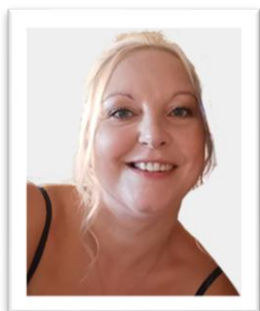




Fable House Safeguarding Policy 26/27



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Document Control

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Purpose

At Fable House, we believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them. We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

This policy, lays out the commitments made by Fable House, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Fable House also have a responsibility to ensure that if we come into contact with children and young people that we believe have been subject to external factors which cause a safeguarding concern, we will follow the appropriate procedures and report to the appropriate service.

Legal Framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. This includes:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **Prevent Duty**
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance**

- **Independent School Standards (ISS)**

Policy Statement

Fable House believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Fable House commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the 6 safeguarding principles. These are:

1. **Empowerment:** Ensuring people are confident and supported in making their own decisions and giving informed consent. Empowerment gives individuals choice and control over decisions that are made.
2. **Protection:** Providing support and representation for those greatest in need. Organisations can implement measures to prevent abuse from occurring and support those at risk.
3. **Prevention:** It is imperative to act before harm occurs, preventing neglect, harm or abuse. Organisations work to prevent abuse from happening by raising awareness, staff training and making information accessible. They also encourage individuals to ask for help if they feel at risk.
4. **Proportionality:** Explores what the least unintrusive response to a situation is in correlation to the risk. This aims to ensure the individual's life is impacted as little as possible by accurately assessing the risk.
5. **Partnership:** Forming partnerships with local communities can create solutions as they can assist in preventing and detecting abuse.
6. **Accountability:** Safeguarding is everybody's duty and people who are in contact with a vulnerable person should be responsible for noting any risks. This includes education, social care and health professionals, along with parents, relatives and members of the community.

Scope

- All staff contracted by Fable House
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Fable House, including but not limited to the following: oversight board, consultants; volunteers; contractors; and all other visitors in attendance.

What is Safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting an individuals' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

For this policy, child safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It includes providing help and support as soon as problems emerge and protecting children from maltreatment within or outside the home, including online.

This means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development

- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Creating a Culture of Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. No single practitioner can have a holistic understanding of a child's needs and circumstances. It is vital for the entire Fable House staff team, parents and carers, external professionals and stakeholders to work collaboratively to promote welfare and build a robust culture of Safeguarding.

Fable House will meet our commitments to keeping children safe by:

- Listening to children and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated safeguarding lead who takes responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation
- Writing detailed safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Making sure all staff, volunteers and visitors understand and follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Ensuring children, young people and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and children know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns
- Designing and undertaking all its programs and activities in a way that protects children from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Fable House. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implementing stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensuring staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- All staff will read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be regularly updated. Staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, as required and at least annually.
- Following up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Professional Curiosity

Staff should:

- Remain open-minded and avoid making assumptions.
- Look beyond presenting information and consider the child's wider circumstances.
- Question information that is unclear, inconsistent or does not fit with what is known about the child.

- Consider patterns and changes in behaviour, attendance, presentation and relationships.
- Recognise that children with SEND may communicate distress through behaviour rather than direct disclosure.
- Be alert to disguised compliance, where apparent cooperation from an adult does not result in meaningful or sustained improvement for the child.
- Focus on the lived experience and outcomes for the child, rather than solely on adult explanations or engagement.
- Record concerns promptly on CPOMS and raise them directly with the DSL or Deputy DSL where an immediate response or safeguarding advice is required. Respectfully challenge or escalate where concerns remain.
- Remain professionally curious without investigating concerns themselves.

Early and Targeted Support

Fable House recognises the importance of identifying emerging needs and providing support at the earliest opportunity. Staff should be alert to any child who may benefit from early or targeted support and should consider the child's individual circumstances, including their SEND, communication needs, family circumstances, attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and any known vulnerabilities. Where a need is identified, Fable House will seek to work collaboratively with the child, their parents or carers and relevant professionals to ensure appropriate support is put in place.

Early support may be provided through universal or community-based services, support within Fable House, or through partnership working with other agencies. Where a child or family has multiple or more complex needs requiring coordinated, targeted support, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider whether a referral for Family Help or other relevant local services is appropriate. Staff should be aware that circumstances can change and concerns may escalate; where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately and a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police will be made as appropriate.

Fable House will actively contribute to multi-agency assessments and plans where requested and will support the effective sharing of relevant information to ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time.

