



An **OnSide** Youth Zone

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Signed by:

CEO, *Janne Wilson*

Date: 7th May 2026

Introduction

Wirral Youth Zone, as part of the OnSide Network of Youth Zones, exists to provide an safe, attractive, accessible, affordable facility where young people 8-19 (up to 25 with a disability) of all backgrounds and abilities can meet to play and participate in a wide range of sports, arts, music, media and developmental activities, seven days a week, where they will find positive people who listen, support, and encourage them to explore opportunities, develop their strengths and talents and have fun!

The young people's chosen name "The HIVE" represents the aspirations and values of Wirral Youth. Wirral Youth Zone will be a 'hive' of activity, adventure, and fun for all young people where they can try new experiences and learn new skills. It will be a place where young people can reach their full potential, grow their dreams and achieve their goals. It will also be a safe and supportive community for young people to belong to and in which they can be themselves.

Our Safeguarding Policy and Principles

Wirral Youth Zone believes that every organisation and its individual staff members have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the young people they are working with, from unnecessary risk and/or harm. The protection of young people is based on the principles outlined within the Children's Act 2004 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child and Working Together 2026 Guidance.

The principles recognise the welfare of the young person is paramount and all young people, regardless of age, disability, gender affirmation, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse.

We believe it is essential that everyone is clear how to report a concern about the welfare of young person. This means following the guidelines set out in this policy.

Guiding Principles

- This policy is based on the legal and statutory definitions of a child (defined as being up to 18 years old).
- The Hive will safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, within the work we do by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse.
- All young people, regardless of age, culture, any disability they may have, sex, language, racial origin, religious belief, gender affirmation or sexual identity have the right to protection from any kind of abuse.
- All young people have the right to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- Young people have the right to expect appropriate support in accordance with their personal and social development.
- Working in partnership with young people, their parent(s)/carers and other agencies is essential for the protection of young people.
- Safeguarding children and young people is the responsibility of everyone within the organisation, regardless of their role.
- A timely and appropriate response will be given to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, or poor practice.

- It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Leadership Team and any external agencies involved to uphold safeguarding criteria thresholds.
- The sharing of confidential information is restricted to the necessary external agencies.
- All personal information about children & young people is shared and stored appropriately in accordance with the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act and Information Sharing Protocols.

Wirral Youth Zone recognises their statutory responsibility to ensure the welfare of young people and work with Wirral Safeguarding Children's Partnership (WSCP) to comply with its safeguarding procedures

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Trustee Board, all employees (permanent, temporary and freelance), volunteers, and partner agencies working on behalf of OnSide or The Hive are aware of their legal and personal responsibilities to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and that everyone knows what to do should they have a concern.

Wirral Youth Zone is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk by implementing:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Safer Recruitment and Vetting of Staff, Volunteer and Trustees
- A Code of Conduct
- Training
- Support for staff, volunteers and trustees
- Safeguarding expectations for external agencies and partners delivering on behalf of Wirral Youth Zone.

Wirral Youth Zone recognises that we all have a legal responsibility to take all reasonable actions to ensure that the risk of harm to the welfare of children and adults at risk is minimised, and a duty of care is always exercised towards them.

Safe working culture

The Hive aims to be a safe and welcoming place for all young people, adults at risk, staff and volunteers. A safe working culture is one where everyone is committed to ensuring that practice is undertaken in the best and most appropriate way to ensure children, young people and adults at risk are safe. Staff, trustees and volunteers (referred to as 'staff &/or others' going forward) are supported, and know how to respond to concerns, regarding the behaviour or practice of others. Key procedures include:

- Policies and procedures being used, regularly reviewed/updated and named staff/roles being accountable for their use.
- Setting acceptable standards of behaviour for staff, volunteers, trustees, partner organisations and young people

An open culture with no secrets.

We develop this culture by

- Including Safeguarding as an agenda item on meetings including Board meetings, SLT and delivery meetings as well as in supervision and appraisal sessions.
- We hold a Risk Management meeting quarterly in which Safeguarding, Health and Safety issues are discussed with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Head of Prevention and Safeguarding.
- Having open discussions to talk about our safeguarding measures and establish if they are effective.
- Encouraging professional challenge and reflection.
- Providing opportunities for all staff & others to share any worries and concerns in relation to safeguarding.
- Transparent, clear procedures that are actively promoted by the Senior Leadership Team and Trustee Board to encourage all staff & others to raise and escalate their concerns within their organisations through whistle blowing procedures.
- Providing support for staff & others when they raise concerns.
- Having robust recording systems that are timely and accurate.
- Detecting and identifying inappropriate behaviour or abuse within the workplace at the earliest opportunity and respond appropriately.
- Having strong inductions and effective use of probationary periods. Having a consistent induction process will make sure everyone at The Hive fully understands and knows how to follow the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ongoing safeguarding training. Ensure everyone is kept up to date with any changes that are made to the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
- Regular performance reviews to take account of any concerns regarding professional behaviours and conduct.
- A commitment from all who work at Wirral Youth Zone to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk and to maintain an ongoing culture of vigilance.

Relationships and Professional Boundaries

The power and influence a member of staff or someone in a leadership role has over someone attending a group activity cannot be underestimated. Therefore, staff are expected to act within appropriate boundaries with young people, in relation to all forms of communication. Staff should be mindful of any physical contact and should not have intimate or sexual relationships with young people.

“It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to involve a child under that age in sexual activity where he or she is in a specified position of trust in relation to that child. This includes those who care for, advise, supervise or train children and young people.” (Sexual Offences Act 2003).

