRB have all since been checked.

3.1 Recruitment Information

When a post is to be advertised, the manager must make it clear to Human Resources on the Request for Resources form that this post has unsupervised access to children to ensure that the proper checks are made (the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 allows for disclosure of all criminal convictions for such posts).

The recruitment pack will need to make it clear where applicants must declare all criminal convictions (not just unspent convictions) and that checks will be made on their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults which will include written references and a Criminal Records Bureau check at the appropriate level.

3.2.1 Criminal Records Bureau

The Councils' Human Resources Team will conduct the required checks with the CRB prior to the commencement of employment. These will be conducted for any new member of staff whose post requires a check as we do not accept CRB checks carried out for previous employers. There are currently two checks available – standard and enhanced. The majority of checks made are of an enhanced nature.

If the CRB check discloses any information about previous convictions, offences, etc., the HR Team will contact the Line Manager and together will assess the relevance of this information to the successful performance of the post and will make a recruitment decision. It is important to note that the Councils will not discriminate unfairly against the applicant on the basis of information derived from a disclosure. Only those offences that are relevant to the role will be considered in assessing an individual's suitability for the post. The existence of a criminal record will not automatically render an applicant unsuitable. However the safety of vulnerable individuals is paramount and offences involving drugs, sex, violence or dishonesty will be examined very seriously.

If the CRB check does not disclose any information the Line Manager will be informed that the individual has been cleared to commence employment. Work should not be undertaken until a satisfactory check has been completed. However it is recognised that occasionally it may be necessary for this to occur. CRB disclosures will be in line with the Council's Policy.

3.3 Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

In accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the Councils are obliged to check the eligibility of all applicants to work in the UK. All applicants are asked to bring along to interview a document to evidence this. This is in the form of either a passport confirming that they are a British citizen or European Economic Area National or a United Kingdom Residence permit.

3.4 Applications

All staff who will have unsupervised access to children must complete, in full, a Council job application form with full personal details. This will need to show information about all past employment and relevant voluntary work and detail gaps in employment.

3.5 Interview

All interviews will be carried out according to standard procedures and by fully trained staff using standard forms/templates. All candidates must be asked about their previous work with children and asked to describe any previous difficulties they encountered in this work and explain how they handled them. It is generally good interview practice to ask open questions about a candidate's experiences and then to probe to find out how people have behaved in the past rather than asking hypothetical questions about what 'should' happen in a given situation. This method is more likely to predict how the person will behave in future. Standard questions have been devised and are available from the Human Resources Team.

The interviewer should ask about any employment gaps or why someone stopped working with children or vulnerable adults and then returned, for example. Sound recording procedures are in place to ensure evidence can be provided as to the applicant's suitability for the post.

3.6 References

Two written references must always be obtained. These should include the applicant's most recent employer plus the most recent organisation/person for whom the applicant provided services involving access to children. References must always be provided on the standard Reference Form or on headed/company stamped paper.

The reference request must make it clear that this person is applying for a job with unsupervised access to children (or that they will be recruiting people to work with children) and ask the referee if there is any known reason why the person should not be employed in such a capacity. If there is any doubt about the written response, the referee should be contacted by phone and asked the same question. Full notes must be made of any oral response, signed and dated by the person requesting the information. The Human Resources Team will conduct this procedure.

3.7 Offer of employment (paid or unpaid)

Any offer of employment (written or oral) must be subject to receipt of references and checks that are satisfactory to the Councils.

If the manager wants the person to start work before the results of the above checks have been received, the employee or volunteer must be told that their duties will be restricted to accompanied access to children until satisfactory responses to the checks have been received, when their employment will be confirmed. Obviously, if the checks are unsatisfactory, employment will be terminated.

Checks should also be made at this stage as to what safeguarding training the employee has received in the past and at what level. This will determine the urgency of the need for training in the new role.

