



MENDIP EDGE FEDERATION

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

September 2016 - September 2017

“Safeguarding children is everybody’s business” (Lord Laming)

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Date of review
Date of next review

November 2016
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Safeguarding Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children and young people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure children and young people receive effective support, protection and justice.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of 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 refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

THIS POLICY has been read by all Staff and signed to the effect that they have read and understood it.

The Policy will also be accessible to all visitors to the school, parents, and carers through the schools' website and / or reception area.

Signed

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date:

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1 Forward Safeguarding legislation and guidance

- The statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2015** covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for LSCBs to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.
- The statutory guidance **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016** is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All staff must read Part One of the **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016** guidance and staff can find a copy in the staff room.

In the UK, more than 50,000 children are annually subject to a child protection plan. Research suggests that one child a week dies from abuse and one child in six is exposed to violence in the home. The prevalence of neglect continues to be a major concern and online abuse is increasing. The sexual exploitation of children is a growing problem and disabled children are three times more likely to be abused and neglected.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff members are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all staff members are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes

- DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016. (KCSIE16)
- DfE guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 (WTSC15).
- Somerset Support Service for Education (SSE).
- Somerset Children's Safeguarding Board. (SSCB)
- Children Missing from Education (CME)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Our Federation recognises that the safety and welfare of children is paramount and that we have a responsibility to protect children in all of our schools' activities. We

take all reasonable steps to ensure, through appropriate procedures and training, that all children, irrespective of sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, are protected from abuse.

We will seek to:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment where children can develop their skills and confidence.
- Support and encourage other groups and organisations to implement similar policies.
- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work with children.
- Ensure that any training or events are managed to the highest possible safety standards
- Review ways of working to incorporate best practice. Including this policy being regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current best practice and Government expectations.
- Treat all children with respect regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.
- Carefully recruit and select all employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.
- Share information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Provide a culture of vigilance of reporting

This Safeguarding Policy relates to all Federation employees or staff working within our schools and is in addition to the Working Together 2015 & Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 guides. This policy document is produced in order to inform and assist our staff and contractual partners in meeting their responsibilities in terms of child protection, whether working directly or indirectly for our schools.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Our schools accept that safeguarding children and young people is a key element within our work. All staff are all familiar with the requirements of “Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Interagency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children” (statutory guidance revised March 2016) & Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibly and all staff members in our schools undertake regular safeguarding training and updates. All staff members have a standard statement in their job description which places a responsibility on staff to safeguard children and young people.
- 2.2 The Director of Children’s Services, within the Local Authority has the overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in the area. They have a number of statutory functions under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 which make this clear. This policy is to add detail to expectations of staff to expect specific duties to

happen in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are or who takes any further action.

- 2.3 The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services in local authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions. (Working together to Safeguard Children 2015)

"Children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together." (Working together to Safeguard Children 2015)

- 2.4 This Federation fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Though the risk of child abuse cannot be eliminated, all staff strive to reduce the risk as far as is reasonably possible. This policy is designed to help achieve these aims and keep our children safe, happy and free from harm while discharging statutory duties in promoting the welfare of children and young people.

3 The Policy and Guidance

- 3.1 We recognise there are three main elements to Child Protection.

- **Prevention** - through support and guidance offered by staff involved directly with children and young people.
- **Protection** - by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are appropriately recruited, trained and supported to respond sensitively and swiftly to Child Protection concerns.
- **Support** - to children and young people who may have been abused or neglected, directly or through those who work directly with, or care for them.

4 Reporting Concerns (procedures)

- 4.1 Where it is believed that a child or young person is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, staff members follow the procedures set out in the South West Child Protection Procedures (www.swcpp.org.uk) and the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) documents which can be found at <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>
- 4.2 These procedures clearly confirm that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance and takes precedence over sensitivities about relations with partners, parents, or the likely reaction of others in the community, and any wish a child might have for complete confidentiality (which cannot be guaranteed).
- 4.3 Members of staff not following procedures could put themselves at risk of disciplinary action and the child concerned at risk. As long as the procedures

are adhered to, members of staff will receive the full support of the Federation and the Local Authority.

- 4.4 Section 6 of this document explains the types of abuse staff may come in contact with; though the list is not exhaustive. All staff will be aware of this through their safeguarding training.
- 4.5 When the employee's professional judgement or after discussion with their manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), they believe a child or young person is suffering or likely to suffer, then a referral should be made to Somerset Direct using the Common Request for Involvement Form or phoning **0300 123 2224**. <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/childrens-services/safeguarding-children/report-a-child-at-risk/>
- 4.6 In many cases the concerns do not reach the threshold for a Child Protection Referral but that of a Child in Need of an earlier intervention.
- 4.7 This is the function of the Early Help Assessment (EHA) and Team around the Child and/or family meeting. This will identify a lead professional who will bring appropriate professionals together to empower the family to address concerns raised. Details of this process are available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/common-assessment-framework-caf/>
- 4.8 There is a document Child Protection Procedure Checklist for Staff set as Appendix B, this will help make an assessment.

5 Framework

- 5.1 We recognise we do not operate in isolation. The welfare of children and young people is not just the responsibility of the Local Authority but a partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers.
- 5.2 Child Protection is the responsibility of all adults, especially those working with children and young people. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the SSCB.

6 The Role of the Federation and the Leadership Teams

- 6.1 Our schools and their Leadership Teams recognise their responsibilities with regard to Child Protection and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- 6.2 Each school within the Federation has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is the lead officer for that school. In addition to this every school has a named deputy safeguarding lead. Staff should take all daily case concerns to their line manager as a first point of contact.

6.3 The Federation Leadership Teams will:

- Recognise how to identify signs of abuse and know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection matter coming to their attention.
- Ensure all staff has basic awareness training in Safeguarding and Child Protection or Introduction to Child Protection Training. For those who are trained at “Working Together”, (previously called level 2), this will need to be refreshed every two years, by attending Update Training (previously called Level 3).
- Act as a source of advice to ensure all staff members are up to date with relevant policies and practices or changes in legislation.
- Determine the level of training staff should receive in each school appropriate to their level of work. Each Leadership Team will ensure staff have appropriate and refresher training as required. Each school’s leadership team will manage for their school. The DSLs will monitor this process to ensure that each school is monitoring training. (Such monitoring ensures schools comply with section 11 of The Children Act (2004) which places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions – and any services that they contract out to others – are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children).
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover.
- Liaise with Somerset Direct, Local Children’s Social Care and other agencies, as appropriate.
- Act as a source of advice and expertise and keep school colleagues informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence.
- Manage and deliver staff child protection training and review the operation of the Child Protection Policy annually to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice. The DSL will report to the school’s Leadership Team quarterly on any issues with regard to the implementation of this policy.

6.4 This policy applies to all staff working in the Mendip Edge Federation.

Key elements to this policy:

- Establishing positive, supportive, secure working practices that put children first.
- Ensuring we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff who work in our schools. .
- Keeping child protection issues at the forefront of our work and knowing who is the DSL in each school.

- Ensuring that all staff implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse and regularly reviews them.
- Supporting children and young people in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- We will follow the procedures set out by the SSCB and take account of all guidance issued by the DfE, OfSTED and other significant bodies.
- Ensure we have a DSL and a Deputy who have received appropriate training and support for their role (training in child protection and inter-agency working must be carried out every two years for staff members at the appropriate level). In addition to this we will ensure every school has a DSL and deputy and staff members are reminded termly who these people are.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences, if appropriate.
- Keep written, dated and signed records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. This includes the use of any screening tool that aids identification of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), on-line use or other such issues and that such record is securely placed.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff and that such procedures are robust to deal with any allegation and that clear records of investigations and outcomes of allegations are held on staff files. This will include contacting Somerset Direct and possibly discussion with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Notify appropriate bodies or their designated authority within one month when the services of a person are discontinued because he/she were considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Risk-assess any off-site activity, led by the schools.
- Staff members will escalate any safeguarding concerns via the appropriate process and address any of its own deficiencies or weaknesses to ensure the child's safety is paramount.

6.5 Our staff and their Leadership Teams will therefore:

- Promote an ethos where children and young people feel secure and are encouraged to use their preferred means of communication, and are understood by adults using inclusive communication skills and strategies. (See European Convention on Human Rights and Health and Social Care Act 2012).
- Promote approaches to ensure that children and young people know which adults they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Promote approaches and activities, when appropriate, which equip children and young people with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and which will help them develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

7 Child Abuse

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 All staff members are alert to the possible signs of abuse of a child or young person due to their regular safeguarding training. Forms of abuse are:

7.2 Physical abuse

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

7.2.2 Where your concern is about physical abuse, make sure you note where on the body the injury is and describe shape and size. Be careful to record the factual evidence – i.e. what you can actually see, not your opinion of how the injury may have been sustained.

7.3 Emotional abuse

7.3.1 Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

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

7.3.3 Emotional abuse is hard to evidence so staff should detail a number of events that have led to their concerns.

7.4 Sexual abuse

7.4.1 Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve

physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

7.4.2 If the child or young person discloses to a member of staff any such incident, that member of staff should record in as much detail as possible what was said, who was there and the child or young person's emotional state throughout the disclosure. Make sure your notes are contemporaneous, **dated** and kept securely.

7.5 **Neglect**

7.5.1 Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- 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.

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

7.5.3 If a child or young person is to be referred because of possible neglect, it is important to always check back to see if there have been any previous concerns. The Children Act 1989 talks about how the persistent neglect of very basic needs is likely to cause impairment in the child or young person's development.

7.6 **Domestic abuse**

7.6.1 Domestic abuse may take many forms. Witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent may cause considerable distress to children and both the physical assaults and psychological abuse suffered by adult victims who experience domestic abuse can have a negative impact on their ability to look after their children. Children can still suffer the effects of domestic abuse, even if they do not witness the incidents directly. However in up to 90% of incidents involving domestic violence where children reside in the home, the children are in the same or the next room. Children's exposure

to parental conflict, even where violence is not present, can lead to serious anxiety and distress among children. Children can see school as a safe retreat from problems at home or alternatively not attend school through a perceived need to be at home to protect abused parents or siblings.

7.6.2 Domestic abuse can therefore have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment and emotional well-being and development. The potential scale of the impact on children is not always easy to assess but may manifest itself as behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, including poor self-esteem, withdrawal, absenteeism, adult-child conflict. Children sometimes disclose what is happening or may be reluctant to do so hoping that someone will realise something is wrong.

7.6.3 Always think through whether the case in question fits more appropriately within a 'Child in Need' framework than within a Child Protection framework. (For example, mucky children may simply come from mucky families; clearly the family needs to do something about the child's cleanliness and appearance, and may need some support in this, but it might not be the case that the child or young person is being abused and in need of protection.)

7.7 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

7.7.1 There will be other circumstances which give cause for serious concern about the welfare of pupils; such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

7.7.2 The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

7.7.3 Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

7.7.4 In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

7.7.5 Violence, coercion and intimidations are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

7.7.6 While professional judgement may lead you to refer this matter to Somerset Direct a screening tool has been developed that may help an SSE employee in their judgement.

7.7.7 There are fuller details around this subject including access to the screening tool at <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

7.8 Radicalisation

- 7.8.1 The UK Government since the 2011 Prevent review defines extremism as: 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.

Staff members receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

- 7.8.2 Radicalisation is defined by the UK Government within this context as “***the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.***” If you become concerned that this may raise a professional concern about a young person you work with or know then Appendix E will help the DSL raise this with the most appropriate person(s).

7.9 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- 7.9.1 FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (World Health Organisation). It is also sometimes referred to as female genital cutting or female circumcision. The practice, which is most commonly carried out without anaesthetic, can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth. FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so staff members are alerted to be aware of risk indicators. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. *Please refer to Somerset Support Services for Education, Education Safeguarding for further information.*

7.10 Forced Marriage

7.10 The UK Government describe this as taking someone, usually overseas, to force them to marry (whether or not the **forced marriage** takes place) or marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured or not) Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. But the choice of whether or not to

accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. Children may be married at a very young age and well below the age of consent in England. Staff members should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. *(Please refer to Somerset Support Services for Education, Education Safeguarding for further information.)*

7.11 On-line

7.11.1 Mobile phones, laptops, iPads, and other on-line type products are integrated into all our lives. However, there are those that seek to use these for their own or others gratification. The link below provides more information on on-line safety and cover issues such as:

- Bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying, racialization and/or extremist behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- The impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting.

<http://swgfl.org.uk/news/News/E-Safety/Making-Sense-of-the-New-Online-Safety-Standards>

7.11.2 Via e-Learning and Information Management (eLIM) and the SSCB and the South West Grid for Learning, our schools will consider any improper use as a possible safeguarding concern, which should be considered as child protection issues and discussed with your line manager or DSL as appropriate.

7.12 Children Missing from Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL/school will monitor absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

EHE- Elective Home Education

When appropriate we will advise the Local Authority of when children leave the school to be electively home educated at the earliest moment

Reduced Time Tables

Should a reduced time table be instigated or be necessary, guidance will be reviewed with the aim the child returns to school full time at the earliest moment or another school sought to ensure the child/young person has their full entitlement.

School Admissions,

In following good practice should a child not be successful in obtaining a place at our school we will alert the Local Authority School Admissions at the earliest moment.

Appendix F is a flow chart to help staff in considering whether to make a Child Protection referral.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 Confidentiality needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. No adult must ever guarantee confidentiality to any child or young person. Staff should make children and young people aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken.
- 8.2 Personal information will only be disclosed to third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (Data Protection Act 1998, European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8). Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child or young person, e.g., where safety and welfare of that child or young person necessitates that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or children. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

9 Records and Monitoring

- 9.1 Well-kept records are **essential** to good child protection practice. Our schools are clear about the need to record any concerns held about children or young people, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 9.2 In our work with children, young people and families, and others in an advisory and support role, we will promote all institutions to:
- Keep clear detailed written records of concerns about children and young people.
 - Ensure all records are kept secure and in a locked location.
 - Ensure records are passed on to the receiving institution if a child or young person transfers.
- 9.3 The notes/records written by the schools within the Federation of any child protection issues regarding individual children and young people will be kept

securely and separately electronically. Where necessary the schools will ensure that child protection information has been passed on to Somerset Direct appropriately.

10 Attendance at Child Protection Conferences

- 10.1 If a child or young person becomes the subject in a Child Protection Conference you may be asked to share information about the child or young person and his/her family. Usually this will be in the form of a written report, the contents of which will be shared with parents/carers prior to the meeting.
- 10.2 Occasionally, there may be information which is confidential and which will be shared in a closed meeting prior to the conference. If this is necessary, the chair of the conference will discuss the matter with parents/carers beforehand.
- 10.3 When any child or young person becomes the subject of a conference, local procedures require all other children in the family are considered. It may well be that staff will be required to provide information on children with whom there appear to be no direct concerns.
- 10.4 Staff may contribute to the process of risk assessment and the decision about the child being in receipt of a child protection plan.

11 Safe Children - Safe Staff

- 11.1 When recruiting staff, schools' leadership teams will ensure all appropriate checks are made. It is important to remember that:
- All staff are an adult role model for children: courteous, friendly and kind. No member of staff should make suggestive or discriminatory or other inappropriate comments.
 - All staff should respect children at all times regardless of their sex, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation.
 - All staff should use social network appropriately, this includes only using official work accounts to promote work and never referring to individual children. Further information can be found on the eLIM website. <https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sites/edtech/SitePages/e-Safety/Social%20Networks.aspx>
 - Staff must never allow or engage in inappropriate verbal or physical contact of any description.
 - Staff should not allow children or adults to engage in abusive activities, ridiculing, bullying etc electronically or face to face.

- Managers must develop an ethos that allows staff to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out any inappropriate attitudes or behaviour to each other.
- All staff should ensure that when working individually with a child or young person, they should be mindful of safe working practices, (e.g. where possible doors are left open), other staff are aware they are working on a one to one basis, and immediate help is available if needed.
- All staff should report disclosures or concerns.
- Staff should never trivialise a child abuse issue.
- Staff should not drive a child or young person home without permission of the parent/carer and line manager.
- No member of staff should ever take a young person to their own home. **In any one-to-one situation that is not a clear and proper part of your work, you put yourself at risk of false allegations.**

Regulated Activity

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) part three.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site security

Visitors to the schools, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and

safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The school lead will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Photography and images

A separate policy is held but all members of staff are aware that at no time should their own personal cameras/smart phones be used in recording children or young people in this Federation.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through the Federation's tackling-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures

12 Useful Information

12.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies such as:

1. Recruitment and Selection
2. Management of Allegations Against Staff
3. Behaviour Management
4. Anti-Bullying
5. Physical Interventions
6. Health and Safety
7. Safeguarding and ICT
8. Use of Photography and Videos
9. Drugs and Substance Misuse

10. Equal Opportunities
11. First Aid (including management of medical conditions)
12. Racial Equality
13. Staff Code of Conduct

12.2 Useful Websites/guidance

www.somerset safeguarding children board.org.uk

Working Together Partnership Protocol 2016-17 available on the SSCB website
Escalation Policy available on the SSCB website

12.3 Useful Numbers

Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224

Consultation line for DSLs: 0300 123 3078

Education Safeguarding Advisor: (Support Services for Education 01823 355014.)

Early Years Safeguarding Advisor: (Support Services for Education 01823 355492.)

APPENDIX A: Child Protection procedure checklist for members of staff

If:

- **A child or young person discloses abuse, or**
- **You suspect a child may have been abused, or**
- **You witness an abusive situation involving another professional.**

You **RECORD AND REPORT:**

- **Respond** without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock.
- **Enquire** casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset.
- **Confidentiality must not be promised** to children, young people, or adults in this situation.
- **Observe** carefully the demeanour of behaviour of the child or young person.
- **Record** in detail what has been seen and heard.
- **Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations:** rather, encourage the child or young person to say what he wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

Asking questions is fine to help understand what the issue is. Ensure the questions are open and give the child the ability to clarify.

- **It is important NOT to ask leading questions.**
- **It is important to know when to stop asking questions and listen.**
- **It is important not to interrogate.**

Types of Questions you can ask:

- Tell me (tell me what happened)
- Explain (explain what you meant by)
- Where did this happen/where were you
- When did this happen

Remember you are only clarifying with the young person if something concerning did happen or could have happened from the information they give you.

Then **REPORT** to Somerset Direct (it may be helpful to discuss potential referrals with your line manager and/or the designated person without delay). Appendix F is a flow chart that will help staff in their deliberations as to whether to make a referral or not.

Staff **MUST NOT**

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves;
- Evaluate the grounds for concern;
- Seek or wait for proof;

- Discuss the matter with anyone other than their line manager, Somerset Direct, designated person and, as appropriate e.g. the Headteacher. Children's Social Care & the Police are the only agencies that can investigate allegations of abuse.

Escalation Process - Resolution of professional disagreements in work relating to the safety of children.

Occasionally, there may be some professional disagreement as to whether child protection concerns meet thresholds etc. There is an escalation process document that is available on the SSCB web site, see Appendix G.

APPENDIX B: Prompt sheet for Child Protection referrals

When completing the Common Request for Involvement Form. (CRIF) Please refer to the Somerset Threshold document Effective support for Children and Families in Somerset. (SSCB). This prompt sheet will also help you bring together all necessary information.

Designated Safeguarding leads can also use the SSCB Consultation Line to discuss cases they have concern about.

Before making a referral through the locally agreed procedures, the following information should be available:

Child's details

- Name, including any middle names and, if the child is known by more than one name; list all names known.
- Date of birth.
- Address and telephone number.
- Health issues that may be relevant.
- Any known disabilities that may affect communication.

Family details

- Names of parents and/or carers.
- Names and ages of any other children in family.
- Ethnicity and cultural background and where appropriate information about the need for interpreters.
- Any legal or custody documents known to exist.
- Name of the family's GP.

School history

- How long has the child attended this school?
- Attendance record – check if there has been a problem with attendance, look out for any patterns that emerge from attendance records, i.e. some children have been reported to miss every Monday because there have been problems at the weekend.
- Behaviour – how does the child present? Check for any repeated patterns of behaviour, or sudden changes of behaviour. Do these relate to a change in circumstances at home?
- Relationships with parents, school, other agencies: good, non-existent, volatile?

Child protection history

- Have you had previous concerns and have you made previous referrals? It is important to revisit previous concerns to get a wider picture. Child protection services are reliant on other agencies to help them build up a clearer picture of what has been happening. The relationship between each event may be more significant than each individual event.
- If you have referred in the past, what was the outcome? Never let the fact that no action was taken last time affect your way of managing new concerns. If you have a concern, always pass it on.

Informing the parent

In most cases it is agreed that it is better to tell the parent that you intend to refer to Children's Social Care or the Police but think it through. If you think telling may put the child or young person at more risk, take advice first. If in doubt, ring Somerset Direct (0845 3459122) and discuss with the Duty Social Worker or the consultation Line.

Making the referral

Once there is all the necessary information available a child protection referral can be made with confidence, following the South West Child Protection Procedures (www.swcpp.org.uk). Record all your actions and responses from other agencies.

APPENDIX C: Procedures if an allegation is made against a staff member.

Never let allegations by a child or young person go unrecorded or unreported, including any made against you. In all instances the Designated Person or deputy must be informed. If the allegation concerns the Designated Person, then the The Leadership Team must be informed.

In all situations the County HR contact and the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations Management, (LADO) must be informed. They can be contacted via Somerset Direct.

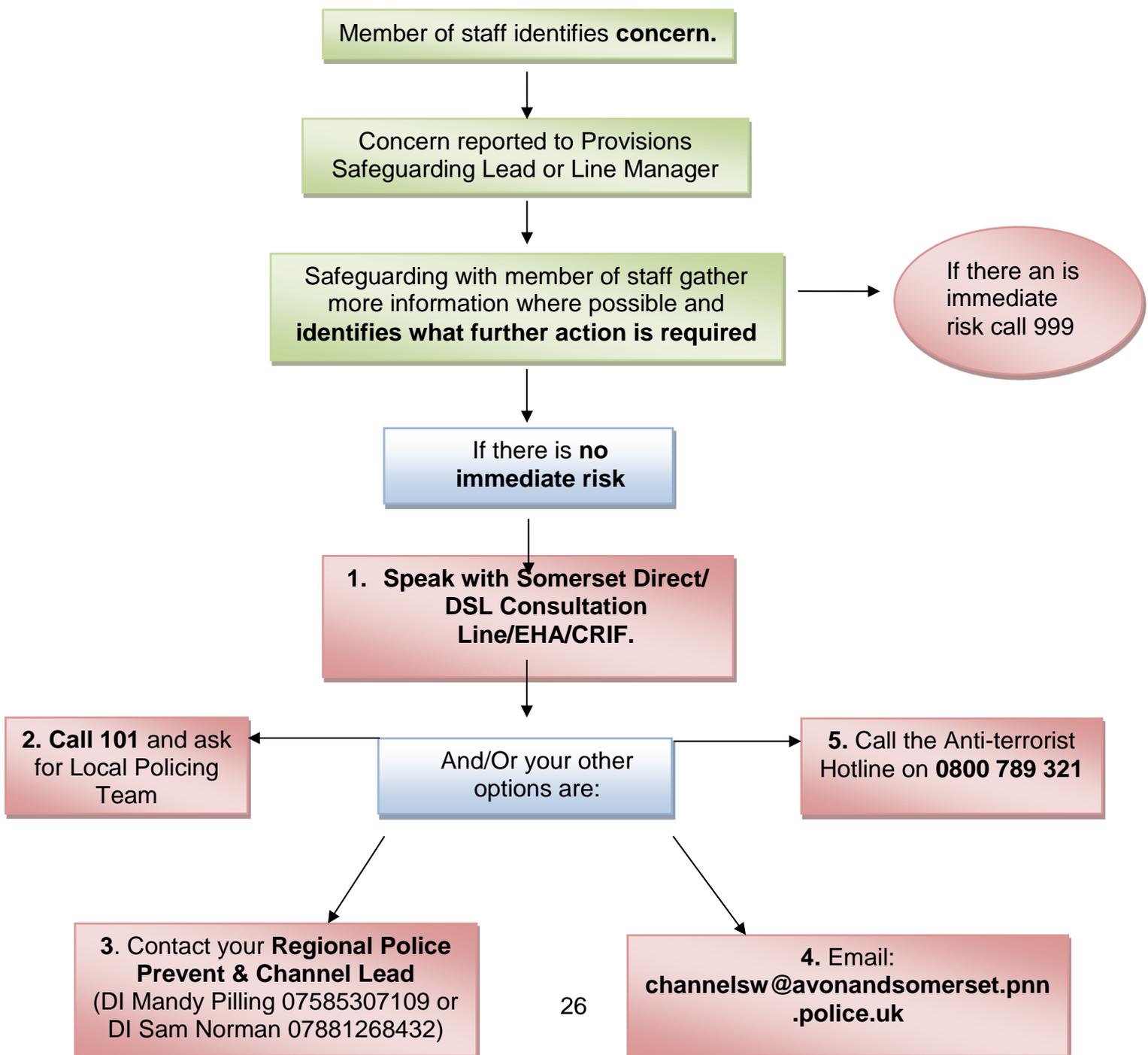
If you receive a disclosure, about an adult colleague, it is important to reassure the child that what he says will be taken very seriously and everything possible done to help. If you are in the room when a child or young person begins to disclose concerns to another person, you should stay unobtrusively in the background. You may be able to support/witness what has been said if required.

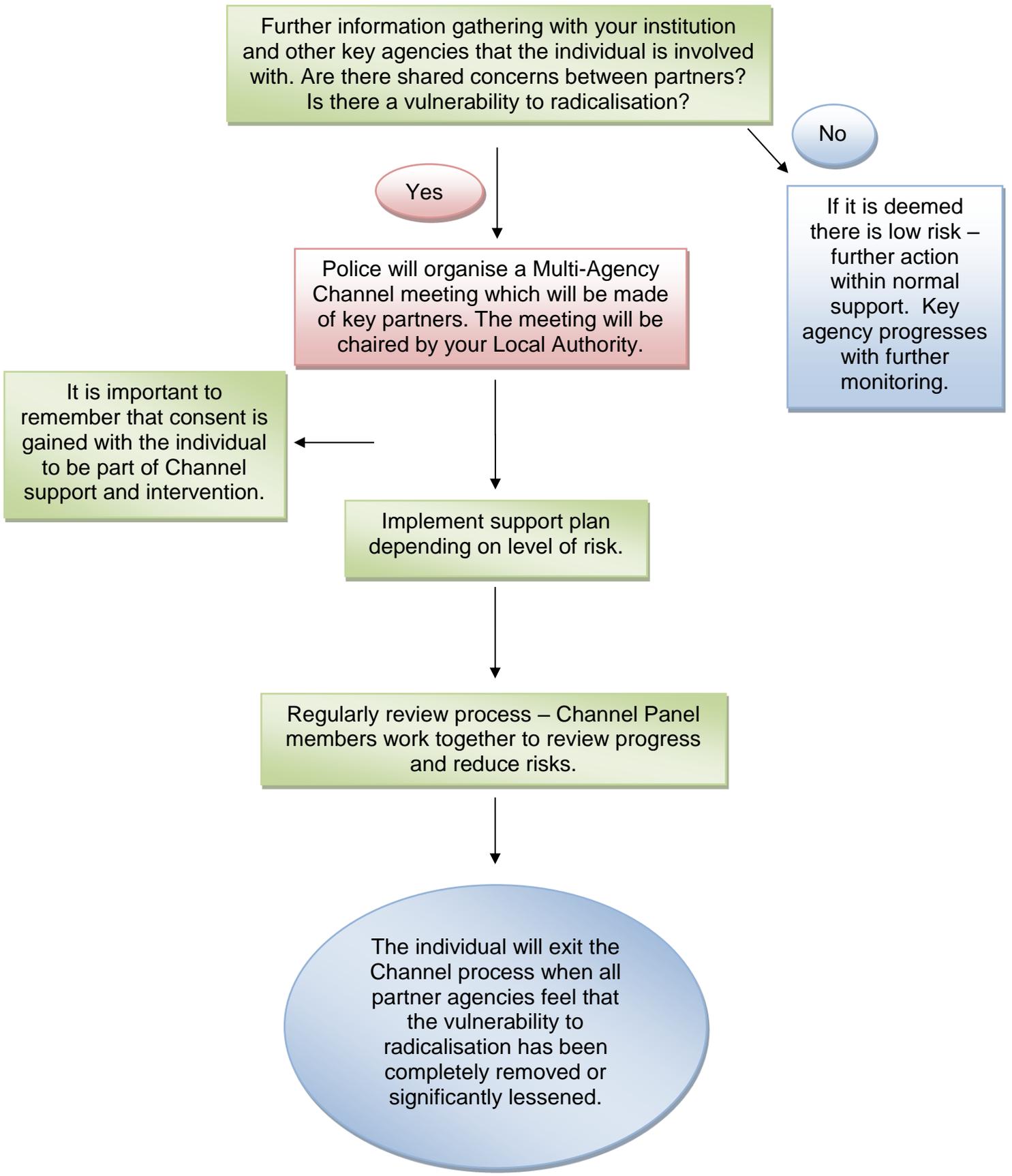
Remember: value your professional judgement.

APPENDIX D: Process map for The staff reporting a concern of a vulnerable individual

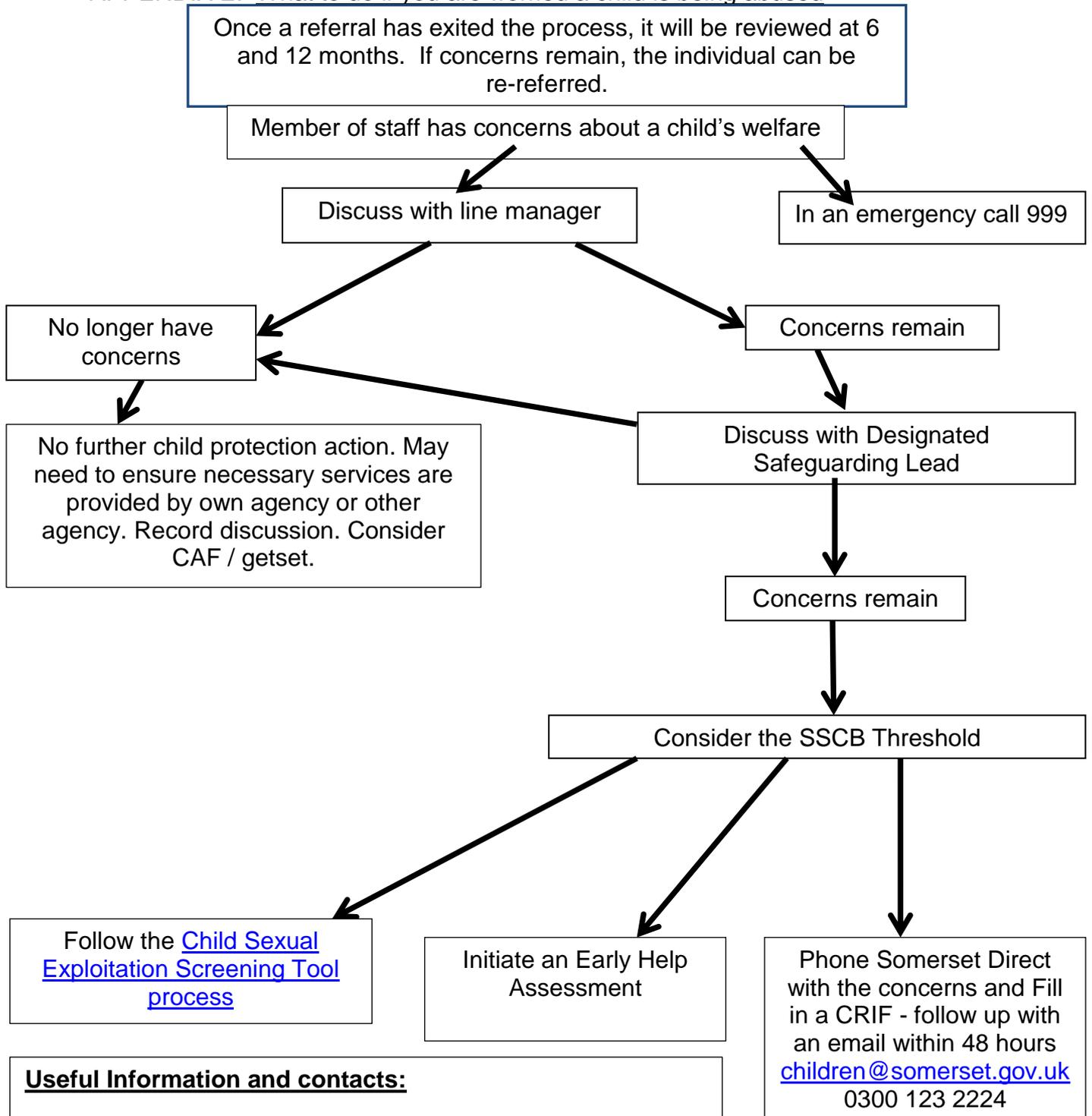
Prevent and Channel

It is important for you as a member of staff to know where to go if you have a concern that someone may be on the route to radicalisation. Below is a flow chart which aims to show the process as to which you can follow:





APPENDIX E: What to do if you are worried a child is being abused



Useful Information and contacts:

Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224 children@somerset.gov.uk

Somerset Safeguarding Children Board - <http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

['What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'](#) – government document

Support for Services for Education - <https://slp.somerset.org.uk/sse/SitePages/Home.aspx>

APPENDIX F: SSCB escalation policy

The below link is for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board's escalation policy that provides resolution of professional disagreements in work relating to the safety of children.

Please refer to Somerset Support Services for Education, Education Safeguarding for further information.

APPENDIX G: KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We should appoint a member of the senior leadership team to coordinate child protection arrangements.

The Designated Senior Lead:

- Has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- Is appropriately trained, with updates every two years
- Acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- Is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Has a working knowledge of SSCB procedures
- Makes staff aware of SSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- Has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention
- Keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- Notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- Ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker is also informed

- Attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the SSCB
- Ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors and proprietors regarding this
- Liaises with the nominated governor/governance and school head as appropriate.
- Keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- Makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- Ensures parents are aware of the' role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made.

The Designated Deputy Lead(s):

Is/are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the on-going safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The Governing Body or equivalent ensures that the school:

- Appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- Has a child protection policy and procedures, including a staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, that are consistent with LSCB and statutory requirements, reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- Has a procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff and allegations against other children.
- Follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations

- Develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head of school, receives information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSP on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated in line with any requirements of the SSCB. The DSL receives refresher training at [two-yearly intervals]
- Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- Ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- Provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing body or equivalent nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Head of School.

It is the responsibility of the governing body or equivalent to ensure that the our safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and SSCB and national guidance.

An annual report will be submitted through Virtual College, as required, to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Head of School:

- Ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- Allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- Ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online

- Ensures that leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- Liaises with the designated officer or team in the local authority where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- Treating all pupils with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- Applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and SSCB procedures
- Referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care
- Following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

- Referring to the Federation's staff code of conduct which reflects our values and ethos.

Abuse of position of trust

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The Federation's Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.