



**Forest of Dean**  
— DISTRICT COUNCIL —

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

## Revision History

Revision date	Version	Description
May 2016	Version 1.0	Initial Draft
July 2016	Version 1.1	Various amendments following consultation with CLT, GO shared services HR and Cabinet Member
September 2017	Version 1.2	Contacts updated
December 2018	Version 1.3	Contacts and document links Updated

## Consultees

Internal	External
CLT	None
Go Shared Services HR	
Cabinet Member	

## Distribution

Name	
All staff (via intranet)	

## Retention

Policy to be retained for 3 years in line with the Council's document retention policy.

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## **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1** The purpose of this policy is to ensure there is an overarching approach to Safeguarding across the organisation and that all employees, elected Members, volunteers, contractors and those commissioned (inc. Publica) to deliver services on the Council's behalf are aware of their legal obligations to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2** The Safeguarding Policy encompasses:
- Safeguarding Children & Young People
  - Safeguarding Adults with Care and Support Needs (Vulnerable Adults)
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Child Sexual Exploitation
  - Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking
  - Honour Based Abuse
  - Forced Marriage
  - Female Genital Mutilation
- 1.3** This Policy will also raise overall awareness of safeguarding, the signs of abuse and information on what to do if they suspect abuse is taking place. Safeguarding is not a practice that operates in isolation, the practices cut across every service and function that the Council undertakes and as such, is embedded within the organisation and has direct links to other Council policies including, Code of Conduct, Harassment and Bullying, Safer Recruitment, and Whistle Blowing.

## **2. FoDDC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1** Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) as a second tier Local Authority has a statutory responsibility and a duty of care, which in the simplest of terms means it has a duty to cooperate and report issues relating to Safeguarding to the appropriate authorities/agencies.
- 2.2** **Safeguarding Children**  
Local Authorities have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. FoDDC is a member of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board (GSCB) and has a role in identifying children and young people who may be at risk and alerting the appropriate service(s). All staff must ensure that they are aware of the Safeguarding procedures that are in place within the organisation and which staff members are responsible for Safeguarding issues.
- 2.3** **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults**  
The Care Act 2014 is legislation that sets out specific safeguarding duties for Local Authorities and their partner agencies.

2.4 The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has care and support needs;
- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect;
- Due to these care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

### 3. DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF ABUSE

#### 3.1 Children and Young People

In accordance with guidance provided by ***Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010*** and based on the **Children Act (1989) and (2004)** the terms children, child, young person or young people shall for the purposes of this policy be deemed to mean:

***“Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that they have reached 16 years of age; are living independently or in further education; are a member of the armed forces; in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Acts and this policy”.***

3.2 A child may be at risk of abuse in many ways:

TYPE	DEFINITION	SIGNS
<b>Emotional</b>	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development.	Conveying to children that they are worthless or inadequate; imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations, serious bullying, exploitation, isolation, segregation
<b>Sexual</b>	Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware what is happening, including use of images through social media or other IT.	Inappropriate sexual behaviour, use of language, fear or adults, recoiling from physical contact
<b>Neglect</b>	The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or	Inadequate food, clothing, shelter. Inadequate access to appropriate

	psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.	medical care or treatment, isolation, truanting, lateness
<b>Physical</b>	May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.	Unexplained bruising, burns, fractures, weight gain or loss, repeat illness.

### 3.3 Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over, who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **and**;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; **and**
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

3.4 A vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse in many ways:

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>
<b>Physical</b>	The non-accidental use of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint.	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit, unexplained burns, unexplained fractures.
<b>Domestic Abuse</b>	An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.	Unexplained bruising, cowering or flinching, bruising consistent with being hit.
<b>Sexual</b>	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent.	Incontinence, difficulty/discomfort in walking, excessive

		washing, sexually transmitted diseases, bruising/bleeding in genital areas, bruising, urinary infections
<b>Emotional/Psychological</b>	Acts or behaviour which impinge on the emotional health of, or which causes distress or anguish to individuals.	Disturbed sleep, anxiety, confusion, extreme submissiveness or dependency, sharp changes in behaviour, loss of confidence or appetite.
<b>Neglect &amp; Acts of Omission</b>	Ignoring or withholding physical or medical care needs which result in a situation or environment detrimental to the individual.	Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs (incl. dressing), failure to provide access to appropriate health care, withholding medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
<b>Financial &amp; Material Abuse</b>	Unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property or any resources of an adult at risk. Scamming and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs.	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, unexplained withdrawals of money from accounts, personal possessions going missing, unusual interest by a friend/relative/neighbour in financial matters.
<b>Discriminatory</b>	When values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies main stream opportunities to some groups or individuals. This includes discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur	Inciting others to commit abusive acts, lack of effective communication, bullying.