All staff & others must ensure the boundaries of a professional caring relationship are always clearly understood. It is never appropriate for staff or others to socialise with young people they are working with; if staff or others sees someone in their own time, they must be careful to retain a professional boundary. This includes socialising over social media, for example it is not appropriate to accept a young person as a 'friend' on platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat or Instagram. We do however recognise that, for example, through family connections, there may be extenuating circumstances where staff or others know the young person in a social capacity. In these circumstances you would need to make it clear to the young person that whilst you are in work mode, they would have to interact with you as a professional in the same manner as other young people. You must also advise your line manager or other appropriate

person of circumstances where you are working with young people that you know in a social capacity.

Staff should also not take pictures on their own personal phones of young people and not have their phones on session.

Clarification on any element of the Safeguarding Policy can be provided by line managers and/or the DSL and more information and guidance can be found in **The Safeguarding Toolkit**

Monitoring and Implementation

Wirral Youth Zone's safeguarding policy will be monitored and reviewed annually. The following situations may also trigger a review of the policy.

- Any changes in legislations
- The result of a significant case

The role of the board

Safeguarding is a key governance priority for The Hive's Board. The Trustee responsible for safeguarding must be notified by the CEO or Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other member of staff who is acting in this capacity) of any safeguarding issues involving The Hive staff or volunteers.

A safeguarding report will be received at each Board Meeting to include the following:

- Any changes in the safeguarding policy or procedures.
- An update on safeguarding training delivered.
- A summary of the number of High and/or Critical safeguarding incidents (as per the Network Incident Escalation policy (and withholding any sensitive data) and the level to which they were escalated (see Network Incident Report Form)
- Any LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) or Charity Commission Notifications

Designated Leads for Safeguarding:

The Designated Safeguarding Leads for Wirral Youth Zones are

Safeguarding Lead & Designated Person – Gill Pleavin, Head of Youth Work

Tel: 0151 705 8006

Email: Gill.pleavin@thehiveyouthzone.org

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – John Jones,

Tel: 0151 705 8009

Email: John.jones@thehiveyouthzone.org

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Jim Davies,

Tel: 0151 705 8004

Email: jim.davies@thehiveyouthzone.org

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Bex Pollard,

Tel: 0151 705 8004

Email: bex.pollard@thehiveyouthzone.org

The board member with responsibility for safeguarding is Phil Garrigan and can be contacted via Jayne Wilson

Email: Jayne.wilson@thehiveyouthzone.org Tel: 0151 705 8000

Any employee, trustee or volunteer who is concerned about a young person or adult at risk should inform their line manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

The Designated Lead has a responsibility to:

- Act as the single point of contact for all safeguarding and child protection concerns
- Respond appropriately to all suspected or disclosed concerns of abuse or neglect
- Make referrals and liaise with:
 - Local Authority Children's Social Care where concerns relate to a child
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where concerns relate to staff or volunteers
 - Police where a crime may have been committed
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a person has been dismissed due to risk or harm to a child
- Keep the CEO and Designated Safeguarding Trustee(s) informed of serious safeguarding matters
- Share relevant information with external agencies where lawful and appropriate, ensuring this does not compromise ongoing investigations
- Maintain detailed, accurate, confidential, and secure safeguarding records

Training, Policy and Safeguarding Culture

- Undertake refresher DSL training at least every two years
- Maintain a strong working knowledge of:
 - Early help assessment and intervention processes
 - Local authority child protection investigations
 - Child Protection Conferences and Review Conferences
- Attend and contribute to multi-agency meetings as required or support other staff to do so
- Ensure all staff and volunteers (including young leaders and mentors):
 - Understand safeguarding policies and procedures
 - Receive safeguarding induction and refresher training
- Ensure safeguarding policies are:
 - Reviewed annually
 - Publicly available
 - Clearly communicated to staff, volunteers, parents/carers, including The Hive's duty to report concerns
- Promote a child-centred, listening culture, ensuring young people's voices inform safeguarding decisions
- Maintain links with the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP / LSCB) to ensure The Hive remains up to date with local and national safeguarding developments

Training requirements

All Youth Zone staff, volunteers and trustees will be required to complete The Hive's safeguarding awareness training before they start their role. All staff; volunteers and trustees will receive annual safeguarding refresher training. All staff; volunteers and trustees will complete the NYA Basic Introduction to Safeguarding training (or equivalent) in addition to The Hive's specific training. Designated Safeguarding leads will attend the Wirral Safeguarding Partnership

DSL Training every 2 years. Staff will attend any relevant training provided by external partners that feel would benefit their knowledge of safeguarding.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

This is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework:
 - Outcome 1: Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
 - Outcome 2: Children and young people are safe in and outside their homes
 - Outcome 3: Children and young people are supported by their family network
 - Outcome 4: Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk

This is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Ensuring they can live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Empowering them by encouraging them to make their own decisions and provide informed consent.
- Minimising the risk of abuse or neglect and preventing it from occurring.
- Promoting their wellbeing and take their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.

This policy outlines how to recognise the signs and indicators of possible abuse to ensure that staff, volunteers and trustees recognise the significance of what they are observing, and the procedures that they need to follow if they have a concern.

This policy is supplemented by a 'Safeguarding Toolkit' which provides further details for employees, trustees and volunteers who work directly with children and adults at risk.

In this policy an adult at risk is defined as a Youth Zone member aged 18 and over who, for any reason, has additional needs and may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. Adults at risk who are members of Youth Zones may have an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan. This is a legal document that outlines the special educational, health and social care needs of children and adults at risk, up to the age of 25, who require additional support and identifies the type of support needed to meet those needs. Staff and volunteers supporting adults at risk should be aware of any specific support required to meet an individuals' additional needs.

Safeguarding adults at risk involves reducing or preventing the risk of significant harm from neglect or abuse, while also supporting people to maintain control of their own lives.

Definitions

Child:

"A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout." (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026)

Adult at Risk:

"An adult at risk is a person who is 18 years or older and is... unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation." (Care Act 2014)

Safeguarding:

"Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them from harm" (NSPCC).