Specific Vulnerabilities

It is important for staff know our students, their needs and their circumstances well. Staff should be aware of specific attributes that make students more vulnerable to Safeguarding and welfare concerns. These include, but are not limited to;

- Having Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
- Being LGBTQ+
- Poor mental health
- Being a Young Carer
- Having a medical condition
- Substance use
- Being pregnant or a parent

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Fable House recognises that children with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers to recognising or reporting abuse, neglect and exploitation. Staff should be aware that:

- Signs of abuse or distress may be mistakenly attributed to a child's SEND, diagnosis or behaviour.
- Children with communication needs may find it more difficult to recognise, understand or disclose harmful experiences.
- Children with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying, child-on-child abuse, exploitation and social isolation.
- Changes in behaviour, communication, attendance or emotional regulation may indicate an unmet need or safeguarding concern and should be considered with professional curiosity.
- A child's developmental level and understanding may differ from expectations based on their chronological age.
- Safeguarding information, education and opportunities to disclose concerns should be made accessible to the individual child, with appropriate communication support and reasonable adjustments where required.

Staff should know students well and consider their individual communication styles, needs, vulnerabilities and behaviours when identifying and responding to concerns. SEND must never be used to explain away indicators of possible harm. Any safeguarding concern should be recorded and responded to in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding Issues

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse. All children deserve the basics in life, which include:

- Love,
- Warmth,
- Attention,
- Food,
- Clean clothes,
- Safety and security,

The following are signs that a child is suffering from neglect:

- Poor appearance and hygiene
- Health and developmental issues
- Housing and family problems
- Showing signs of hunger
- Physical injuries due to lack of supervision

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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.

Indicators of Physical Abuse may include:

- Unexplained injuries (often in various stages of healing)
- Evidence of delayed or inappropriate treatment for injuries
- Wearing clothing which covers body, particularly when inappropriate for weather
- Wary of adults/hypervigilant
- Unlikely explanations for injuries
- Persistent unexplained illnesses (in the case of fabricated illness)
- Being physically violent towards others

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or producing, sexual images; watching sexual activities; encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways; or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- Frightened of being alone with people or someone they used to know.
- Displaying aggressive language or sexual behaviour that's out of character and they shouldn't know.
- Bed-wetting.
- Nightmares.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Significant increase or decrease in time spent online, texting, gaming or using social media.
- Upset, angry or distant after texting or using the internet.
- Lots of texts, emails and numbers on their phone.
- Very secretive about who they're talking to online or on the phone.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Making a child feel worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Making a child feel they are only there to meet another's needs
- Inappropriate age or developmental expectations
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse

- Making the child feel worthless and unloved
- High criticism and low warmth
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Exploitation or corruption

Emotional abuse can be hard to identify as there are often no physical signs. A young person may not realise they are being emotionally abused and may not make a disclosure until they are at 'crisis point.'

Indicators of emotional abuse include:

- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty making or maintain relationships
- Struggling to control emotions
- Being withdrawn

It is important to remember that some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Honour Based Abuse: Forced Marriage, FGM, Breast Flattening

It's suspected that 24,000 girls under the age of 15 in the UK are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). Because the summer holidays in most schools and colleges are six weeks or longer, the risk of girls undergoing FGM increases because they have the time to undergo and 'recover' from FGM. Even though social, cultural and religious reasons are given to justify FGM, it is a horrific form of child abuse that is dangerous and against the law. This 'honour-based' form of violence involves removing part or all of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Forced marriage is another common form of 'honour-based' violence and is a criminal offence in the UK. It's important to remember that forced marriages are not the same as arranged marriages – when someone enters an arranged marriage they have a choice. It's common for forced marriages to happen abroad and in secret – this type of marriage is usually planned by family members, religious leaders and often entails sexual, emotional or physical abuse.

The following are signs of forced marriage and FGM (both before and after it has happened):

- Difficulty sitting, standing or walking,
- Long periods of time in the toilet or bathroom,
- Child becomes withdrawn, anxious or depressed,
- Comes back to school or college with unusual behaviour,
- Reluctant or refusing to undergo a normal or routine medical examination,
- May not be explicit in asking for help due to embarrassment or fear,
- Repeated prolonged absences from school,
- Long breaks abroad arranged by family,
- Academic work suffers,
- Running away from school or home.

FGM differs from other kinds of abuse in terms of professionals' legal responsibilities. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a

statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Fable House ensures all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

Breast flattening (sometimes known as breast ironing) is when a girl's breasts are pressed with a hot object, massaged, pounded or flattened over time to flatten them and delay their development. Breast flattening is often done by a female family member, like a mother, aunty or grandmother, who believe this will help keep the girl safe from unwanted attention from men. Whatever the reason – breast flattening is abuse and it's wrong. It can be very painful and cause health issues.