	or similar treatment.	
<b>Modern Slavery</b>	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced and compulsory labour and domestic servitude.	Poverty, isolation, drug and alcohol misuse
<b>Institutional/ Organisational</b>	Where the culture of the organisations places the emphasis on the running of the establishment above the needs and care of the person.	Lack of care plans, contact with the outside world not encouraged, no flexibility or lack of choice.
<b>Self-neglect</b>	Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	A deterioration in physical appearance, lack of grooming, rapid weight gain/loss.

**3.5** There are a number of specific acts that constitute abuse.

### **3.5.1 Female Genital Mutilation**

A collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.

### **3.5.2 Honour Based Abuse (HBA)**

Is violence and abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours (including crimes), mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community, or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.

It is a form of domestic abuse which relates to a victim who does not abide by the 'rules' of an honour code. This will have been set at the discretion of relatives or community; the victims are punished for bringing shame on the family or community.

### **3.5.3 Forced Marriage**

In a forced marriage you are coerced into marrying someone against your will. You may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis.

It's not the same as an arranged marriage where you have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.

### **3.5.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

'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, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

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.

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

### **3.5.5 Modern Slavery**

There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. It involves people being forced to work through mental or physical threat, owned or controlled by an 'employer' usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse, dehumanised and being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.

### **3.5.6 Human Trafficking**

Takes place when a victim is moved from one place to another for the purpose of exploitation, this could be through sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced criminality or organ harvesting. The trafficker is able to control and exploit through violence, coercion or deception.

## **4. RESPONSIBLE LEADS**

### **4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead**

FoDDC has a Joint Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies who are responsible for championing the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Their role is also to support staff and provide guidance and advice to aid implementation of this policy and in making a referral.

**SAFEGUARDING LEAD: Peter Williams, Head of Paid Service**

**DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEADS: Nicola McLean, Community Engagement Manager and Simon Wright, Community Safeguarding Officer.**

#### **4.2 Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)**

FoDDC's CLT incorporate safeguarding in their meeting agenda twice a year to discuss issues relating to safeguarding concerns (i.e. case studies), Audit, Training and reflect upon roles. They also ensure that:

1. FoDDC meets its legal obligations.
2. Make sure, where relevant, that the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is considered in strategies, plans and services.
3. Encourage, embed and maintain the best safeguarding practice across all services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.
4. All safeguarding matters are treated seriously.
5. Support staff and members on all aspects of Safeguarding and ensure procedures are adhered to.

#### **4.3 Managers**

1. Responsibilities for ensuring staff complete the appropriate Safeguarding Training (e-learning or face to face). Are trained and implement the training.
2. Provide support to staff handling safeguarding issues and ensure procedures are adhered to.
3. Have an awareness of policies and procedures.
4. Take responsibility for the quality of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in their area/team/service.
5. Make sure all staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have employment checks appropriate to their role and legislative requirements.

#### **4.4 Human Resources**

1. Ensure that relevant policies are in place e.g. Safer Recruitment and Disciplinary Procedures.
2. Support managers and members in the use of these policies.
3. Provide support with the pre-employment checks (including through the Disclosure and Barring Service).

#### **4.5 Staff**

1. Treat all safeguarding matters seriously.
2. Report concerns as per the reporting procedure and complete the relevant on-line form.
3. Be aware of the policies.
4. Complete safeguarding training relevant to their role.

## **5. WHO THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY AFFECTS**

In addition to employees and members (Councillors) of FoDDC this policy shall also apply to the following areas:

### **5.1 Procurement**

Contracts with external agencies for the provision of goods and services must make specific reference to safeguarding and the duties imposed on staff. Steps must be taken to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount when any service is provided on behalf of, or in partnership with the FoDDC.

### **5.2 Contractors**

FoDDC will ensure all contractors providing services directly related to children, young people and vulnerable adults have an understanding and commitment to safeguarding and have a safeguarding policy that meets the needs of FoDDC. Contractors providing a service to FoDDC such as maintenance work on a FoDDC property will need to be made aware of our procedures and policies. FoDDC staff will need to ensure that relevant safeguarding practices are adopted by the contractor.

Contractors providing a service on behalf of FoDDC such as the leisure contractor will be required to work within the guidance of this policy. The contractor must ensure that they meet with the standards and guidance set out in the FoDDC policy.

Where the term staff is used throughout this document it is taken to imply all staff and others carrying out work on behalf of FoDDC, unless otherwise stated.

### **5.3 Partners**

All partners working with FoDDC must have regard to safeguarding. For joint projects partner agencies will be required to pass a copy of their policy to FoDDC to ensure it meets our needs or adopt our policy for the duration of the project.

### **5.4 Volunteers**

Any volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be required to undertake a DBS check and should be made aware of the Council's Safeguarding policy as part of their overall induction.

### **5.5 Modern Apprentices, Work Experience and workers under the age of 18**

Staff will need to be aware that the above duty will apply to their interaction with work experience and modern apprentice workers under the age of 18. Such workers would still be deemed as children under this policy (see

section 3.1), whilst also themselves being responsible under the duty imposed by Section 11 of the Children Act (2004). It will be necessary to consider the impact of this in all risk assessments carried out in relation to this member of staff.

If a work experience placement involves working with a member of staff off site or working with a member of staff on their own for longer than half a day, the students' parents or guardians should be informed prior to the work experience placement. In addition when the student goes off-site the employee must advise a Senior Officer where they are going, the reason for the visit and how long the visit will take.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES**

### **6.1 Safer Recruitment**

FoDDC operates safer recruitment principles which are followed for all staff appointments.

### **6.2 Training**

All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults must attend safeguarding training appropriate to their role and as a minimum, familiarisation with the Safeguarding Induction Booklet for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Information Booklet.

### **6.3 Safeguarding Allegations against a Member of Staff**

The Council takes seriously any allegations or complaints about the conduct of staff and volunteers in respect of their contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. All allegations or complaints received by the Council will be investigated fully, and where applicable action will be taken against the member of staff or volunteer via the disciplinary procedure. If deemed necessary the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended whilst the investigation takes place. The decision to suspend lies ultimately with the Head of Paid Service and Strategic Group Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding.

In the event of a serious allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the Council will involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) employed by Gloucestershire County Council.

### **6.4 Support for Staff/Volunteers**

Support will be provided for any member of staff or volunteer subject to an allegation as indicated in the FoDDC disciplinary procedure.

### **6.5 Whistle Blowing**

FoDDC has a Whistle Blowing Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy. This can be found on the FoDDC Intranet or requested from Audit, the Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer if the intranet is not

accessible. Staff have a duty of care to draw attention to bad or poor practice in the workplace. This includes practice that may be abusive and/or neglectful. Members of staff who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults have an individual responsibility to raise concerns with someone who has responsibility to take action.

## **6.6 E-Safety**

Children, young people and vulnerable adults can be at risk of exploitation and abuse through the medium of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It is important that staff are alert to potential risks children, young people and vulnerable adults may be exposed to, and that steps have been taken to mitigate the risk of this occurring, with specific reference to:

ICT Policies. These can be found on the Publica Portal. Policies include:

- Information Security Policy
- Staff Acceptable Usage Policy
- 3rd Party Acceptable Usage Policy

## **7. POLICY REVIEW**

**7.1** This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or in response to legislative changes.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **1. Listening to children and vulnerable adults**

As adults with trust and influence, Council staff are in a powerful position to recognise and receive information about abuse. However, **it is not their responsibility** to decide if a child is being abused. Their role is to act on their concerns. If a child tells a member of staff about their abuse:

- Listen carefully to what they have to say.
- Don't ask direct questions.
- Do encourage them to talk.
- Be honest with them about what you can and cannot do. Tell them that you are not able to keep what they have told you secret and you will try to find them the help they need.
- When they have finished, make a detailed note of what they have said on the incident record form and pass that information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If you have serious concerns about the immediate safety of that child, contact Social Services or the Police. Record who you spoke to and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of your actions.
- Do not contact or confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible.

### **2. What to do if you have concerns**

It is not the responsibility of an employee to take individual responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse is actually taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults in order that appropriate agencies (e.g. local social services) can then make enquiries and take any necessary action. **See Appendix A** for a Quick Guide to Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedure.

In being vigilant of child and vulnerable adult protection it is crucial that all employees with responsibility for care are aware of the steps used to recognise signs of abuse.

There should always be a commitment to working in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about those in their care. Therefore, in most situations, it is important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child or vulnerable adult seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced a family bereavement.

There are circumstances, however, in which a child or vulnerable adult may be placed at even greater risk if such concerns were shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse, or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Council's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Coordinator as soon as possible.

Once the incident/allegation has been reported it is the responsibility of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Coordinator to inform the appropriate agency without delay.

### **3. Dealing with allegations against staff**

- Should an individual member of staff become aware of an allegation (against a colleague) of an incident of child abuse taking place, or having taken place, they should follow the procedure below:
- Take the allegation seriously. It is your duty to consider any allegation to be potentially dangerous to the child and therefore report it
- As part of your report, make a written record of any details of which you are aware
- Report the allegation to Child Protection Coordinator giving details of the allegation, how you became aware of it and any other relevant details. Try not to cloud your report with your opinions or judgements
- Do not judge or investigate. As an employee, it is important not to lose focus of your role. By reporting an allegation quickly, any necessary investigations and/or judgement can be made by trained professionals, i.e. social services and/or the police.

### **4. Maintain confidentiality**

It is extremely important that any allegations are not discussed (unless absolutely necessary) as any breaches could be damaging to the child or vulnerable adult and to any investigation which may follow. Any requests for information from members of the public (including parents) or the media should be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate for children, vulnerable adults, parents/carers and members of staff. Use of help lines support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

### **5. Support**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. (See Appendix B for useful contacts)

### **6. Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details.

## **7. Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:**

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The name, age and date of birth of the child or vulnerable adult.
- Their home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline** on **0808 800 5000**, or **Childline** on **0800 1111**.

## **APPENDICES**

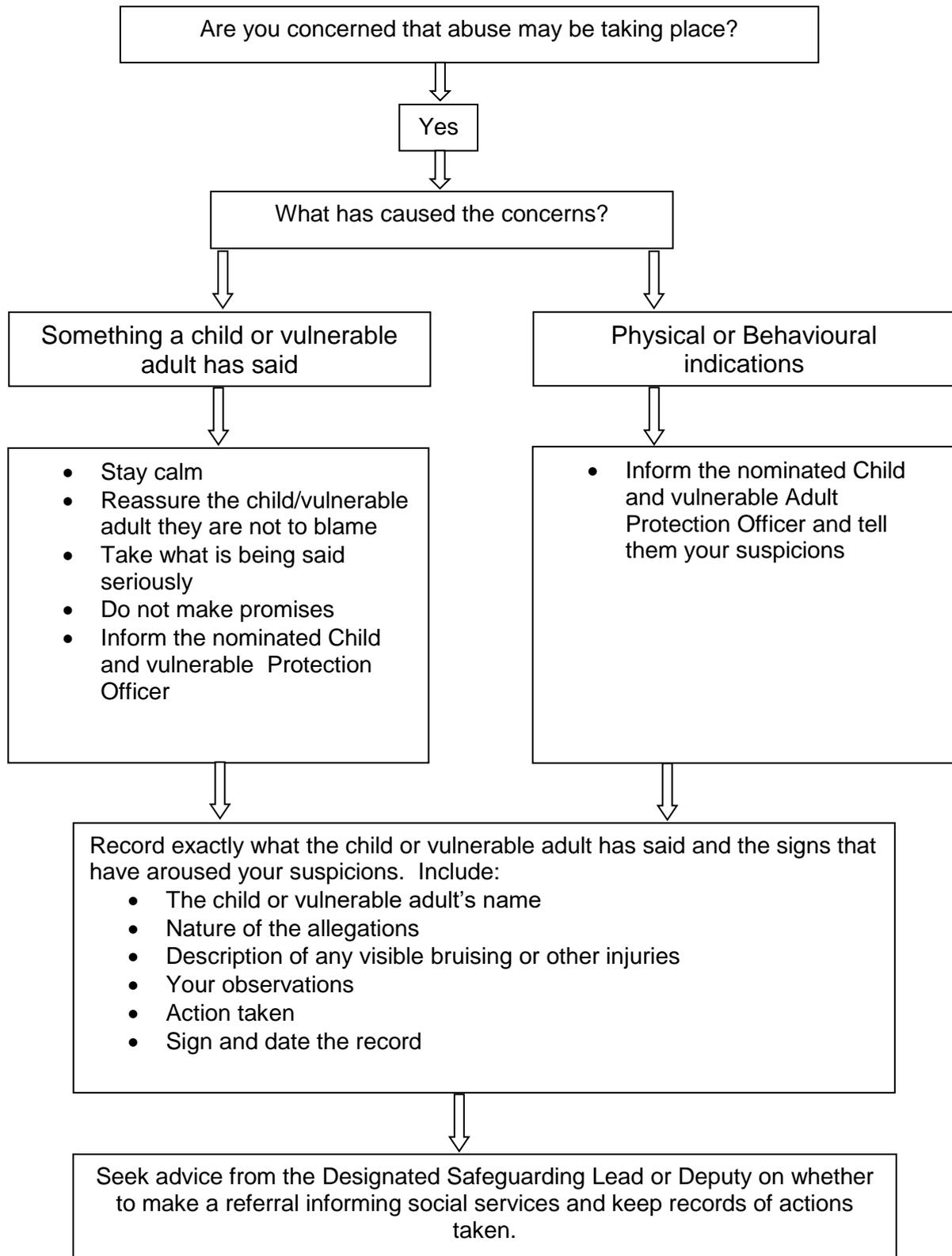
**A.** Reporting Procedure and Flow Chart

**B.** Business Conduct -

**C.** Information Sharing -

**D.** Useful Contact Details for Disclosures and Advice

## Appendix A – A quick guide to procedures



## **Appendix D - Useful Contact Details for Disclosures and Advice**

<b>Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board</b> Safeguarding Manager	<b>01452 583638</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Children and Young Person's referral team</b>	<b>01452 426565</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Service</b>	<b>01452 583636</b>
<b>Jane Bee – Allegations and Business Manager</b>	<b>01452 426994</b>
<b>Children &amp; Families Help Desk</b> (Make referral)	<b>01452 426565</b>
<b>Social Care Local Area Offices – Forest of Dean</b>	<b>01594 820500</b>
<b>Community Adult Care Directorate</b> Adult Helpdesk	<b>01452 426868</b>
<b>Police Non emergency</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Police emergency</b>	<b>999</b>
<b>Police Child Protection Unit</b>	<b>01242 261112</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service</b> Community Safety Team	<b>01452 888777</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Trading Standards</b>	<b>01452 426201</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Rape &amp; Sexual Abuse Centre</b>	<b>01452 526770</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service</b>	<b>0845 602 9035</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Community PALS</b> (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)	<b>0800 015 1548</b>
<b>Healthwatch Gloucestershire</b>	<b>0800 652 5193 or 01452 504989</b>
<b>Victim Support</b>	<b>01452 317444</b>
<b>NSPCC</b> Child Protection Helpline 24 hours, call free	<b>0800 800 5000</b>
<b>Childline UK</b> Freepost 111, London N1 OBR	<b>0800 1111</b>
<b>Age UK (formerly Age Concern and Help the Aged)</b>	<b>01452 422660</b>
<b>Alzheimer's Society</b>	<b>01452 525222</b>

<b>Silver Line</b>	<b>020 7224 2020</b>
<b>Benefit Enquiry Line</b>	<b>0800 882200</b>
<b>Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	<b>01453 762084</b>
<b>Cross Roads Caring for Carers (Forest of Dean)</b>	<b>01594 823414</b>
<b>Dementia Care Trust</b>	<b>01452 550066</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>08457 90 9090</b>
<b>Salvation Army</b>	<b>0300 3038151</b>
<b>Modern Slavery National Helpline</b>	<b>0800 121 700</b>
<b>Gloucestershire Counselling Service</b>	<b>01452 766310</b>
<b>Forest of Dean District Council Offices</b>	<b>01594 810000</b>