Terms of reference and legal framework

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 make it clear that people who work with children have the responsibility to keep them safe. This is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (to which the UK is a signatory) which sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse. The document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026) sets out the arrangements for how all organisations must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

"Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, child protection should take priority over all other work" (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026). Working together to safeguard children GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Adult protection is part of safeguarding and was first placed in a legal framework within the Care Act 2014. This does not only refer to adults who lack capacity. Adults with full capacity can still be considered at risk if they are unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm.

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Recognising abuse

Abuse - A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour and economic or financial abuse, where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial context by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. This includes in teenage relationships, or under the guise of 'honour' based abuse including forced marriage and female genital mutilation, or abuse related to faith or belief such

as allegations of demonic possession. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026). In relation to child protection there are four types of abuse defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

More information can be found in appendix one

Vulnerable young people

Everyone at Wirral Youth Zone has a responsibility to be aware that some children and young people who takes part in our activities may experience difficulties that adversely affect their lives at home and/or within their lives outside of the organisation and therefore be at risk of harm.

Particularly vulnerable groups could include:

- **Children and young people with a disability** (disability can take many forms including) Physical disability, Sensory disability, Learning disability
- **Children and young people at risk of Sexual (CSE) or Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**
- **Young Carers**
- **Children and young people affected by gang activity**
- **Children and young people missing from education**
- **Young people who are homeless**
- **Children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse**
- **Children and young people whose parents/carers misuse substances**
- **Children and young people whose parents/carers have learning disabilities**
- **Children and young people whose parents/carers have a mental illness**
- **Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children**

(This list is not exhaustive)

Any concerns relating to particularly vulnerable children and young people must be raised with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. Do not make assumptions that another staff member, agency or local authority provision is already managing this because the young person is already known to them.

Adults at Risk:

Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. (Care Act 2014). In relation to adult protection there are 10 types of abuse defined in the Care and Support statutory guidance as follows:

- Physical Abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial or material
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational and/or institutional abuse
- Neglect or act of omission
- Self-neglect

What to do if you suspect abuse

A child or adult at risk may choose to disclose concerning information to any employee, trustee or volunteer, or may be observed carrying out concerning behaviour that raises concerns around possible abuse. It is not the duty of employees, trustees or volunteers to investigate the issue themselves; however, it is their responsibility to gather as much information as possible.

Where you suspect a child or adult at risk is being abused or there is potential for harm, you should discuss your concerns immediately with one of the Hive's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), if they are not available then a Session Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If none of the above are available please report to Wirral's Social Care team.

If there is significant concern the safeguarding lead will contact Children's Services/Adult Services and/ or the Police. They may need your support in making the referral to ensure the details are recorded correctly.

If you are not sure or have any concerns, speak to the Hive's safeguarding lead. Remember this is what they are there for, to deal with any concerns and offer advice and support.

The supplementary 'Safeguarding Toolkit', to be used in conjunction with this policy, includes a Flowchart to follow if you suspect abuse and/or harm has occurred to a child and/or adult at risk.

What to do if a young person tells you about abuse

If a young person/ vulnerable adult makes a disclosure about abuse or you suspect they may be about to it is imperative they understand you cannot keep this 'secret' but that you have a duty to report it to other professionals who will help keep them safe. Be honest and open about who you will speak to and why.

You should find a quiet place to talk where they feel comfortable. Ensure you give them the time they need to talk but be aware they will need to give a full account to Children's Social Care so avoid subjecting them to lengthy or multiple 'interviews' as it can confuse and jeopardise evidence. Try to keep eye level equal or lower than theirs.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Listen, but do not press for information
- Stay calm and be reassuring

- Find a quiet place to talk
- Believe what you are being told
- Listen to the young person, if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it
- It is acceptable to observe injuries such as; bruises, but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them; (injuries must be recorded on a **Cause for Concern Form, Appendix 1**)
- Do not question the child in a way that will introduce new words, phrases or concepts into their minds (leading questions)
- Do not challenge, confront or criticise their information, even if it seems unlikely or if there are obvious errors. They may be unable to give accurate timescales or dates.
- If a disclosure is made the pace should be dictated by the child without their being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as 'what did they do next?' or 'where were you when this happened?' The staff or volunteers role is to listen not to investigate.
- Use open questions
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this
- Do not criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- Do not promise confidentiality, reassure the young person that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell and why. It is important that you don't make promises that you cannot keep (please see the **Confidentiality Policy, Appendix 2** for more details)

Remember is it a huge step for a young person to make a disclosure

Inform the safeguarding lead immediately who will work with you to contact the Child Protection Social Work team and/or the Police and complete all necessary paperwork. If the situation is an emergency and neither safeguarding lead or deputies are available you should telephone Children's Social Care directly or, if out of hours, the Emergency Duty Social Work team or Police.

Recording Information

Make some notes immediately afterwards (being aware that note taking during a disclosure may inhibit that disclosure making it harder for the young person to be open and honest); record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption and interpretation. All information should be recorded on our Cause for Concern form which can be accessed online via our website ([Share a Concern - The Hive Youth Zone](#)). Do not be afraid to interrupt meetings if you need to speak to someone. Note any non-verbal behaviour and ensure that the language used by the young person (do not translate into correct terminology) is recorded.

What to do if an allegation of abuse is made involving staff or a volunteer

If a young person makes an allegation of abuse against a staff member or volunteer, you should report this immediately to the Session Lead/ Safeguarding Lead, if these are not available then you must speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If the volunteer or

member of staff against which the allegation is made is onsite and you cannot contact the Safeguarding Lead speak immediately to the manager in charge.

If it is against a member of staff from another organisation report it directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

You should assure the young person who made the allegation that this is a serious matter and you will follow it up with the Safeguarding Lead. Update the young person of what action has been taken.

The Safeguarding Lead will make a referral directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer who will advise on the most appropriate course of action. This referral will usually be made immediately but must be made within 24 hours.

Wirral LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

Where there is **any indication that a child has been harmed**, you must also contact the **Integrated Front Door (IFD) 0151 606 2008** (9am–5pm, Mon–Fri) **0151 677 6557** (Out of hours) **and/or Police 101**

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/lado-allegations/>

The Hive has a **Whistleblowing Policy** that outlines the course of action staff or volunteers can take if there are major concerns over apparent wrongdoing by The Hive without fear of detrimental treatment.

What to do if you suspect radicalisation

If you have concerns that a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism speak to the Safeguarding Lead who will help you decide whether it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel lead and complete all necessary paperwork.

A copy of the Channel Panel Referral Form can be found on the link below

[Prevent Radicalisation and Extremism - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Merseyside Police have a dedicated Prevent team who can be contacted for advice:

Telephone: 0151 777 8506 or email Prevent@merseyside.police.uk

Informing parents

The Safeguarding Lead will inform the young person's family/carers that an incident has taken place and/or a referral is being made unless: that would either place the young person at greater risk, place the member of staff or public at risk or impede the investigation; sexual abuse or fabricated illness is suspected; or multiple abuse is suspected. In these cases Social Services or the Police will decide whether or not to inform the parents. An inability to inform parents should not delay or prevent a referral being made.

Confidentiality, information sharing and storing

Staff and volunteers have professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies. If a young person confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the young person sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer the matter for their own sake. At the same time, the young person should be reassured that the matter will only be disclosed to the relevant person/s who will then decide on an appropriate course of action. Staff and volunteers who receive information about children and families in the course of their work should have the information only within a professional context. Personal information about all young people and their families is regarded by those who work in this building as confidential. All records relating to child protection incidents will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and only shared as is consistent with the protection of children. If staff are unsure whether to share information support can be sought from the Safeguarding Lead or Chief Executive.

Our children, adults at risk and their parents/carers have the right to expect all staff, volunteers and trustees to deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information is only available to those who need to know it. Parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child/adult at risk should be told that their right to confidentiality may be breached if information comes to light suggesting possible harm to other people.

Safeguarding issues relating to individual cases must not be subject to open discussion in the office or elsewhere. Should any information or correspondence related to specific safeguarding issues need to be sent via email this should be done securely, as a minimum.

Employees, trustees and volunteers should also remember to not promise children or adults at risk to keep 'secrets'.

7 Golden Rules for Information Sharing

The '7 Golden Rules'¹ for information sharing are listed as good practice for how The Hive will manage issues relating to confidentiality:

- 1.** Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- 2.** Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset and why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is safe or inappropriate to do so.
- 3.** Seek advice if there is any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
- 4.** Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Professionals may still share information without consent if, in their judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. Judgment will need to be made on the facts of the case.

¹ Information Sharing for Practitioners and Managers 2015

5. Consider safety and wellbeing: Base information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information shared is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, it is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, it is shared in a timely fashion and is shared effectively.
7. Keep a record: of the decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If it is decided to share, then record what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Storing Information

Once the C4C is completed online the designated safeguarding leads will be able to access this via Salesforce. Salesforce is our secure system for recording information about young people. Only the Safeguarding Leads will have access to the safeguarding information stored on Salesforce. This is only accessible via a safeguarding password and two factor authentication.

Information relating to child protection/welfare is required to be kept for a minimum 10 years, according to NSPCC guidance.

The Hive will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of;

- Any allegations made
- Details of how the allegations were followed up and resolved
- Any action taken
- Decisions reached

Supporting those involved

Support should be provided for the parents/carers and child as well as the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Parents/carers should be kept constantly apprised of the situation and of any developments. They should also be informed of the outcome (if there is not a criminal investigation), including the result of any disciplinary procedures.

Supporting staff who receive disclosures

Receiving a disclosure or observing signs of abuse can be very distressing. Staff should discuss their feelings with their line manager if they feel affected. Staff can access free counselling support through the Hive's Medicash counselling team.

Safeguarding children and young people can entail making difficult professional judgements and decisions. All staff and volunteers have access to advice and support through formal and informal supervision from their peers and managers. Incidents of a child protection nature can affect staff not directly involved and staff affected can access support as above. Members of staff may be asked to attend a Strategy Meeting or Child Protection Case Conference. Staff should seek guidance and advice from the Designated Person on these meetings and further advice can be provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Staff rights and sources of support when facing an allegation

The member of staff who is the subject of the allegations will be kept informed of the progress of the case and will receive appropriate support whilst the case is ongoing. Sources of support and advice for staff going through the Disciplinary Procedure include:

- Line manager or CEO if more appropriate
- Trade union
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- ACAS – This provides help and support for employers and employees, they have a helpline adviser available 8am-8pm, Monday – Friday.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst the allegation is being investigated and considered.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

For further information on policies closely aligned to the Safeguarding Policy, please see the following:

- Dignity at Work Policy (including Code of Conduct) [DignityatWorkPolicy0421.pdf](#)
- Lone Working with Young People [Lone Working with Young People Policy & Procedures 0621.pdf](#)
- Recruitment & Selection Policy [Recruitment & Selection Policy 0822.pdf](#)
- Social Media Policy [Social Media Policy 0722.pdf](#)
- Whistleblowing Policy [Whistleblowing Policy 1123.pdf](#)

MONITORING & REVIEWING

The safeguarding policy will be regularly monitored, and reviewed on an annual basis, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Trustee responsible for safeguarding. The policy will also be reviewed in response to any changes in legislation or to OnSide or the local Safeguarding Partnerships working practices.

Regular meetings will be held with our trustee Phil Garrigan who leads on Safeguarding and Risk Management as part of his role as a trustee.

Wirral Safeguarding Partnership Section 11 audit will be completed annually and kept up to date.

Appendix One Recognising Abuse

In relation to child protection there are 4 kinds of abuse defined in "Working Together", they are:

Physical abuse

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

Indicators of this are;

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable explanations or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Absconding
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted
- Bruises seen on parts of the body not normally harmed through play, such as in or around the mouth
- Bruises that appear as a small 'grasp' or finger marks to a child's arm or legs
- Injuries that look like they have been caused by a belt or stick
- Bruises that appear to be of different ages (colour) in the same area
- Injuries that appear the same on both sides of the body, legs head or arms
- Injuries that appear as bite marks, especially when the marks appear to be of an adult or an older child (more than 3cm across)

It is a concern when a child is not taken for treatment if they are suffering pain, swelling or discolouration over a bone or joint. Although it may not always be possible to know whether a child has a fractured bone, it is difficult for a parent / carer to be unaware that the child has been hurt. It can be difficult to distinguish between a burn and scald that has been caused accidentally or non-accidentally. As with fractures, all burns and scalds should receive medical attention.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations

being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur on its own.

Indicators of this are;

- Very low self-esteem, often with an inability to accept praise or trust in adults
- Excessive clinging and attention seeking behaviour
- Overanxious – being excessively 'watchful' (hyper vigilant), constantly checking or being over anxious to please
- Withdrawn / socially isolated
- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-deprecation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse or not accessing appropriate antenatal care. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of this are;

- Constant hunger and complaints of tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- Below average weight / height
- Reluctant to go home, particularly at weekends / holiday

Sexual abuse

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

Indicators of this are;

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to their age, or acting out precocious sexual behaviour with others
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-harm, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing □out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be □alone with a specific person
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; oversensitive or overreacting to criticism
- Reluctant to go home

Typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse and recognising abuse

There is no definitive list of vulnerabilities

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality).
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Learning disabilities.

- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families.
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Homeless.
- Lacking friends from the same age group.
- Living in a gang neighbourhood.
- Living in residential care.
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer.
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence.
- Young carer
- Isolated, with little or no friendship or peer group

This is not an exhaustive list.

A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs of abuse and hide what is happening from everyone. Many learn to 'manage' their problems, making it hard for others to help. We may observe behaviours/physical presentations that cause concern, however, it is important to remember that the causes of these may not be abuse, but due to other issues such as bereavement, homesickness etc. Information related to events of this nature should be logged onto a Cause for Concern form. As a result, staff should be cautious before assuming abuse is the cause. Staff should ensure that they discuss their concerns with the Designated Person for advice.

Other types of abuse and safeguarding issues

In addition to these four types of abuse there are the following commonly recognised types of abuse and safeguarding issues

Child Sexual Exploitation

On February 16th, 2017, the government launched the revised definition of Child Sexual Exploitation along. The revised definition is detailed below:

"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology "a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point."

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are already being sexually exploited:

- Missing from home or care
- Becoming especially secretive and disengaging with their usual friends
- Personality and behaviour change (whilst mood swings are common to all adolescents, it is the severity of behaviour change that is most indicative)
- Physical injuries
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- Absent from school
- Change in physical appearance
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family
- Receipt of gifts from unknown source (which could include expensive which they couldn't normally afford, such as mobile phones or jewellery)
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide
- They may receive odd calls and messages on their mobiles or social media pages from unknown, possibly much older associates from outside their normal social network

To access the Child Exploitation tool please use the link below. Further information of Child Exploitation can be found on this page.

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/child-sexual-exploitation/>

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is a very serious issue which can have a devastating and lasting impact on its victims. Children can be trafficked into, within and out of the UK. 'Trafficking of persons means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Domestic violence

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those

aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of sex or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. Staff can also refer to the DfE guidance Domestic violence and abuse.

Screens tools are provided by a range of partner agencies via the Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board, see link below

[Domestic Abuse - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Fabricated or induced illness

The fabrication or induction of illness in children is a relatively rare form of child abuse. Where concerns exist about fabricated or induced illness, it requires professionals to work together, evaluating all the available evidence, in order to reach an understanding of the reasons for the child's signs and symptoms of illness.

Staff can also refer to Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced.

Faith abuse

Faith abuse includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or 'leading them astray' (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home. Staff should refer to Child abuse linked to faith or belief.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Comprises all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is also sometimes known as 'female genital cutting' or 'female circumcision'. However, circumcision is not an appropriate term. Communities tend to use local names for referring to this practice including 'sunna'. FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of

girls and women. In all circumstances where FGM is practised on a child it is a violation of the child's right to life, their right to their bodily integrity, as well as their right to health. The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. If you have concerns relating to young people possibly affected by FGM, this should be referred using the Child Protection procedures.

Forced marriage

Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse can also be a factor.

Crime Exploitation/Organised Crime

Crime Exploitation/Organised Crime is becoming a prevalent issue amongst many young people. Individuals, normally working with others, with the capacity to commit serious crime on a continuing basis, which includes elements of planning, control and coordination and benefits those involved will look to exploit young people who display common indicators of vulnerability, to participate in organised crime, whether that is drug dealing, minding weapons/drugs.

Radicalism and Involvement in Terrorism

At the time of writing the current threat from terrorism is considered to be "severe". Terrorism can involve the exploitation of young people and vulnerable adults.

Terrorism is defined by the Terrorism Act 2000 as:

"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."

Extremism is defined in the national Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) as: "A vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It also includes calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas."

Radicalisation is defined in the CONTEST Strategy as:

"The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism."

The following are examples of recognised offences in relation to terrorism, extremism and radicalisation:

- Murder or soliciting murder.
- Committing, preparing or instigating acts of terrorism.
- Incitement to commit acts of terrorism overseas.
- Encouragement of terrorism.
- Inciting racial or religious hatred or hatred because of sexual orientation.
- Inviting support for a proscribed organisation.

- Terrorist financing offences.
- Dissemination of terrorist publications.
- Offences of encouragement and dissemination using the internet.

The CONTEST strategy focuses on 4 strands: Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare, it is the Prevent strategy that is of relevance in safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. The Prevent strategy has three key objectives:

- Ideology - Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it;
- Individuals – Protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Institutions – Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

Challenging the ideology includes being proactive in promoting values such as: democracy, the rule of law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech, and the universal right to freedom from persecution. There is a need for local communities and organisation to support this by focusing focus on those most susceptible to terrorist propaganda; it should not be assumed that Muslims are any more vulnerable to radicalisation than other faith or ethnic groups.

In terms of protecting individuals key points made are:

- Radicalisation is a process not an event, and it is possible to intervene in this to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised
- There is a need to ensure that activities are proportionate and focused upon people at risk.
- Activity needs to address all forms of terrorism. It is not just the responsibility of the police, but also local authorities and other partners.
- Programmes relating to this are comparatively new, and evidence of impact is limited. The Government is committed to research and evaluation to demonstrate what works and inform the development of best practice.

Channel is a multi-agency process that evaluates referrals of individuals at risk of radicalisation and decides on the most appropriate action. It involves assessing the nature and the extent of the potential risk and, where necessary, providing an appropriate support package tailored to the individual's needs. Supporting those most at risk of being radicalised is about diverting people away from potential risk at an early stage which prevents them from being drawn into criminal activity linked to terrorism not about prosecution. At The Hive we have a clear role in providing diversionary activities as well as targeted support services.

Self-injury and Self Harm

Self-injury can take many different forms but in general terms is the act of deliberately causing harm to oneself either by causing a physical injury or by putting oneself in dangerous situations and/or self-neglect. Self-injury is generally a coping mechanism; there can be many reasons

why a person chooses to self-injury, but it is important that staff consider the possibility of a link between self-injury and trauma/abuse.

When dealing with self-injury and self-harm staff should:

- Show that they care about the person behind the self-injury
- Show concern for the injuries themselves and ensure any needed first aid is provided
- Make it clear it is OK to talk about
- Acknowledge how scary the thought of not self-harming may be
- Explore what are their support networks?
- Report to designated leads and seek further advice

Private fostering

Under certain conditions, a child might be cared for, as part of a private arrangement, by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This constitutes private fostering when the following conditions are met:

- a child is under 16 years of age – 18 if they have a disability
- the arrangement is for 28 days or longer
- the child's new carer does not have parental responsibility for the child and is not a close relative. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

By law parents and carers must notify the local authority of private fostering arrangements to safeguard and protect the child's welfare as well as ensuring the child, carer and parent are receiving appropriate support and help.

Wirral Youth Zones policy is that if we do become aware that a child or young person who is being privately fostered, we will inform the carer/parent of their legal duty to notify Wirral Multi agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH); we will follow this up by contacting Children's Social Care within 48 hours, the contact details are:

Children's Social Care and Out of Hours Duty Team

Tel: 0151 606 2008 (Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm), Outside of these hours

Tel: 0151 677 6557 (Outside of these hours)

E-mail: ifd@wirral.gov.uk

Appendix 2

How to report a Cause for concern via the Hive youth Zone website.

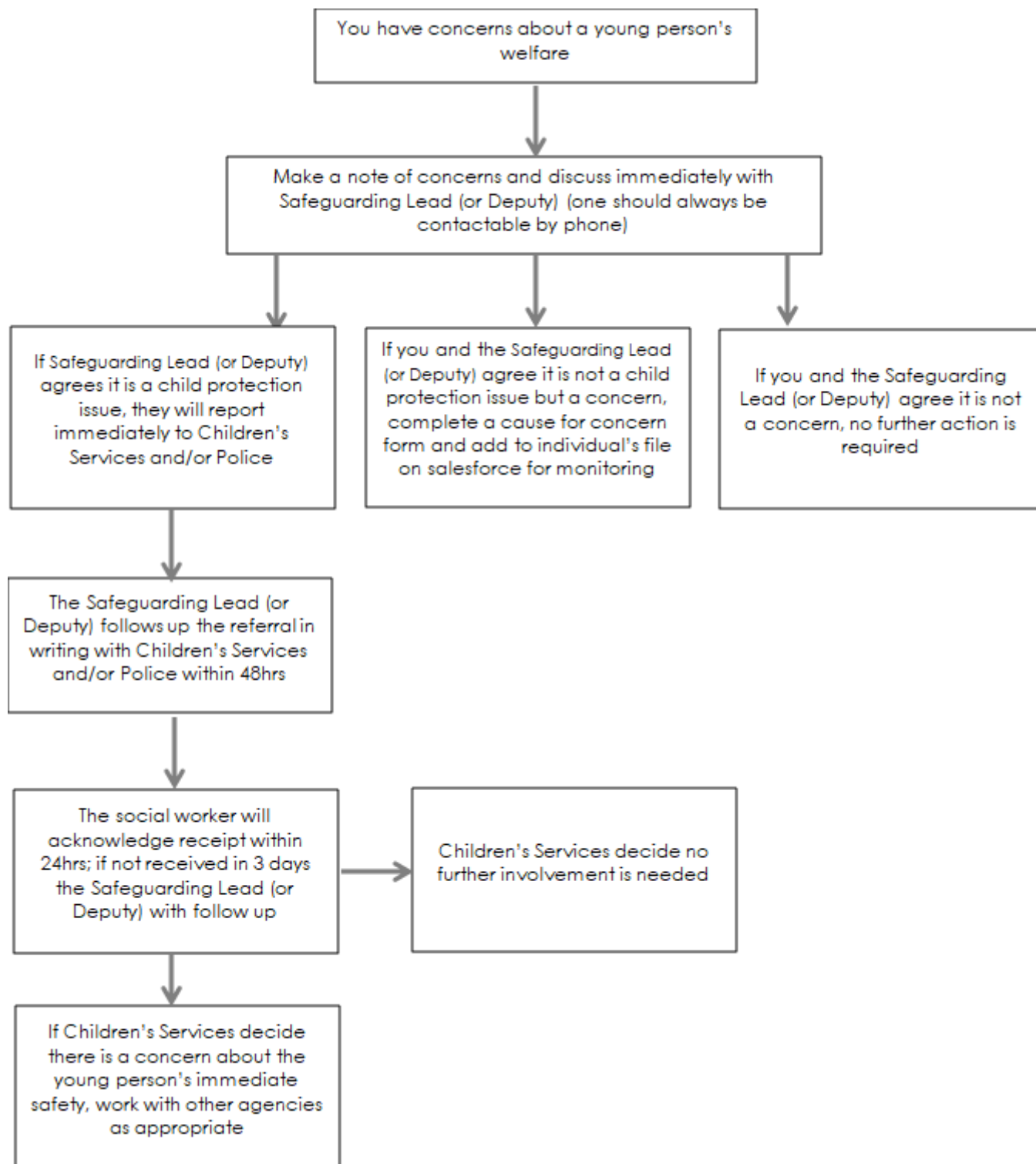
Search Share a concern on the Website and fill in the e- form. QR Code can be found in the Kronos room.

[Share a Concern - The Hive Youth Zone](#)

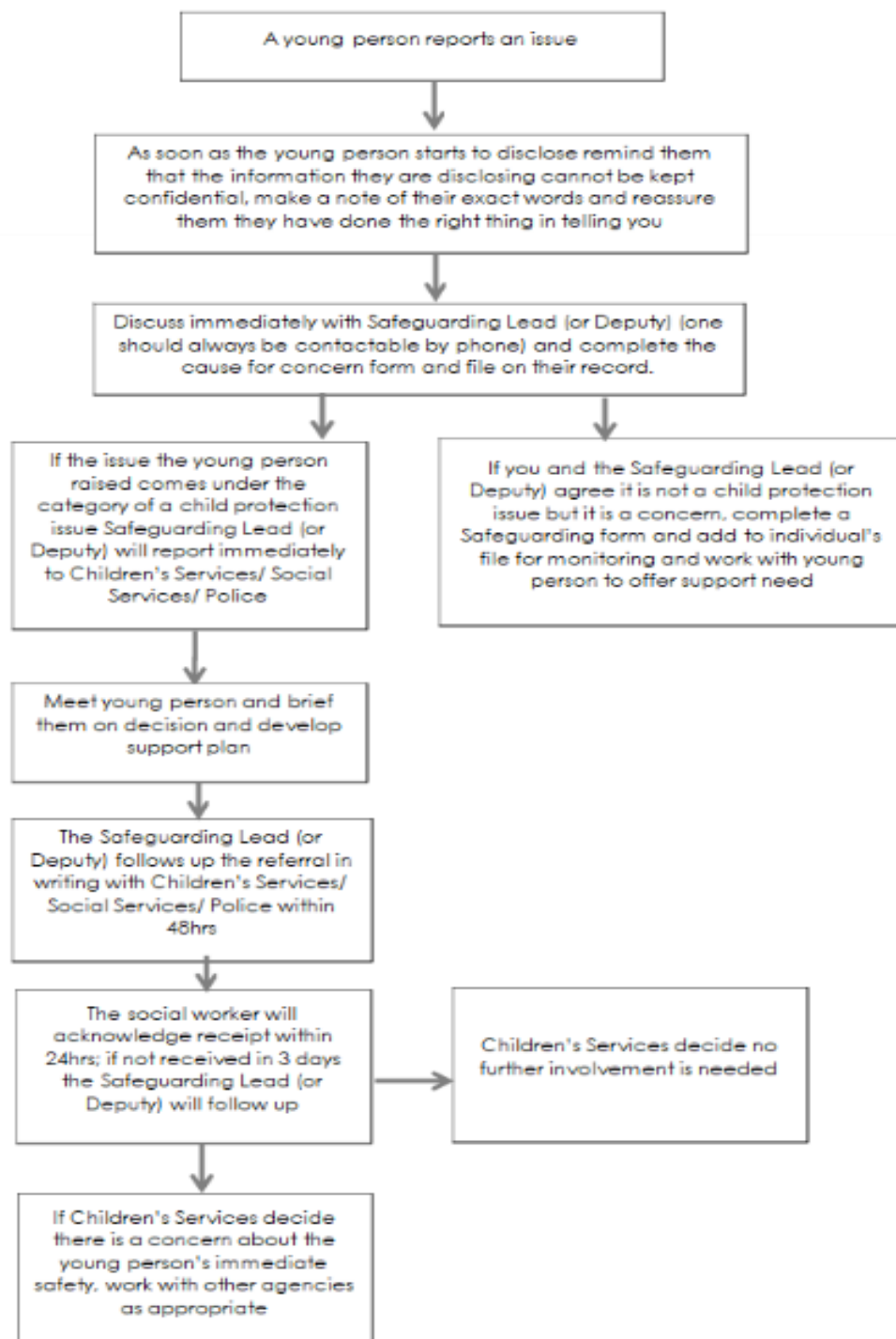
Appendix 3

Safeguarding Flow Charts

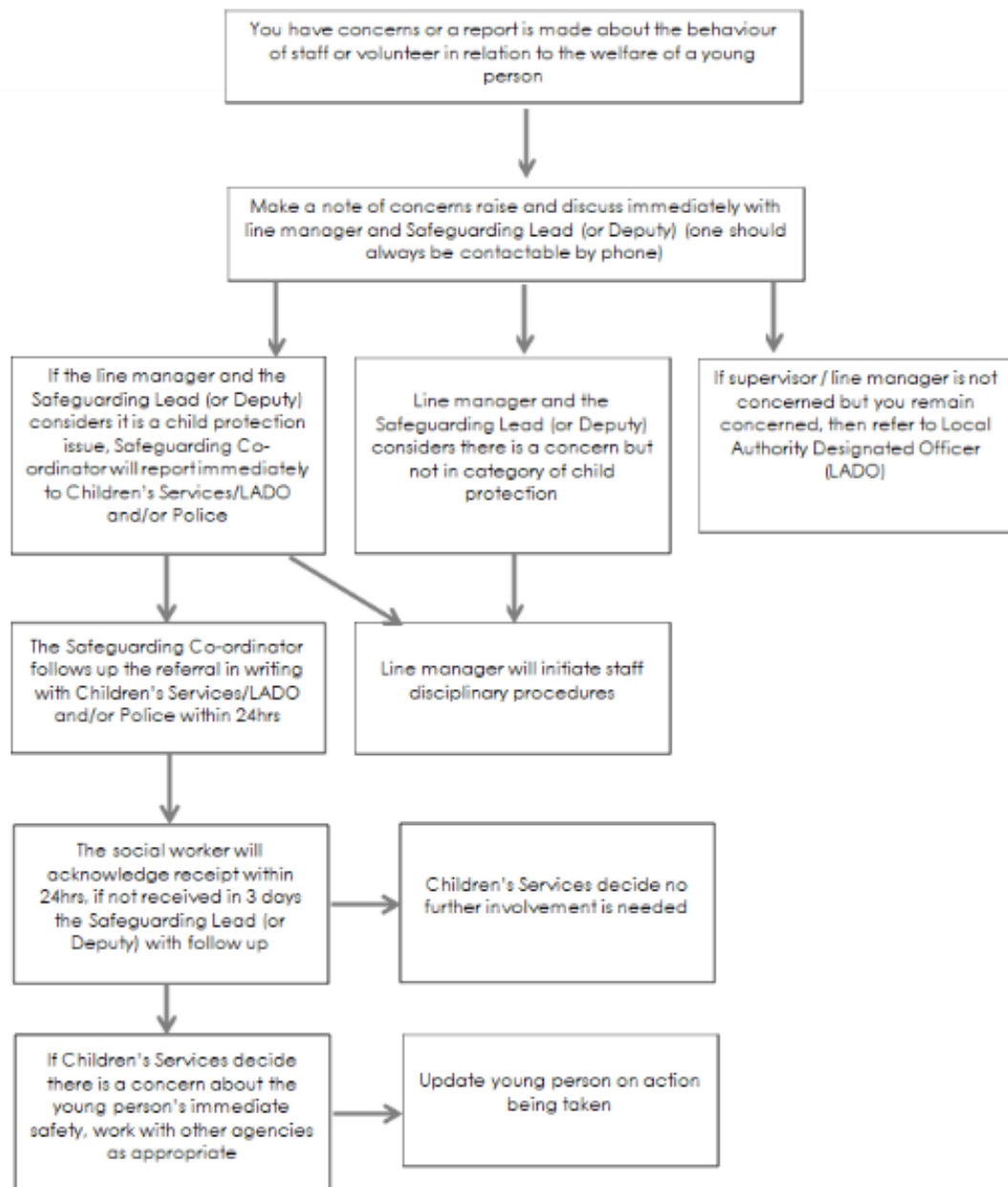
What to do if you suspect abuse



What to do if a young person tells you about abuse



What to do if an allegation of abuse involves staff or volunteer



Appendix 4

Quick Reference Emergency Contact Sheets

The Hive

Designated Safeguarding Lead, Gill Pleavin (Head of Youth Work), 0151 705 8006, gill.pleavin@thehiveyouthzone.org

Deputy Safeguarding Leads:

John Jones, Deputy Head of Youth Work, 0151 705 8009
john.jones@thehiveyouthzone.org

Jim Davies, Senior Lead, 0151 705 8004 jim.davies@thehiveyouthzone.org

Bex Pollard, Junior Lead, 0151 705 8000 bex.pollard@thehiveyouthzone.org

Jayne Wilson CEO Jayne.wilson@thehiveyouthzone.org

Phil Garrigan, Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding

Wirral Social Care – Children and Young People

Wirral Integrated Front Door Team, Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm, 0151 606 2008,
Outside of these hours, 0151 677 6557, ifd@wirral.gov.uk

In an emergency always call the police on 999. If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101 <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/public/concerned-about-a-child/>

Wirral Social Care - LADO

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO)-
safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

Wirral Social Care - Adult

If you are concerned that an Adult is experiencing or at risk of harm, abuse or neglect please report it to Wirral Central Advice and Duty Team on 0151 514 2222 between 9am – 5pm, outside of these hours please call 0151 677 6557.
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/public/concerned-about-an-adult/>

Channel (Preventing Violent Extremism)

Merseyside Police have a dedicated Prevent team who can be contacted for advice:

Telephone: 0151 677 6557 or email Prevent@merseyside.police.uk
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/radicalisation-and-extremism/>

For any incident where a young person has required hospital treatment or an emergency call has been made to the police for any reason, you **must** regardless of the time of day inform the Head of Youth Work, who will make a decision as to if the CEO needs to be immediately informed.