Signs that someone is going through breast flattening/ironing:

- Talking about pain or discomfort in the breast area
- Be embarrassed about their body
- Be afraid the get changed for sports as they want to hide their scars or bandages
- Tell you it is happening to them, but don't understand it is harmful

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Fable House recognises that mental health and emotional wellbeing are important aspects of safeguarding and that difficulties with mental health can, in some circumstances, be an indicator that a child has experienced or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All staff should be aware of changes in a student's behaviour, presentation, attendance, engagement or emotional wellbeing that may indicate they require additional support. Staff will consider each student's individual circumstances, including their SEND, communication needs, developmental level and any known vulnerabilities, and will seek to understand the underlying reasons for changes in behaviour rather than viewing behaviour in isolation.

Fable House staff do not diagnose mental health conditions and should not attempt to do so. Their role is to recognise and respond to concerns, provide appropriate support within their professional role, and ensure that concerns are shared or referred to appropriately. Where staff have concerns about a student's mental health or wellbeing, these should be shared with the appropriate member of staff and, where there is also a safeguarding concern, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Fable House will work collaboratively with students, parents and carers and, where appropriate, external health, social care and other professionals to identify needs and provide or access suitable support. Where specialist assessment or intervention may be required, appropriate referrals or signposting will be considered. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, staff will follow Fable House's safeguarding and child protection procedures without delay.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.

Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.

This type of harm can be committed or facilitated by organised criminal networks and gangs which young people are members of. Young people are not always recognised as victims and may be criminalised for actions they take under coercion.

Signs of sexual exploitation and grooming:

- Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Being frightened of some people, situation, or places
- Being secretive
- Sharp changes in mood or character
- Having money or things they can't or won't explain
- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area.
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy
- Involved in a gang
- Involved in criminal activities, selling drugs or shoplifting

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

What is a gang?

The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.

- Peer group
A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.
- Street group

“Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.”

- Organised criminal gangs

“A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.’”

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of ‘gang’ and not every ‘gang’ is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime. Young people are not always recognised as victims and may be criminalised for actions they take under coercion.

What is county lines?

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:

- Airbnb short term rental properties
- Budget hotels
- the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing.

Signs of cuckooing:

- signs of drug use
- more people coming and going from the property
- more cars or bikes outside
- litter outside
- you haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, they've seemed anxious, distracted or not themselves.

Children living in these properties are at risk of neglect and other types of abuse.

Signs of criminal exploitation

- Frequently absent from or doing badly in school
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone who is older than them
- Being angry, aggressive or violent
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Having unexplained money and buying new things
- Wearing clothing or accessories in gang colours and or getting tattoos
- Using new slang words
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.

- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

Exploiting a child into committing crimes is abusive. Children who are targeted can also be groomed, physically abused, emotionally abused, sexually exploited or trafficked. However, as children involved in gangs often commit crimes themselves, sometimes they aren't seen as victims by adults and professionals, despite the harm they have experienced. It's important to spot the signs and act quickly if you think a child is being groomed or is becoming involved with a gang.

Serious Violence and Weapons

Fable House recognises that involvement in serious violence may include students carrying, possessing or using weapons, including knives or other objects intended to cause harm. Staff should be alert to any indication that a student may be carrying a weapon, considering carrying one for protection, or associating with individuals or groups where weapons and violence are present. A student carrying a weapon may themselves be at significant risk of harm, exploitation or coercion, as well as presenting a potential risk to others. Staff should be aware of indicators of involvement in serious violence, including increased absence from education, changes in friendships or associations, unexplained injuries, deterioration in wellbeing or educational engagement, and unexplained gifts or possessions.

In order to keep themselves and students safe, staff should not attempt to remove a weapon from a student and should immediately alert a member of the Senior Leadership Team in line with the confiscation policy.

Any concern relating to weapons or serious violence must be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. The school will assess the immediate risk to the child and others and take appropriate action, including involving parents or carers, children's social care, external support services and/or the police where necessary.

Online Abuse

From cyber-bullying, sexual abuse, grooming, exploitation and emotional abuse there are many types of online abuse, and there is a greater risk of children experiencing this during the holidays, as they use social media to stay in touch with friends. The following are signs that a child is experiencing abuse online:

- Drastic increase or decrease in the time spent online, texting, gaming or using social media.
- After using their phone/tablet/computer, they are upset or angry.
- Secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing.

By closely monitoring a child's online activity, implementing strict privacy settings on their devices and educating children about the dangers of the internet we can prevent online abuse.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can include physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse and psychological or emotional abuse. It can consist of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour and can occur inside or outside the home. Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the statutory definition applies where both individuals are aged 16 or over and are personally connected.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right. A child who sees, hears or experiences the effects of domestic abuse and is related to, or under the parental responsibility of, either the victim or perpetrator is recognised as a victim under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant and long-lasting impact on a child's safety, emotional wellbeing, development and education.

Staff should also be aware that domestic abuse can include teenage relationship abuse and child-to-parent or caregiver abuse. Young people may experience controlling, coercive, threatening, physical, emotional or sexual behaviour within their own intimate relationships, including abuse facilitated through technology. Where one or both young people are under 16, the behaviour may not fall within the statutory definition of domestic abuse but should still be recognised and responded to as child-on-child abuse and a safeguarding concern.

