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| <p style="text-align: center;">Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults Policy POSCH (Parents and Carers of Special Children)</p> |
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Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone

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This statement of policy and procedures applies to all staff and volunteers, employed or deployed by POSCH. It is about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, that is: promoting their welfare and protecting them from harm or exploitation. A child is defined as someone who is under the age of 18. A vulnerable adult is defined as someone over 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Review

POSCH will ensure that issues of safeguarding receive continuous attention and will regularly review the way that we operate to support this principle. The Safeguarding policy should be reviewed annually and when there are any changes in legislation.

Date approved: October 2017

Date of next review: October 2018



1. Policy statement

POSCH is committed to provide a safe environment for children young people, parents and visitors and promote a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns that they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

- POSCH believes that all children and young people, regardless of age and background, have at all times and in all situations, the right to enjoy the activities of the group in a happy, safe and secure environment.
- POSCH will ensure that this is the case by rigorously implementing this policy. All trustee's and volunteers will be checked through the DBS. This policy applies to all trustees and volunteers at POSCH and members who use the settings.
- POSCH believes that all children/young people have a right to protection from exploitation and abuse.
- The welfare of children/young people and vulnerable adults overrides all other considerations.
- POSCH associates, employees and volunteers will take seriously and immediately report allegations or suspicions of abuse concerning children/young people and adults for whom services are being provided.
- POSCH will work in partnership with local authorities and other agencies to enable children/young people and adults to understand what abuse is and their right to be protected from harm.
- POSCH will ascertain the wishes and feelings of children/young people and families for whom services are provided, inform them of their rights, help them put forward their views.
- POSCH will pay particular attention to the needs of disabled children and their families who are statistically at an increased risk of abuse and exploitation.
- POSCH is committed to providing an effective complaints procedure for children and young people and their families to whom services are provided (see complaints procedure).
- In considering the needs of families, children and young people, POSCH will positively promote their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, health, gender, sexuality and special needs (see equality and diversity policy).
- POSCH are committed to providing high quality support and supervision to all volunteers and staff providing services to adults, children and young people who have suffered abuse, and provide appropriate support services to them.

- POSCH will work in partnership with the families of children and young people who have suffered abuse and keep them fully informed.
- Training in Safeguarding will be provided for all staff and volunteers. All staff and volunteers must undertake Basic Awareness Safeguarding training as part of their induction, either as an e-learning package or in a group setting, plus other training courses as appropriate to their role. For all staff Safeguarding Training will be part of their continuous professional development, and training must be *refreshed with every significant change of trustees*.
- POSCH actively supports the 5 aims of The Care Act 2014 relating to co-operation. The five aims include:
 1. Promoting the wellbeing of adults needing care and support and of carers;
 2. Improving the quality of care and support for adults and support for carers (including the outcomes from such provision);
 3. Smoothing the transition from children's to adults' services;
 4. Protecting adults with care and support needs who are currently experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect.
 5. Identifying lessons to be learned from cases where adults with needs for care and support have experienced serious abuse or neglect.

2. Types and signs of abuse

Abuse is generally divided into four categories

Discriminatory Abuse

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 or similar treatment. Excluding a person from activities on the basis they are 'not liked' is also discriminatory abuse.

Domestic Abuse

Examples of domestic abuse include Psychological; Physical; Sexual; Financial; Emotional abuse; as well as so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The Home Office (March 2013) defines domestic abuse as: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse... by someone who is or has been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality".

Financial or Material Abuse

Theft, fraud, internet scamming, postal and doorstep scams, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits are all forms of financial abuse and are more often than not targeted at adults at risk. The adult at risk can be persuaded to part with large sums of money and in some cases their life savings. These instances should always be reported to the local police service and local authority Trading Standard services for investigation. The SAB will need to consider how to involve local Trading Standards in its work. Financial abuse can have serious effects including loss of income and independence and harm to health, including mental health. Where the abuse is perpetrated by someone who has the authority to manage an adult's money, the relevant body should be informed, e.g. the Office of the Public Guardian for deputies and attorneys and DWP for appointees.

Modern Slavery

Slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. A person commits an offence if:

- The person holds another person in slavery or servitude and the circumstances are such that the person knows or ought to know that the other person is held in slavery or servitude; or
- The person requires another person to perform forced or compulsory labour and the circumstances are such that the person knows or ought to know that the other person is being required to perform forced or compulsory labour. There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. Someone is in slavery if they are:
 - 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, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property';
 - Physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement;
 - Human trafficking , recruited and transported for example using threats, coerce or force a person into sexual exploitation , forced labour or domestic servitude.
- Contemporary slavery takes various forms and affects people of all ages, gender and races. Adults who are enslaved are not always subject to human trafficking. Recent court cases have found homeless adults promised paid work opportunities enslaved and forced to work and live in dehumanised conditions, and adults with a learning difficulty restricted in their movements and threatened to hand over their finances and work for no gains.



From 1 November 2015, specified public authorities have a duty to notify the Secretary of State of any individual identified in England and Wales as a suspected victim of slavery or human trafficking, under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Neglect also includes a failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk for themselves.

Organisational Abuse

Is the mistreatment, abuse or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in a setting or service where the adult lives or that they use. Such abuse violates the person's dignity and represents a lack of respect for their human rights.

Physical Abuse

Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Restraint

Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions. In extreme circumstances unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint may constitute a criminal offence. Someone is using restraint if they use force, or threaten to use force, to make someone do something they are resisting, or where an adult's freedom of movement is restricted, whether they are resisting or not. Restraint covers a wide range of actions. It includes the use of active or passive means to ensure that the person concerned does something, or does not do something they want to do, for example, the use of key pads to prevent people from going where they want from a closed environment.

Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Sexual Abuse

Examples of sexual abuse include rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. Sexual abuse is not confined to issues of consent the following factors should also be considered:

- Any sexual relationship or inappropriate sexualised behaviour between a member of staff and service user should lead to disciplinary proceedings;
- A sexual act between a care worker and service user with a mental disorder is also a criminal offence under section 38- 42 of the Sexual Offences Act.

Signs of Abuse

The signs summarised below do not necessarily mean that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused. Similarly there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried report it to the designated person. It is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting.

Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Bald patches
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Running away

Signs of Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciated, decline in health for no reason
- Frequent lateness or non attendance at school/provision

- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships, lack of money
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging

Signs of Emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and/or emotional development slows down
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. thumb sucking, hair twisting, etc.
- Self harm
- Fear of parents or carers being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Substance misuse
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing, scavenging

Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Lack of trust in adults and/or fear of a particular individual[s]
- Over familiarity with adults or provocative behaviour
- Withdrawal and introversion/problems with peer relationships
- Running away from home/sudden behaviour changes e.g. falling standards, truancy, stealing etc.
- Low self esteem
- Substance misuse
- Displaying sexual knowledge beyond age group
- Involvement in prostitution

Patterns of Abuse

Abuse can take place in any context. It may occur when an adult at risk lives alone or with a relative; it may also occur within nursing, residential or day care settings, within hospitals or other places previously assumed safe, or in public places.

Patterns of abuse may reflect very different dynamics, such as:

- Serial abuse in which someone seeks out and ‘grooms’ individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse;
- Long term abuse may occur in the context of an ongoing relationship such as domestic violence between partners or generations or persistent psychological abuse;
- Opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around;
- Self-neglect, where a person declines support and assistance with their care and support needs, impacting on their individual wellbeing.
- Abuse may consist of:
 - A single or repeated acts
 - An act of commission or omission
 - Multiple acts, for example, an adult at risk may be neglected and also being financially abused. Abuse may be intentional or unintentional. A number of abusive acts are crimes and informing the police must be a key consideration

3. What to do: Responding to disclosures of abuse

It is not the responsibility of employees/volunteers to deal with suspected abuse but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the designated person. It is important that all employees/volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities if child or vulnerable adult abuse is suspected.

Concerns would normally be shared with parents/carers as soon as possible. However, there could be circumstances when this could put the person at greater risk or there may be concerns that parents/carers will not respond appropriately.

If you notice any social changes in the behaviour of a child young person or vulnerable adult, worrying marks or bruises or hear someone talking about things which give cause for concern, then your first responsibility is to the child. It is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising and coping with abuse is very stressful and the person reporting the concern will not have to cope alone.

If a child, young person or adult spontaneously talks of experiences which give cause for concern volunteers at the POSCH should:

1. Explain to the child, young person or adult that if he/she discloses information which leads you to believe they are being abused, you will be unable to keep it confidential.
2. Listen to the child young person or adult without questioning him/her. Be aware of your own reactions as showing disapproval may stop the child from continuing with their disclosure.
3. Do not try to stop the child, young person or adult from recalling events. Make a note of what is said, in what context, the setting, the timing and which people were present.
4. Reassure the child, young person or adult tell them that they are right to tell you (do not promise to keep it a secret as it is your responsibility to inform others).
5. Stay calm – ensure the child, young person or adult is safe and feels safe.
6. Accept what you have been told. (This should not be seen as believing or disbelieving what you have been told)
7. Reassure the child, young person or adult and stress that they are not to blame.
8. Tell the child, young person or adult that you will offer support but you will have to pass the information on.
9. Do not question the child, young person or adult and/or rush into details that may be inappropriate.
10. Monitor the individuals concerned; encourage them to continue to take part in the Organisation's activities.
11. Do not make promises you cannot keep.
12. Do not approach or contact the alleged abuser(s).

Reporting Procedures

- Record the concern or incident- use the Record of Concern Template APPENDIX 1. Include date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made. Record the names of the people involved and what was said and done by whom and any action taken.
- Inform the designated name person for Child and vulnerable adult Protection or the deputy immediately. Remember that confidentiality is of the utmost importance.
 - If the matter is urgent and none of the above can be contacted, then contact Social Care (**During Office Hours by phone: 01609 780780 or outside office hours on 01609 780780**) or **Dial 999** the police or ambulance **if a crime, injury or immediate risk is perceived.**
 - The Designated person will contact the appropriate authorities including the Duty Team as soon as possible.

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/> and

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>

Whether information is shared with or without the adult at risk's consent, the information sharing process should abide by the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. In those instances where the person lacks the mental capacity to give

informed consent, staff should always bear in mind the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and whether sharing it will be in the person's best interest.

Managing allegations against staff

Allegations against people who work with children and vulnerable adults, including any POSCH staff or volunteers must be referred to the area local authority following consultation with the supervisor or senior colleague, as described above. North Yorkshire has a designated officer within the safeguarding board who offers support and advice in relation to allegations and monitors how they are dealt with. This person can be consulted to decide if a concern warrants a referral or not. When a referral is made, the area local authority will hold a strategy discussion to decide how to act and coordinate the response of the different agencies. The area local authority is responsible for the welfare of the child concerned, the police for any criminal investigation and the employer/agency for the disciplinary process. There may have been an initial telephone strategy discussion to agree immediate action, but this should be followed by a face to face meeting involving all agencies to coordinate the 3 processes. The manager or their delegated manager should attend.

If the allegation concerns a member of staff, POSCH board of trustees should be consulted about the implementation of the disciplinary process, taking advice as appropriate from the local authority.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and the Care Act 2014 clarifies when this procedure should be used, namely, when a person has;

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult,
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or vulnerable adult
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

Strategy meetings may be chaired by the LADO who has a responsibility to monitor the progress of all allegations. Thus the LADO must be informed of allegations within one working day. The LADO also monitors to ensure that allegations are dealt with consistently, that the same process is applied and that outcomes are appropriate. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, Handling Allegations of Abuse made against Adults who Work with Children and Young People (DCSF May 2009) the Care Act 2014 and the area local authority safeguarding procedures must be consulted when dealing with allegations against staff or workers.

If a member of staff or a volunteer is subject to this process, there has to be a written record of the outcome. If the area local authority and the police take no further action, it is essential that the charity obtains their view in writing as to what action, if

any, the charity should take. Area local authorities and the police cannot direct the charity to reach a particular disciplinary judgement, but they can advise that the charity implements disciplinary procedures. Whilst the focus of this policy is safeguarding children and young people, it is important to ensure that any staff or worker subject to this process are treated honestly and fairly and receive appropriate support. However, when an allegation is being investigated by the Police, it is essential to agree with the Police and Local Authority designated person responsible for safeguarding either children or adults, what information can be shared with the member of staff or worker.

Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

If the charity dismisses a member of staff or volunteer in relation to an allegation, or a member of staff or volunteer resigns, but would have been dismissed, the charity has a statutory duty to refer the person to the Independent Safeguarding Authority. DBS will consider whether or not to bar the person from working with children and vulnerable adults.

Referrals to DBS must state the grounds for the referral and the evidence that demonstrates the referral criteria are met. If a local authority recommends referring either a member of staff or a volunteer to DBS, e.g. following a strategy discussion, it is essential that the request is received in writing, from the local authority, with the written agreement of the local authority designated responsible person stating the evidence that supports the local authority's request. The charity would normally only refer staff or workers to DBS once any disciplinary process is complete and referrals must be made in line with the DBS guidance demonstrating how the individual has;

- engaged in relevant conduct;
- satisfied the Harm Test; or
- received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

Designated Person

There will be a named designated person and a deputy-designated person for child protection and safeguarding. In the event of any concerns regarding a child, young person or vulnerable adult then the designated person or deputy will be informed at the earliest available opportunity. If necessary the designated person will inform the relevant Social Care without delay and the management committee. The designated person will also ensure that the child protection procedures are kept up to date and reviewed.

Named designated person: Anita Reeves (Coordinator)
Contact details: 07763 960905
Or poschcharity@outlook.com

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Named Deputy: Andrea Hobbs (Chair)
Contact details: 07899790126
Or andrea.hobbs027@gmail.com
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4.Organisational commitments

Recruitment

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with POSCH.

Volunteer recruitment procedures will include a DBS check at the appropriate level. This will include all members of the POSCH management committee. We will ensure that all volunteers have appropriate training.

Should any concerns arise following a DBS then this will be passed onto the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board will be contacted for information and guidance. Any Disclosure that causes concern will be assessed to establish the level of risk the subject poses to children, other service users, volunteers, the general public and POSCH. A number of questions will be asked:

- Does the offence relate directly to work with children or vulnerable adults?
- What is the seriousness of the offence/s and the circumstances surrounding it?
- How long it is since the offence was committed?
- Does the subject have a pattern of offending?
- Has the subject's situation changed since the offence occurred?
- What is the subject's explanation of the offence?
- Did the subject declare the offence prior to the Disclosure?

If all these questions are not answered satisfactorily then the prospective volunteer will go through a probation and induction process, including relevant training. Ongoing training and supervision will ensure all volunteers are adequately supported.

Training and supervision of volunteers

New volunteers will have a designated person (supervisor) that will ensure that a proper induction takes place. The supervisor will provide regular support and supervision to the new volunteer in all areas of their work including child protection. All new volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction

process. Volunteers will be able to identify the signs of abuse and will be confident about the steps to take and who to report any concerns.

All staff and volunteers will attend external training on Safeguarding provided by North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board or other relevant providers. Until external training is possible, safeguarding training will be cascaded by supervisor at POSCH. Volunteers will keep a check on visitors and guests whether their visit is by invitation or unsolicited.

Creating a Safe and Caring Environment

- Risk Assessment should be undertaken prior to any offsite visits or new types of activities.
- Employees/volunteers working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment, activities undertaken, etc.
- Employees/volunteers working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of children as their main concern including the use of activities at an appropriate age/ability level.
- Wherever possible we will encourage an 'open environment' e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and discouraging the keeping of secrets. This especially includes employees/volunteers should being alone with a child at any time. When this is unavoidable, it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation and/or the children's parents/carers.
- Employees/volunteers must treat all children/young people with respect.
- Employees/volunteers must not make racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate.
- Employees/volunteers must take care to avoid showing any favouritism.
- It is the responsibility of employees/volunteers to prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children by older or stronger children through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation.
- Arrangements for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children from activities/trips need to be clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and employees/volunteers.

Behaviour guidelines for employees/volunteers

Safety of participants and employees/volunteers is of prime consideration at all times. All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in POSCH's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.



Employees/volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.

Employees/volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate individuals and/or agencies.

Employees/volunteers will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.

Employees/volunteers are expected to abide by the code of conduct provided during their induction

Appropriate employees/volunteers should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in any activities [this information should be confidential].

Employees/volunteers should ensure that their activities start and end on time.

Employees/volunteers are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout their activities.

Employees/volunteer should ensure that they are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through POSCH's liability insurance.

Photography, video

Formal permission from parent/carers should be obtained before taking photographs, videos, etc.

E-Safety

This is a constantly changing area of life, as technology continuously changes and develops. It offers great opportunities for communication and learning, but inevitably brings risks as well. POSCH shares the view of Child Exploitation and Online Protection (www.ceop.gov.uk) and the www.thinkuknow.co.uk website. We encourage and support adults, children and young people to use technology safely and wisely, being aware of the dangers. POSCH also has policy and procedures in relation to the staff use of mobile phones and the internet. The policy and procedures identify inappropriate use that will result in disciplinary action.

5. Monitoring and compliance

Safeguarding will be a standard item on the agenda of all trustee and committee meetings.



Policy will be reviewed annually including any other relevant practises, procedures and policies.

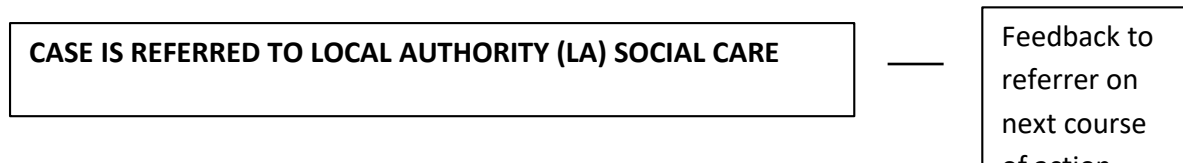
Training and supervision records of all staff and volunteers will be kept up to date.

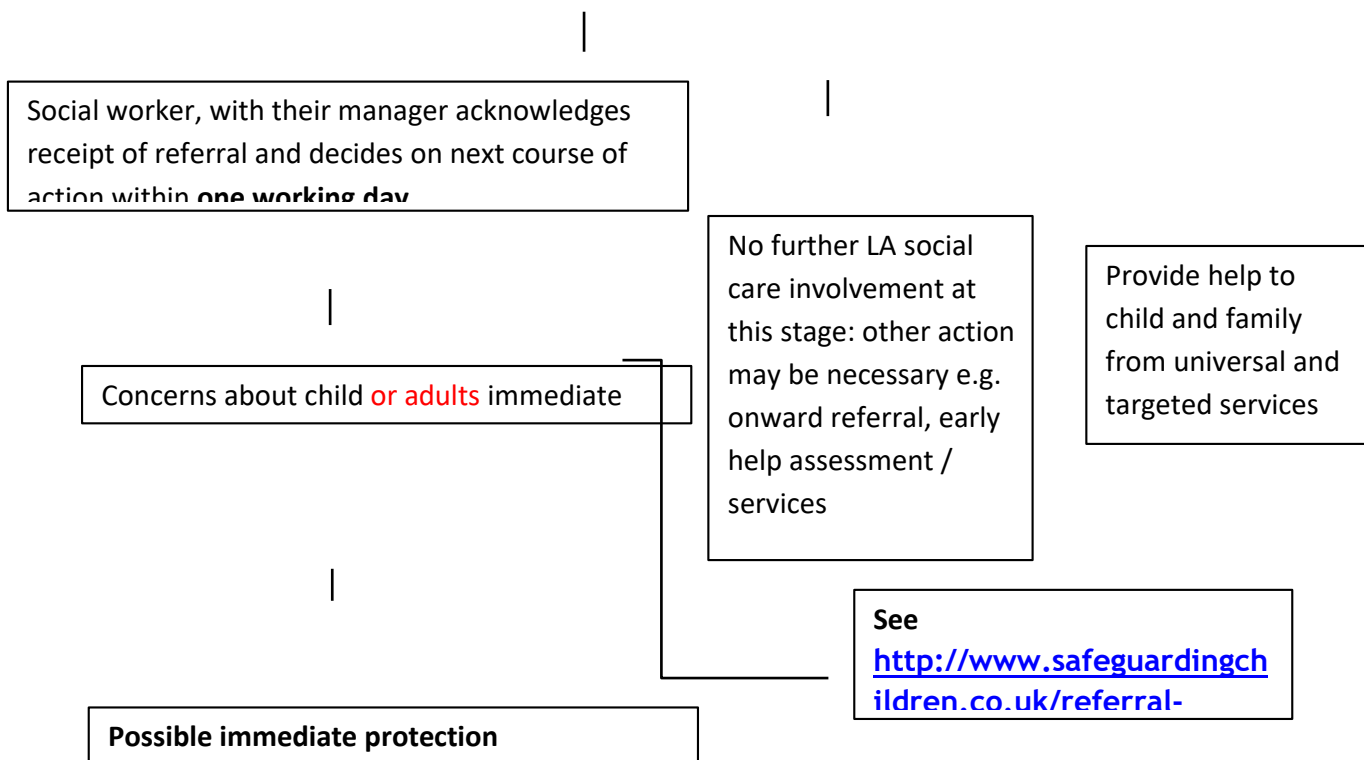
APPENDICES

Record of Concern Template for children and vulnerable adults

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| Name of child/adult Address Telephone | Parent/carers name Are they aware of concern? |
| What is said to have happened or describe what was seen (be as factual as possible, who, what where when and how with names, dates, times and place) Is child/young person or adult at immediate risk? | |

Flow chart 1: Action taken when a child is referred to local authority social care services





Professionals in all agencies have a responsibility to refer a child, young person or vulnerable adult to Social Care when it is believed or suspected that a person:

- Has suffered significant harm and /or;
- Is likely to suffer significant harm and/or;
- Has developmental and welfare needs which are likely only to be met through provision of family support services (with agreement of the adult/ child's parent/ carer).

If your concern is outside of normal office hours, you should contact the emergency duty team.

During Office Hours

By Phone: 01609 780780

Email: social.care@northyorks.gov.uk

Outside Office Hours

Emergency Duty Team (for evenings, weekends and bank holidays): 01609 780780