3.8 Data Protection and Confidentiality

Data Protection principles must be followed. This means that:-

- The information sought must be adequate, relevant to the purpose and not excessive.
- It must be fairly and lawfully processed.
- CRB checks must only be made once it has been decided to offer the person the post (*Note: Candidates attending interview may be willing to give their permission for such checks to be made if they are successful, but CRB checks should only be conducted in respect of the successful person.*)
- The information must not be retained for longer than necessary (*Note: The CRB guidelines say 6 months after such time all documentation must be destroyed. A note may then be held on the personal file stating which checks were conducted, the date and that they were satisfactory.*)
- The information must be kept confidential and accessed only by those who need to know.
- All media enquires will be handled by the Councils' Communications Managers.
- The information must not be transferred to other people without the person's permission unless required by a statutory body with the authority to request it.

The principle is fully endorsed that the welfare of children and young people override the obligations of confidence held to others.

4. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

4.1 Induction

All staff and volunteers who work with children should receive clear induction and training in recognising and understanding possible signs of child abuse and know what steps need to be taken to provide child protection. This will include guidance on all relevant procedures in treating children with respect.

Extracts from this Policy will be included in all general induction training with line managers supplementing induction training for staff who have direct access to children. All employees will receive a leaflet endorsed by the Safeguarding Children Board which highlights their responsibility to be alert to concerns regarding the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of all children and young people.

4.2 Further Training

Training will be given according to job roles at the following levels:

Introduction to Safeguarding Children – in house training to raise awareness for all who come into contact, either directly or indirectly, with children, young people or their carers, within their work or voluntary capacity, to understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children and young people. Some staff in this category will need further multi-agency training as detailed below.

Multi agency Working Together training endorsed by the Safeguarding Children Board for employees who have regular contact with children and who would make a referral, write a report or attend a child protection case conference and who may be part of a core group.

Additional multi-agency specialist training for specific target groups but it is expected that staff will have already undertaken the above two sessions as knowledge of identification and referral of concern of abuse will be assumed.

5. PROTECTING STAFF AND CHILDREN

5.1 Good Practice Guidelines

This section is an extract from a document entitled: Child Protection Policy and Implementation procedures: Guidelines for Governing Bodies of Sport and Local Authorities. Whilst there are some guidelines that will not apply to your work at Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils, the principles described are helpful and should be applied.

All staff should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from possible allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

The section below is supplemented by a separate Child Protection Policy drawn up for the Suffolk Sport Partnership which makes specific references to those employees and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults in sport.

5.2 Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment (e.g. no secrets)
- treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each young person first
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children you come into contact with
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. in decisions about work experience)
- ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, a male and female member of staff should always accompany them. (NB However, same gender abuse can also occur.)
- being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults
- requesting written parental consent if staff are required to transport young people in their cars

Advisory leaflets have been devised for employees and volunteers in certain areas to provide specific guidance. These can be found on Wired/Dora.

Within the appropriate leaflets is advice and guidance on use of personal vehicles to transport children and young people and on use of photographic equipment. All services/facilities for children and young people have clear policies, signage, registration and parental consent forms.

5.3 Practice to be avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you
- avoid giving children lifts in your car, especially alone.

5.4 Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned:

- engagement in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- being alone in a room with a child
- allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching
- allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- doing things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
- inviting or allowing children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

5.5 Specific Guidance for Managers providing Work Experience Placements

All managers offering work experience should be familiar with the contents of these safeguarding guidance notes.

Where activities described in 5.3 above (e.g. time alone with the student or providing a lift in your car) are necessary for the provision of genuine work experience, the following steps should be followed:

- A full risk assessment for the placement should be completed by the placement supervisor and copied to the school and to HR. A template is usually provided by the school. Advice on completing the risk assessment can be gained from HR.
- HR will contact the school or work experience co-ordinator to gain confirmation of the parent's written consent to the student undertaking such activities.
- The supervisor should complete the Work Experience Disclosure form, as shown at Appendix A and return to the HR Team.

5.6 Code of Ethics and Conduct

The Government produced *Caring for the Young and Vulnerable? Guidance for preventing abuse of trust*, 1999. The guidance is based on the principle that all organisations involved with caring for young people or vulnerable adults should have codes of conduct to protect against sexual activity within relationships of trust.

On appointment staff are required to sign up to the Employees' Code of Conduct. The Code encourages:

- the development of an open and positive environment
- poor practice to be identified
- investigations to be carried out
- disciplinary action to be taken if appropriate.