Any concern that a child is experiencing or affected by domestic abuse must be recorded and responded to in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

Fable House is part of Operation Encompass. This is a police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who witness/experience domestic abuse.

Operation Encompass means that the Education Safeguarding Service will share information about domestic abuse incidents with our school prior to the start of the next school day when the police have been called to a domestic incident.

Parental Conflict

Some level of conflict between parents is often a normal part of everyday life. It may become a safeguarding or welfare concern when the conflict is frequent, intense, poorly resolved or damaging. This can include unresolved arguing, silence, lack of respect or lack of resolution. This conflict can affect children in all types of parental relationships. It can have a significant negative impact on children's mental health and long-term life chances.

Staff may hear about parental conflict:

- Directly from a child
- Through a child's work, such as written work in English
- Through a child's actions during play
- From parents during parents' evening or other meetings

Child on Child Abuse (excluding harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence)

At Fable House, we believe all students have a right to attend and learn in a safe environment. Students should be free from harm by other students. We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively

affect the learning and wellbeing of others. Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms.

This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, biting, shaking, pushing or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Bullying, including physical, verbal, emotional and online bullying.
- Threatening, intimidating, humiliating or coercive behaviour.
- Prejudice-based or discriminatory abuse, including abuse relating to disability, race, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation and misogyny
- Deliberately excluding, isolating or controlling another child.
- Taking, damaging or withholding another child's belongings or money.
- Extortion, coercion or pressuring another child to provide money, possessions or services.
- Initiation or hazing-type behaviour involving harassment, abuse or humiliation.
- Encouraging, pressuring or coercing another child to engage in criminal or harmful behaviour.
- Abuse within teenage or adolescent relationships, including controlling or coercive behaviour.
- Threatening another child with a weapon or other object intended to cause harm.
- Online abuse, including threats, harassment, impersonation, deliberately sharing private information or encouraging others to target a child.
- Exploitation of a child's vulnerabilities, including those associated with SEND, communication difficulties or social understanding.

It is important to remember that Child on Child Abuse does not occur in a vacuum. It occurs in a society where there are structures and norms that shape young people's views, experiences and behaviours, as well as responses to them. Consequently, it is vital for educational settings to use curriculum, pastoral and safeguarding approaches to address these issues and potential misconceptions. At Fable House, our ethos and curriculum are designed to develop students' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.

It is also important for staff to be aware of potential vulnerabilities to effectively safeguarding from child on child abuse. For example, age, gender, developmental understanding and social status.

Staff should be aware of key times during the school day where students may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse. For example, times with lower levels of supervision and immediately before or after school.

Child on Child Abuse is a safeguarding concern for all involved, including the victim, perpetrator and witnesses.

Through education and early intervention, Child on Child Abuse is preventable. Staff should take early action in relation to any concerns.

Our behaviour and bullying policies outline further information on our strategies to mitigate the risk of child on child abuse.

Child on Child Abuse: harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence

Fable House recognises that sexual behaviours between children exist on a continuum and may occur in person or online. Behaviour should be considered in the context of the child's age, developmental stage, SEND, vulnerability, frequency of behaviour, consent, power imbalance and the presence of coercion.

The continuum includes:

- *Developmentally appropriate* – age and developmentally appropriate curiosity, conversations or behaviours which are mutual and consensual.
- *Inappropriate* – sexualised language, jokes, comments, gestures or behaviour that is inappropriate for the child's age, developmental stage or situation.
- *Problematic* – persistent or intrusive sexualised behaviour, repeated sexual comments or harassment, sharing inappropriate sexual content, or behaviour which causes distress to another child.
- *Abusive* – unwanted sexual touching, upskirting, coercion, intimidation, exploitation, threats or behaviour involving a significant imbalance of power or lack of consent.
- *Violent* – serious sexual behaviour including sexual assault, assault by penetration, rape or other sexual offences.

Staff should recognise that behaviour can escalate along this continuum, particularly where inappropriate sexualised behaviour is normalised, minimised or left unchallenged. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as “banter” or an inevitable part of growing up.

Staff should be alert to misogyny and sexist attitudes, including language and behaviours which demean, objectify, intimidate or seek to control girls and women. Such attitudes can contribute to a culture in which sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour are normalised. Staff are expected to challenge misogynistic and sexist language, attitudes and behaviour whenever they encounter them, responding in a way that is appropriate to the student's age, developmental level and individual needs.

As part of our preventative approach, students are explicitly taught about misogyny, sexism, healthy relationships, consent, respect and harmful sexual behaviour through PSHE and RSE, with teaching adapted to ensure it is accessible and meaningful for students with SEND.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos of children require a safeguarding response, whether the sharing was consensual or non-consensual. This includes images which have been digitally manipulated or generated using AI.

All concerns about harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence or the sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery must be reported promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL and responded to in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

Transgender and Gender-Questioning Students

Fable House is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which all students, including those who are transgender or questioning their gender, feel valued and able to access education without fear of discrimination, bullying or harassment. We recognise that each student's experience is individual and will respond sensitively to their needs, wishes and circumstances, taking time to listen to and understand the young person.

Where a student requests support in relation to their gender or social transition, decisions will be considered on an individual basis, with the student's wellbeing, safeguarding and best interests at the centre. Wherever possible and appropriate, Fable House will work collaboratively with parents and carers, recognising the important role families can play in supporting a young person, while prioritising the student's safety and wellbeing.

We recognise that a young person's understanding of their gender may develop or change over time. Students who wish to pause, change or fully or partially reverse a social transition will be treated with the same respect and sensitivity and supported without judgement. Where appropriate, Fable House will work with the student, their parents or carers and relevant professionals to ensure that suitable support is available.

Fable House will respect students' chosen names and agreed forms of address in accordance with individual support arrangements, while maintaining accurate statutory records, including the student's biological sex, where legally required and for safeguarding purposes. Such information will be handled sensitively and confidentially and shared only with relevant staff.

Fable House will remain alert to any additional vulnerabilities or safeguarding concerns and will take appropriate action to protect students from bullying, discrimination, abuse or exploitation.

Toilets, Washing and Changing Facilities

All student toilet facilities at Fable House are individual, self-contained, gender-neutral and accessible. Each toilet is contained within a separate room, is intended for use by one person at a time and can be secured from the inside, providing privacy and dignity for all students. This arrangement enables students to access facilities safely regardless of sex, gender, disability or additional need, while maintaining appropriate safeguarding and privacy. Where a student requires additional support to use toilet or washing facilities, this will be considered on an individual basis and appropriate arrangements will be agreed, taking account of the student's needs, dignity, privacy and safety in line with our Intimate Care Policy. Any safeguarding concerns relating to the use of toilet or washing facilities will be managed in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

Extremism, Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of an educational organisation's safeguarding approach. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremist ideology may be related to (but not limited to); radical

religious ideology, racism, misogyny/incel culture, far-right movements, far-left movements, white supremacy.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The organisation's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

See our Prevent Risk assessment which outlines how we ensure our students are protected from radicalisation in our specific context.

Young Carers

Fable House recognises that children and young people who have caring responsibilities for a family member may have additional support and safeguarding needs. Caring responsibilities can have a significant impact on a young person's attendance, attainment, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and ability to engage fully in education. Staff will remain alert to signs that a student may have caring responsibilities, including where these have not previously been identified or disclosed. We recognise that early identification is essential to ensuring that young carers receive appropriate support at the right time. Where a young carer is identified, staff will work sensitively with the young person and, where appropriate, their family to understand their individual circumstances and needs. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider whether additional support or referral is required, including support from relevant external partners, local authority services or health services. Any safeguarding concerns identified in relation to a young carer will be responded to in accordance with Fable House's usual safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Children with Medical Conditions

Fable House recognises that having a medical condition does not, in itself, constitute a safeguarding concern. A safeguarding referral should only be considered where there is reason to believe that a child may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation because of, or in connection with, their medical condition. Staff should remain alert to concerns such as medical needs not being appropriately met, necessary treatment or medication being withheld, or a child's condition increasing their vulnerability to harm or exploitation. Where such concerns arise, staff should report them promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL, who will consider whether further safeguarding action or referral is required.

Attendance

Fable House recognises that poor or irregular attendance is not, in itself, a safeguarding concern; however, patterns of absence or changes in attendance can be an important indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, unmet need or deteriorating wellbeing. Staff should remain professionally curious about the reasons for absence and consider attendance alongside other information known about the student.

Particular attention will be given to students who are persistently or severely absent, have repeated or unexplained absences, are accessing a part-time timetable, experience repeated suspensions, are at risk of permanent exclusion, or are accessing Alternative Provision, as these circumstances may increase vulnerability or indicate that additional support is required.

Fable House will work collaboratively with students, parents and carers and relevant professionals to understand and address barriers to attendance and provide appropriate support. Where attendance concerns indicate that a student may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, these will be reported and responded to in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

The Attendance Champion and Attendance Officer oversee school attendance and ensure that statutory attendance guidance is followed. Further information is contained within the Fable House Attendance Policy.

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement in which a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if the child has a disability) lives in the care of someone who is not the child's parent (s), a person with parental responsibility for the child, or a relative of the child for a period of 28 days or more. This could be a step-parent (by marriage or civil partnership), grandparent, step grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt. Private fostering is a private arrangement made by the parent(s), (or those with parental responsibility) for someone to care for their child because they are unable to do so (permanently or temporarily). This may be due to a number of reasons such as parental ill health, a parent going abroad or into prison, a child being bought to the UK to study English or the relationship between the child and parent has broken down.

Parents and carers often fail to notify schools about private fostering arrangements even though they are legally required to notify Children's Services. Often this is because they are unaware of the requirements. They believe that this is a private family arrangement which does not concern anybody else.

Education staff play an essential role in identifying privately fostered children. If you know a child is being privately fostered, you should advise the parent/carer that they have a legal obligation to report the arrangement to Children's Social Care at least six weeks before it happens or within 48 hours if the arrangement is current having been made in an emergency.

Online Safety

Online safety is a safeguarding issue, not simply an IT issue. The internet and digital technology are integral to education, communication and wider life, and Fable House has a responsibility to enable students to benefit from technology while ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place.

Fable House will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on school devices and networks. These systems will seek to protect students from harmful and inappropriate online content, including terrorist and extremist material, without unreasonably restricting access to information required for teaching and learning. Fable House currently uses Smoothwall to support its filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL oversee filtering and monitoring arrangements, with appropriate technical support. The effectiveness of these arrangements will be reviewed at least annually and appropriate checks will be undertaken and recorded. Staff are expected to understand their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring and to report any concerns, including inappropriate searches, harmful content or weaknesses in filtering and monitoring systems, promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Through the curriculum and pastoral support, students are explicitly taught how to keep themselves safe online. Teaching is adapted to take account of students' developmental levels, SEND and individual vulnerabilities and includes, where appropriate, online relationships and behaviour, privacy, harmful content, exploitation, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories.

Fable House also works with parents and carers to promote safe and responsible use of technology, including when students are accessing technology away from school. Information and support will be provided where parents or carers have concerns about their child's online activity.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Fable House recognises that generative artificial intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and safeguarding risks. The school's existing safeguarding, online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements apply to the use of generative AI.

Students' use of generative AI within Fable House will be appropriately supervised and monitored, taking account of their age, developmental level, SEND and individual vulnerabilities. Students will be supported to understand how to use AI safely, responsibly and critically, including the risks associated with inaccurate or misleading information, misinformation and disinformation, inappropriate or harmful content, privacy and personal data, and AI-generated or manipulated images.

Particular consideration will be given to the safeguarding risks associated with AI-generated or digitally manipulated sexual imagery, including deepfakes. Any incident involving nude or semi-nude imagery,

including AI-generated or digitally manipulated imagery, will be treated as a safeguarding matter and responded to in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

Where AI products are used within the setting, Fable House will consider the effectiveness of available safety, filtering and monitoring controls. Staff must report any concern about a student's use of AI, the generation or sharing of harmful or inappropriate material, or any apparent weakness in filtering or monitoring arrangements to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Further information is contained within the Fable House Online Safety Policy.

Students Over the Age of 18

Fable House is aware that students who are categorised as children (under 18) will be working in a building with students who are categorised as adults in safeguarding terms (students who are 18 and over). In order to be proportionately responsive to the risk this may present, staff will be vigilant at all times and be mindful that children are working alongside adults. We have a high staff to student ratio with students having a minimum of 1:1 support throughout the day. All students (child and adult) have an individual risk assessment which is updated annually or more often in the event of changing needs/risks. These risk assessments include details of how staff can minimise risk from one student to another where applicable. Any concerns about the behaviour of any student towards another (regardless of age) are reported to the DSL and Deputy DSL and recorded on CPOMS to be followed up in line with general safeguarding procedures.

Reporting and Response

Fable House will ensure:

- Safe, appropriate and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are available to staff and the communities we work with. Staff record safeguarding concerns on CPOMS, while external stakeholders, such as visitors, can report concerns using a Cause for Concern form.
- All safeguarding concerns should be recorded promptly on CPOMS. Where a concern requires an immediate response, or a member of staff requires safeguarding advice or clarification, they should speak directly to the DSL or Deputy DSL and should not rely solely on the CPOMS notification.
- Where neither the DSL nor Deputy DSL is available and the concern requires an immediate response, staff must speak directly to another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), who will ensure appropriate action is taken. The absence of the DSL or Deputy DSL must never delay action to safeguard a child.
- In an emergency, or where a child is at immediate risk of harm, appropriate emergency or statutory services should be contacted without delay.
- Any staff member reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels will be protected in accordance with Fable House's Whistleblowing Policy.
- Complaints and safeguarding concerns from external sources, including members of the public, partners and official bodies, will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- Safeguarding reports and concerns will be followed up in accordance with Fable House's safeguarding procedures.

- Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken where a member of staff is found to have breached safeguarding policy or procedures.
- Appropriate support will be offered to children who have experienced harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal process is undertaken.

The DSL or Deputy DSL will consider safeguarding concerns and determine the appropriate response. This may include continued monitoring, speaking with the student and/or parents or carers, providing or signposting to early support, considering Family Help, working with other professionals, or making a referral to Children's Social Care or other statutory services.

Where appropriate, Fable House will seek to work openly and collaboratively with parents and carers and inform them when a referral is being considered. However, consent is not required to make a safeguarding referral where there is a lawful basis to share information. Parents or carers will not be informed where doing so may place a child at increased risk of harm, prejudice an investigation or otherwise compromise safeguarding action. Decisions regarding information sharing and referrals will be appropriately recorded.

See Appendix 1 for Responding to Concerns Flowchart for Staff

See Appendix 2 for Visitor Cause for Concern Form

Record Keeping

Fable House are confident of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the Safeguarding Lead.

Staff will:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the school's CPOMS system.
- Ensure the date, time, place is recorded, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

The Safeguarding Lead will have access to safeguarding records and will ensure that all records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2006.

Where information needs to be shared between staff at Fable House in order to best protect the student, information will only be shared on a need to know basis.

Information Sharing

Fable House recognises that effective information sharing between practitioners, agencies and organisations is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Staff must not allow concerns about data protection to prevent them from sharing information where there is a safeguarding concern. Information should be shared in a timely, necessary, proportionate and secure manner with those who need it to protect a child from harm. Wherever possible, staff should be transparent with

children and families about what information will be shared and why; however, consent is not required where there is a lawful basis for sharing information for safeguarding purposes, and information should not be withheld where doing so could place a child at risk. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will use professional judgement when deciding what information should be shared, with whom and when, and will ensure that decisions and the reasons for them are appropriately recorded. When a child moves to another school or college, relevant safeguarding information and the child protection file will be transferred securely and promptly, with a clear and structured summary of current concerns, relevant context and any ongoing support needs

CCTV

Fable House uses closed circuit television (CCTV) order to provide a safe and secure environment for students, staff and visitors. This footage can be used in the event of relevant Safeguarding incidents as factual evidence.

- Students, staff and visitors are made aware of the CCTV system through signage around the building which meets legal requirements
- The images captured by the CCTV system will be retained for 28 days, except where the image identifies an issue and is retained specifically in the context of further investigation
- The recordings are kept within a secure system
- Access will be restricted to authorised personnel. Supervising the access and maintenance of the CCTV System is the responsibility of Sonia King CEO
- In certain circumstances, the recordings may also be viewed by other individuals in order to achieve the objectives set out above. When CCTV recordings are being viewed, access will be limited to authorised individuals on a need-to-know basis
- Individuals have the right to request access to CCTV footage relating to themselves under the Data Protection Act. Individuals submitting requests for access will be asked to provide sufficient information to enable the footage relating to them to be identified. The school will respond to requests within 30 calendar days of receiving the request in line with the school's data protection policy. The school reserves the right to refuse access to CCTV footage where this would prejudice the legal rights of other individuals or jeopardise an on-going investigation.

Concerns About Staff Conduct or Safeguarding Practices

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to raise concerns about the conduct of another adult or about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice within Fable House, no matter how small the concern may appear.

Where a concern relates to a member of staff, volunteer, trainee, contractor or other adult working with students, it should be reported promptly to the Headteacher. Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported to the Proprietors. Where a concern does not meet the harm threshold, it will be managed in accordance with Fable House's Low-Level Concerns procedures.

Concerns about organisational practices, procedures, decisions or failures which may compromise the safety or welfare of students should be raised promptly with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Staff are encouraged to respectfully challenge practice and should be confident that genuine safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern internally, believes there is a conflict of interest, or considers that a genuine concern has not been appropriately addressed, they should follow Fable House's Whistleblowing Policy and may raise the matter through appropriate external safeguarding or whistleblowing channels.

Staff should never assume that somebody else will raise a concern or allow concerns about professional relationships, hierarchy or possible repercussions to prevent them from acting to safeguard a child.

Links to other policies

Behaviour Policy

Online Safety Policy

Attendance Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Prevent Risk Assessment

PSHE/RSE Policy

Recruitment Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Physical Intervention, Confiscation and Absconding Student Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Student Equality Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Fable House Safeguarding Team

DSL – Claire Thorpe c.thorpe@fablehouse.org

Deputy DSL- Lizzy Latham l.latham@fablehouse.org

Local Authority

Kirklees Safeguarding Children Partnership (KSCP)

Kirklees Council

Kirklees Safeguarding Children Partnership

PO Box 1720

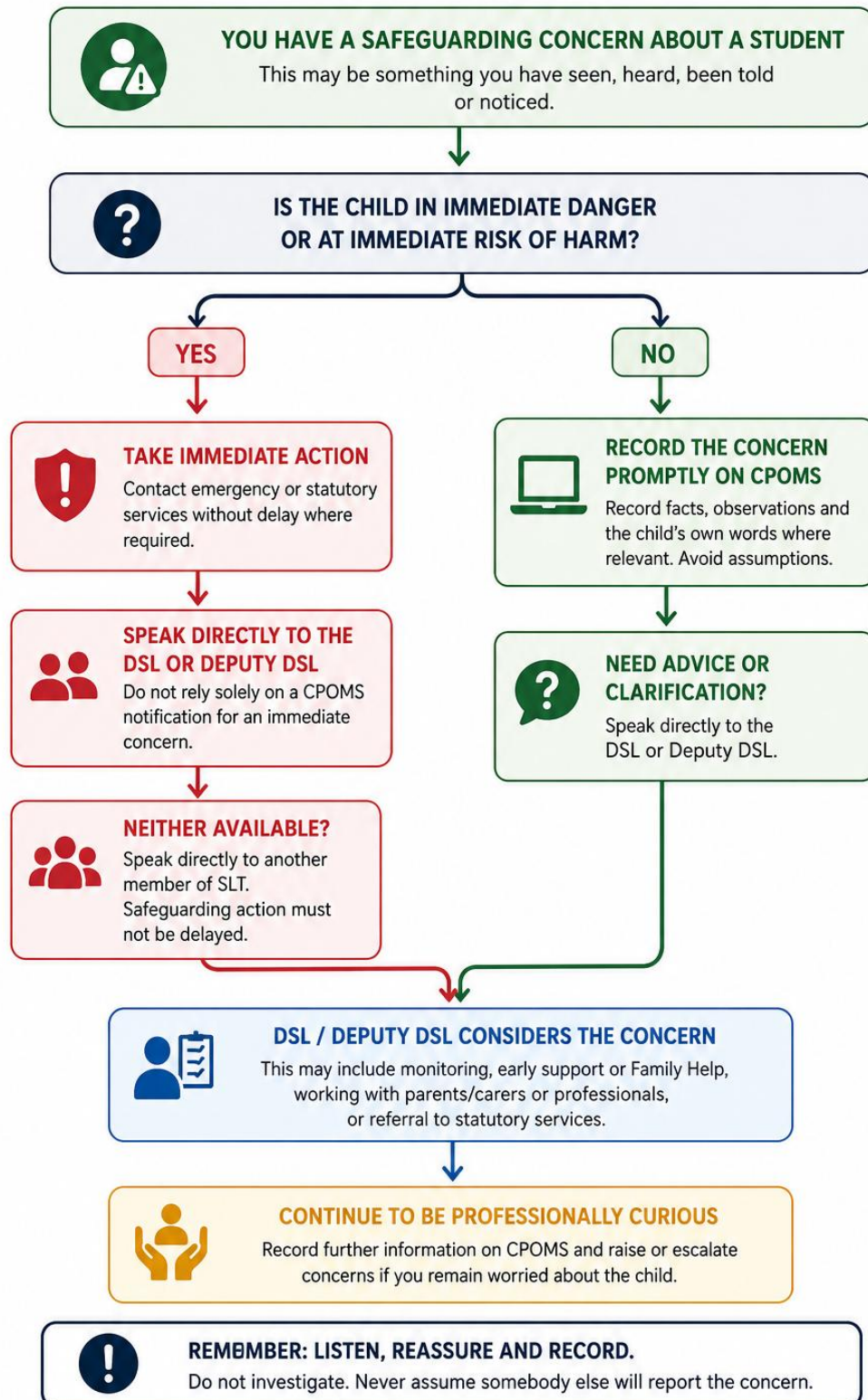
HUDDERSFIELD

HD1 9EL

Duty & Advice Team Tel: 01484 456848

Appendix 1: Responding to Concerns Flowchart for Staff

RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN A GUIDE FOR STAFF



Appendix 2: Cause for Concern for Visitors

SAFEGUARDING CAUSE FOR CONCERN FORM

Name of
Student:

Date of record:

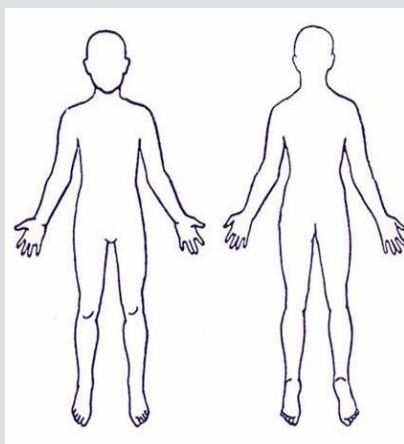
Name of
Referrer:

Date of incident:



Details of concern:

- Write a factual account
- Record what has been said verbatim if possible
- Use the body map to record any physical injuries observed



Signed:

Please return this to Reception for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead