



## **Forest Arts Child Protection Policy and Procedure**

*Forest Arts has used this model template, which has been provided by the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board, as a format for Forest Arts' Child Protection Policy and Procedure. It contains policy information, procedures, flowcharts and a glossary of terms.*

### **Policy**

#### **Why have a Child Protection Policy?**

Forest Arts supports young people in providing access and inclusion to the Arts and Music Education both at the Centre and in Walsall Schools.

#### **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:**

**Child protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise. Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children. All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;



- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2010, DCSF, now DfE)

### **Definitions of abuse and neglect:**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

#### **Physical abuse**

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.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

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. 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 cyberbullying), 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.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

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



physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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.

### **Neglect**

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.

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

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2010)

### **Staff awareness**

#### Training

Staff training is not only crucial in protecting children and young people, but also makes them aware of how they can protect themselves against allegations.

Level 1 Safeguarding training is undertaken by staff every 12 months. Other post-specific training is undertaken as required.

#### Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.



## **Procedure:** **What to do if you have concerns about a child**

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should:

- not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services;
- listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief;
- accept what is said;
- reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. *'Everything will be alright now'*, *'You'll never have to see that person again'*;
- reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'*;
- not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate;
- not ask leading questions (e.g. *Did he touch your private parts?*), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*;
- not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff;
- explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to;
- take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards;
- record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase);
- record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with your *manager, named or designated member of staff*. If you still have concerns, you or your manager should refer to Children's Social Care Services for further advice. Call the Initial Response Service, Quest Building, 139 – 143 Lichfield Street. Tel: 01922 658170



### Report a concern

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you are concerned about a child you MUST contact The Multi Agency Safeguarding HUB (MASH). MASH is the first point of contact for any professional or concerned individual who has concerns about a child. They will provide consultation, advice and support and will make a decision regarding the most appropriate course of action.

**MASH** contact details: Telephone: 0300 555 2866 option 2

Opening hours:

Monday – Thursday      8.45-17.15

Friday                      8.45-16.45

Address: Civic Centre, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Darwall Street Walsall WS1 1TP

Outside these hours, you should contact the **Emergency Response Team**

Telephone: 0300 555 2922 or 0300 555 2836

**Seona Baker – Safeguarding Coordinator (Education)**

Telephone: 07951819648

Email: [seona.baker@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:seona.baker@walsall.gov.uk)

**Alan Hassall - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (Allegations against Staff)**

Telephone: 01922 654040 / 07432422205

Email: [alan.hassall@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:alan.hassall@walsall.gov.uk)

You can now complete Child Protection training in a way that suits you, this could be online or by attending one of Walsall Safeguarding Board's training courses <http://wlscb.org.uk/training/>

**All practitioners** must complete Child Protection Level 1, which should be refreshed every 2 years.

**Designated Safeguarding Leads** must complete Child Protection Level 2, which should be refreshed every 2 years.

**Further information and key documents, which you may find useful:**

- **Safeguarding Useful Numbers factsheet (PDF 173KB)**
- **Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners July 2018 (PDF 271KB)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018 (PDF 1.81MB)**
- **WSCB Child Protection Policy and Procedure Template (Word 818KB)**



- **Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings 2018 (PDF 745KB)**
- **Poster for Parents (Childcare) (PDF 1MB)**
- **Prevent Duty Useful Links (Word 18KB)**
- **MARF Form (Word 267KB)**
- **Top Tips to completing a MARF (PDF 283KB)**
- **Thresholds Leaflet (Word 190KB)**
- **Early Years Inspection Handbook 2018 (PDF 616KB)**

You can also access all the information you need on the websites below:

- **Walsall's Early Help Website (weblink)**
- **Walsall Children's Safeguarding Board (weblink)**

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999

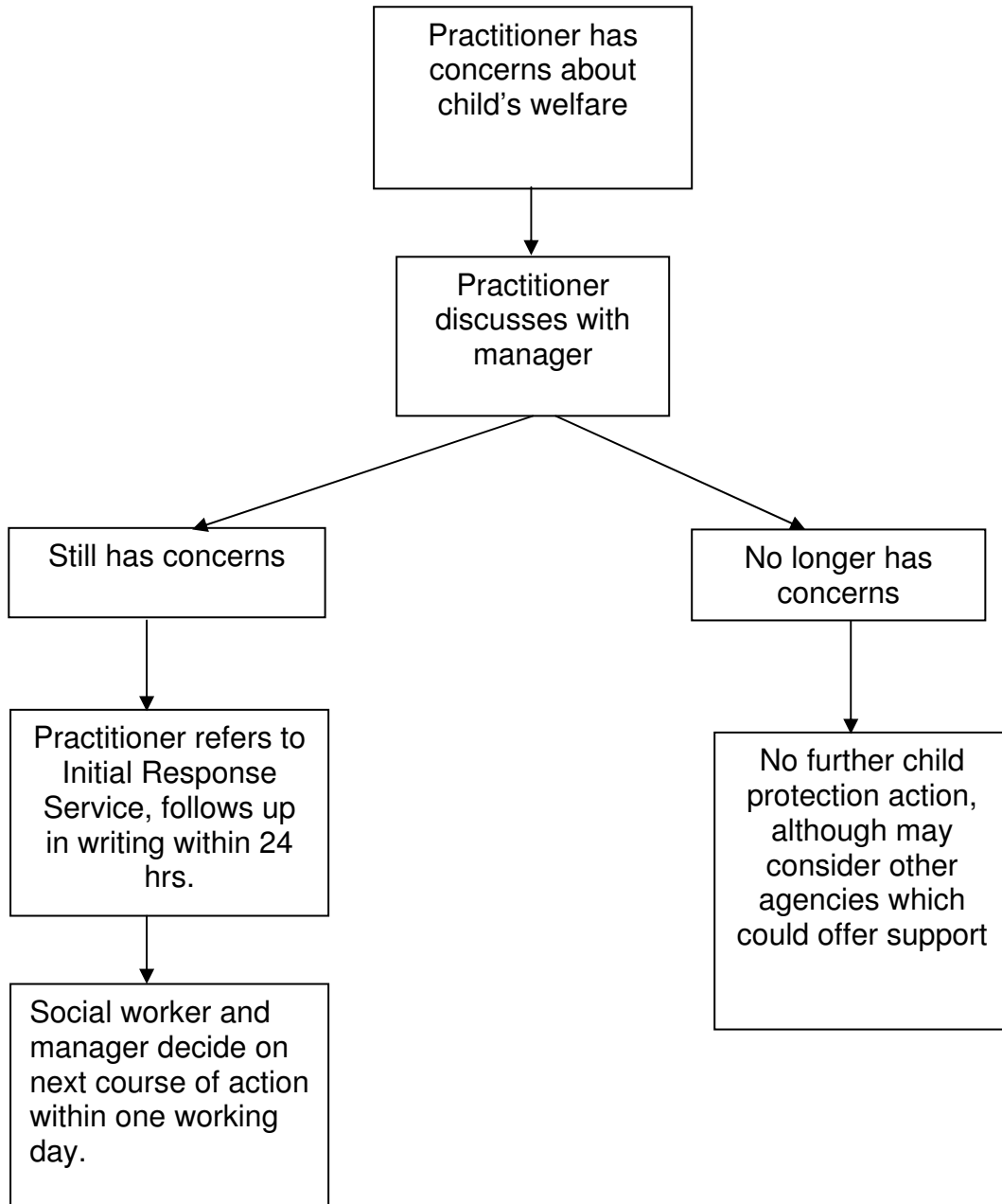
Updated August 2018

### **What information will you need when making a referral? :**

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 24hrs. This should be done on a CAF/CP Referral form. This can be downloaded from the WSCB website [www.wlscb.org.uk](http://www.wlscb.org.uk) under Child Protection Procedures – Common Assessment Framework. You only need to complete the boxes marked with an asterisk\*.

## Appendix 1 Flow Chart What to do if you have concerns that a child is being abused



The Initial Response Service can be contacted on 01922 658170, or in an extreme emergency dial 999 for the Police.



## Allegations involving a member of staff / volunteer:

This organisation is committed to having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the WSCB.

However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. Each agency is required to have a Named Senior Officer who will receive all reports of allegations. Our Named Senior Officer is **Deborah Whitehouse**.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

\*\* All allegations should be notified to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.\*\* (call 01922 646640 / 658354)

Forest Arts' named Senior Officer (**Deborah Whitehouse – 01922 650311/07921 386102**) should receive reports in relation to allegations against those within the organisation. A senior member of the Human Resources section for the agency must also be consulted.





The LADO will discuss the matter with the Named Senior Officer/Manager to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to the Children's Social Care Services is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to the Children's Social Care Services and the Police, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, the LADO will immediately refer the matter to the Children's Social Care Services and ask for a Strategy Discussion/Meeting to be convened straight away.

Where the safety of other children is in question as a result of the allegation, consideration should be given to invoking the Complex (Organised or Multiple) Abuse Procedure (this can be found on the WSCB website [www.wlscb.org.uk](http://www.wlscb.org.uk) ).

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Children's Social Care Services. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently the LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult Police and social care colleagues as appropriate.

Where a referral is made directly to Children's Social Care Services, they will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Police and the Named Senior Officer/Manager in the relevant agency or organisation.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

1. The police investigation of a possible criminal offence



2. Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care Services as to whether the child is need of protection or in need of services

3. Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

In addition, such allegations may give rise to complaints of poor practice, which should be considered in line with the agencies complaints or disciplinary procedures.

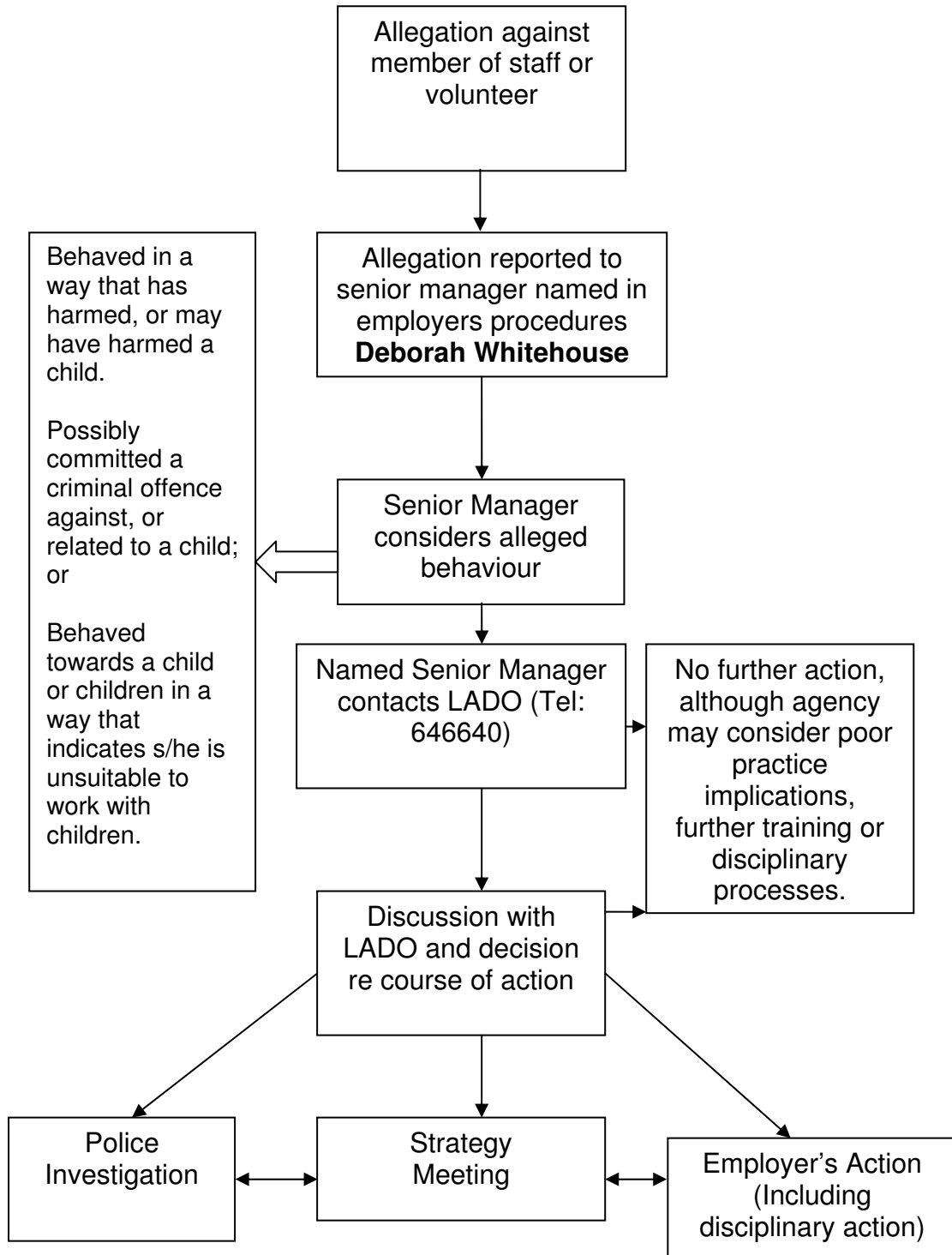
More information and the full Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures can be found at [www.wlscb.org.uk](http://www.wlscb.org.uk) .

Procedure completed by (name of officer): Deborah Whitehouse

Date: 17.12.2018

Review/update policy: December 2019

**Appendix 2**  
**Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers**



Assessment by Children's Services e.g. s47 Child Protection Enquiry

LADO tracks progress, monitors outcomes and reports to LSCB and DCSF



### **Appendix 3** **Glossary of terms**

Child – a young person under the age of 18 yrs

Child Protection Enquiry - A Child Protection Enquiry (usually referred to as a Section 47 Enquiry) is required if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Common Assessment Framework - The aim of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is to ensure that every child and young person receives the universal services to which they are entitled and any additional services they need at the earliest opportunity. To achieve this there is an expectation that all agencies, both statutory and voluntary, will work more closely together, share information appropriately and focus the provision of services around the needs of the child or young person. In Walsall the CAF form is also used to make Child Protection referrals to Children's Social Care.

LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer - The Local Authority must appoint a Designated Officer (LADO) whose responsibility it is to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases which fall within this procedure, providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the Police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistently, and with a thorough and fair process.

Named Senior Officer – agencies should appoint a Named Senior Officer to have overall responsibility for ensuring that their agency operates procedures for dealing with allegations against those who work with children in accordance with the guidance set out in Appendix 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010), resolving inter agency issues and liaising with the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board / LADO on the subject.



Significant Harm – The Children Act 1989 introduced Significant Harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

Significant Harm is any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life.

Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. This definition was clarified in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include, "for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another".

Suspicious or allegations that a child is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm may result in a Core Assessment incorporating a Section 47 Enquiry.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective coordination in every local area. For this reason, the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board. The WSCB must coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for that purpose.