6. RECOGNISING SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

The first indication that a child is being abused is not necessarily the presence of a severe injury. Concerns that a child is being abused may be raised by the signs of bruises or marks on a child's body or by remarks made by a child, his/her parents or friends, or the observation of a child's behaviour or reactions, from an awareness that a family is under stress and may need help with caring for the children or from a number of other factors.

6.1 Physical

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing significant harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

6.2 Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child(ren) that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration or 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 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.

6.3 Sexual

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or in the production of pornographic material; or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

6.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur in pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

7. WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT POSSIBLE ABUSE

7.1 Duty to refer

Staff may be come aware of suspected or likely abuse by:-

- Their own observations or concerns;
- Being told by another person that they have concerns about a child;
- The child tells them, either verbally or through play or behaviour;
- The abuser tells them.

Even if there is not direct contact with the child, staff may become concerned because of difficulties experienced by the adults, e.g.

- Domestic Violence incidents
- Mental Health issues
- Substance and Alcohol abuse incidents

There is a duty on staff to respond to concerns about children where they may at risk of significant harm. A flowchart showing the procedure for referral is shown at Appendix B.

7.2 Confidentiality

Sometimes, it is only when information from several sources has been shared and combined that it becomes clear that a child is at risk. Personal information about children and their families will usually be confidential and should not be disclosed to a third party without the consent of the subject. **However, the law allows for the disclosure of confidential information where this is necessary to safeguard a child or children in the public interest.**

Disclosure of confidential information must be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case and must be limited to those people who need to know in order to take appropriate action.

7.3 Referral Procedures

1. Make a careful note of the injuries or behaviours which have caused concern.
2. Listen carefully to anything the child tells you. If you have observed an injury, you may ask the child how the injury happened.
3. Remember, your role is to note and pass information on accurately, not to conduct the early stages of an investigation.
4. If there is still concern, e.g. if the explanation for an injury is inconsistent with the signs you have observed, make a careful note of what you have heard and observed, sign, date it and note the time. It is important that the form is completed at the time. The form can be found in the safeguarding area on Wired or Dora.
5. Immediately report your concerns to one of the Council's Safeguarding Co-ordinators. These are:

| Name | Contact Number |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Heather Shilling HR | (01502) 523221 |
| Carol Lower HR | (01502) 523228 |
| Jenny Edgerly HR | (01394) 444327 |
| Terri Lawson Revenue and Benefits | (01502) 523534 |
| Sarah Shinnie Community and Economic Services | (01394) 444652 |
| Scott Luxton Customer Services | (01502) 523640 |
| Andrew Reynolds Environmental Services | (01502) 523113 |
| Dave Howson Housing/Building (for Housing/ enquiries only) Building | (01502) 523146 |
| Angela Haye/Julie Griffiths Housing Options/Strategic Housing | (01502) 523134/(01394) 444613 |

If you cannot get hold of any of these people, it is still important that the referral is made. You should contact Children's Social Care immediately (see Appendix B for details) and ensure you inform the safeguarding lead at the earliest opportunity.

1. The Safeguarding Lead will immediately report the matter to Children's Social Care and will also clarify who will inform the parents.
2. Send your completed referral form to the Safeguarding Lead you have spoken to as soon as possible (agree with them the best way to do this). This may be handwritten or typed. If typed a hard copy must be printed off and dated and signed by hand. Do not keep a copy for yourself. Do not discuss the matter or show the form to anyone else unless you know that they are authorised to have access to the information. Make sure any written information providing personal details is sent in a sealed envelope marked Private and Confidential.
3. All referrals to Children's Social Care must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.
4. Safeguarding matters must not be investigated by council staff although they may be asked to take part in a strategy discussion or further meetings if Children's Social Care consider that there is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm or if staff are implicated.

8. HANDLING COMPLAINTS/ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE BY A COUNCIL EMPLOYEE

Any allegation or complaint about a Council employee or volunteer that involves possible harm to a child and where this is related to the employee's work, must be reported immediately to Human Resources (within 24 hours maximum) and the employee's Head of Service or other senior manager. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people, including those who work in a voluntary capacity are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In such cases, if staff are given the information in confidence, they must explain to the person that they have no choice but to report what they have been told.

Any manager who is made aware of such an allegation or complaint must not start their own enquiries, but should follow similar guidelines to those provided under section 7 above, recording what they know and passing the information on to Human Resources immediately, followed by a written report. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - see contact details below) should be informed at the earliest opportunity, to determine the next appropriate step.

The employee or volunteer may need to be suspended from work whilst the matter is investigated and if their role involves contact with children and young people this is likely to be the case. However, this will not be automatic and will take into account the relevant circumstances and outcome of any possible strategy discussion with the LADO. In some cases, it may be sufficient to ensure that the employee or volunteer does not have unsupervised access to children. In all cases the person who is the subject of the investigation should be kept informed of the progress of the case and supported appropriately. Every effort should be made to keep the details confidential and to guard against any publicity whilst the allegation is being investigated.

Children's Social Care (and/or the Police) will be informed and the procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children or vulnerable adults or are in a position of trust will be followed. Any internal investigation or action will not commence until this can be done without prejudicing their proper procedures. (Where internal procedures are underway and a child protection issue comes to light, the internal procedures may be suspended pending Social Services/Police action.) It is also helpful to share information about the alleged employee/volunteer(s) and any other possible employment/activities they may be involved in with children, eg. coaching.

The contact details for the Local Authority Designated Officers are:

Northern Area – Maureen Lamont – (01502) 405188

Southern Area – Tina Wilson – (01473) 581871

Western Area – Susanna Bedford – (01284 758816)

In the absence of your local LADO, please contact one of the other two listed as they will be providing cover.

REFERENCES

Children Act 1989/2004

Protection of Children Act 1999

Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board's Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Children

Safe From Harm

A Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales

Home Office London 1993

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010

Every Child Matters 2003

ESSENTIAL READING

What To Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused *Children's Services Guidelines 2003*

Children Act 2004

Licensing Act 2003

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Gambling Act 2005

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Web Sites

www.suffolkscb.org

www.doh.gov.uk

www.dfes.gov.uk

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

www.oursafesite.com

www.waveney.gov.uk

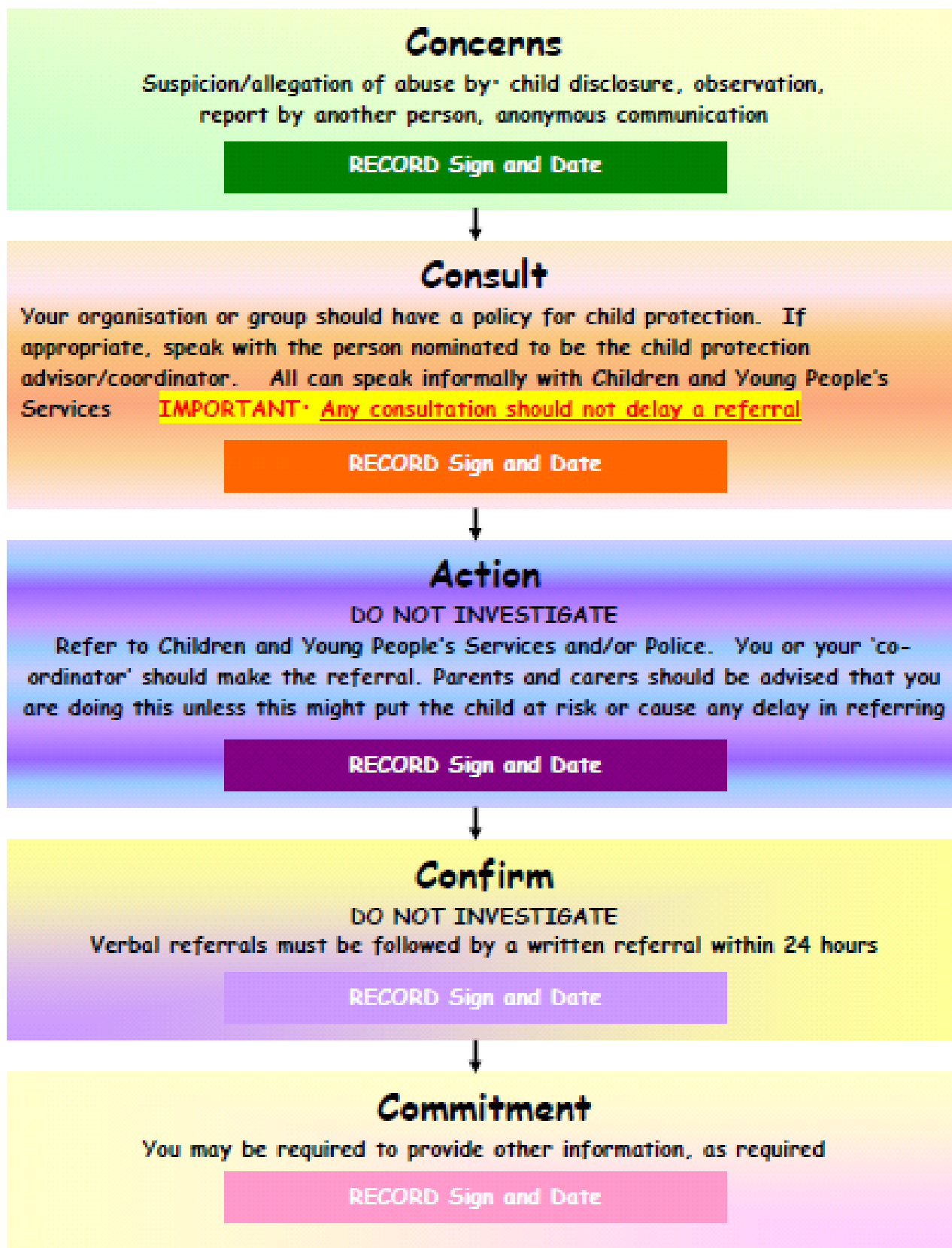


Work Experience Disclosure Form

This form should be completed and returned to by the Placement Manager (and any other member of staff who will have unsupervised access to student), prior to the Work Experience period. Please read this policy particularly (section 5.3) before completing this form.

| | |
|--|--|
| Name | |
| Team: | |
| <p><i>I declare that:</i></p> <p><i>I have no previous criminal convictions, "spent" or otherwise; and also no pending court cases. I know of no reason why I should not work with children.</i></p> | |
| Signed | |
| Print Name | |
| Date | |

Flowchart for Referral



REMEMBER

DO NOT DELAY - CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND POLICE ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Flowchart for Referral

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD?

TELEPHONE AND REFER!

A general principle for referral is outlined
in the flowchart overleaf

Telephone Numbers:

Children's Services:

Customer First freephone No: 0808 800 4005

Emergency Duty Service

Week days: 5.20pm to 8.45am

Weekends: 4.25pm Friday to 8.45am Monday 0808 800 4005

Suffolk Police:

Main Switchboard No: 01473 613500

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

Suffolk's Guidance and Procedures
for safeguarding children are
available

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Suffolk Safeguarding
Children Board

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For further copies please telephone 01473 264733

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FORM FOR RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN

Please use this form as a prompt, recording any additional information on the back or on another sheet of paper. PLEASE HAND WRITE YOUR NOTES OR TYPE AND PRINT THEM OFF

REMEMBER – your job is not to investigate, but to record accurately all information you receive or signs and symptoms you observe. Only fill in what you already know.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Child's Details (Name, Address, Tel. No. etc): | Child's Parents or Guardian's Details: (where known) | Details of Person reporting suspicion/allegation/ concern to you (this may be the child): |
| Describe what the concern is here: | | |
| Describe fully any signs, symptoms you or others have observed (include here what the child has told you): | | |
| Where did this occur (as far as you know)? | | |
| When did this happen (as far as you know)? | | |
| If some earlier signs/symptoms were noticed before today, when and where was this? | | |
| Record details of anyone else who may have been present or have relevant information: | | |
| Record who has been informed (You must inform one of the Councils' Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Human Resources immediately and the child's parents or guardian unless it is possible that they may be responsible.) | | |
| Signed: | Dated: | |
| Job Title: | Telephone No: | |

SEND OR HAND THIS FORM (in envelope marked Private & Confidential) TO A COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR OR HUMAN RESOURCES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE