



Safeguarding Policy

Children Young People Vulnerable Adults

Foreword

Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) is committed to ensure that all WFDC activities provide a safe, enjoyable and positive experience for children and young people and vulnerable adults as participants and for the employees whose involvement is integral to the development of quality opportunities and services.

This Safeguarding Policy and its procedures will ensure that protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults remains a priority for WFDC and highlights the commitment of all involved in ensuring that our procedures are continuously reviewed, improved and in line with development and government legislation.

This policy provides a generic statement on what parents, customers, and employees can expect from us, as minimum standards, in the area of safeguarding.

The policy and procedures will be transparent and open to inspection by anyone, and details how concerns about the wellbeing of people will be responded to. It will provide a reference point for all, in the quest for making people’s lives as safe as possible.

We are aware that we cannot do this alone and, in return, we will continue to seek a minimum standard from voluntary organisations and our partners who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This document makes a commitment to review and to adapt to change in a positive stance on all areas of safeguarding.

Ian Miller

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Chief Executive, Wyre Forest District Council

Contents	Page
1.0 Policy Statement	
1.1 Introduction	5
1.2 Responsibilities	8
1.3 Principles	8
1.4 Equality & Diversity	9
2.0 Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying	
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Poor Practice	9
2.3 Categories of abuse	10
2.4 Bullying	14
3.0 Safe Recruitment and Selection Practices	
3.1 Recruitment and Training of Employees	15
3.2 Code of Behaviour for Employees working with Young People	17
3.3 WFDC Guidance and Procedures relating to activities and services	17
4.0 Procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children	
Responding to Disclosures, Suspicions and Allegations	
4.1 Introduction	20
4.2 Responding to Disclosures	21
4.3 Responding to Suspicions	22
4.4 Allegations against WFDC Employees	24
4.5 Allegations of Previous Abuse	28
4.6 Action if Bullying is suspected	28
5.0 WFDC Adult Support Services	
5.1 Housing	29
5.2 Wyre Forest Vulnerable Adults Group	30
5.3 WFDC Internal Officer Group	30
5.4 Contracted Services	30
6.0 Review of Policy and Procedures	30
7.0 Links to other Policies and Guidance	31
8.0 Essential Contacts	32
9.0 Appendix	33

Appendices

- A.** A Quick Guide to Procedures:
Flow Charts 1/2 for responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations
- B.** WFDC Child Protection Incident Report Form
- C.** WFDC Safeguarding Advisor – Roles and Responsibilities
- D.** WFDC Code of Behaviour for Employees working with Young People
- E.** WFDC Code of Conduct for Young People
- F.** WFDC Guidelines and Procedures for Activities and Services:
 - 1. Work Experience and Extended Work Experience
 - 2. Trips, Tours and Holiday Clubs
 - 3. Residentials
 - 4. Transporting young people
 - 5. Lost/Found young people
 - 6. Procedure for dealing with lost young people
 - 7. Procedure for dealing with found young people
 - 8. Procedure for dealing with young people who decide to leave the activity
 - 9. Restraining young people
 - 10. Our policy on working in schools
 - 11. Site visits by WFDC employees to private households / business premises
 - 12. Our policy on working with Agency employees
- G.** CSE Flowchart
- H** Glossary of Terms

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

It is the policy of WFDC that all children, young people and vulnerable adults (vulnerable people) have a right to protection and for their welfare to be paramount.

By the nature of the organisation, it is inevitable that various degrees of contact with vulnerable people will occur and it is therefore our policy to have in place clear guidelines for safeguarding and promoting welfare as well as protecting our employees and other adults in a position of responsibility from potential allegations of abuse. The term '**employees**' is used to include all council employees, full or part time, volunteers and anyone working on a paid or unpaid basis on behalf of WFDC.

WFDC delivers a wide range of services and activities for residents of all ages and the wider public who are visitors to the district. Our core business includes working in local communities to improve quality of life issues. This ranges from delivering cultural projects in parks and community settings to managing the placement of homeless people in temporary accommodation.

We expect agencies and organisations and other stakeholders, with a remit for working with vulnerable people, that we work with or who hire our facilities, to adhere to our procedures as a minimum standard or operate their own effective safeguarding policy. Support is available from WFDC Community Development Manager to an organisation, which needs to establish their policy (see Appendix F).

This policy relates to children and young people under the age of 18 and to vulnerable adults over the age of 18.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

A Vulnerable Adult is any person aged 18 or above:

“Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself from significant harm or exploitation”.

(No Secrets, 2000, Paragraph 2.3)

The services are:

- Accommodation and nursing or personal care in a care home
- Personal care or nursing or support to live independently in his/her own home
- Any services provided by an independent hospital, independent clinic, independent medical agency or NHS body;
- Social care services
- Any services provided in an establishment catering for a person with learning difficulties

The conditions are:

- A learning or physical disability;
- A physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- A reduction in physical or mental capacity

The disabilities are:

- A dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of, basic physical functions;
- Severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others;
- Impairment in a person's ability to protect him/herself from assault, abuse or neglect

What is 'Significant Harm'?

It is important to consider the meaning of 'Significant Harm'. The Law Commission suggests that:

"Harm should be taken to include not only ill treatment (Including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment that are not physical) but also the impairment of physical, emotional, social or behavioural development".

(‘Who decides’, Lord Chancellors dept 1997)

Sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute Significant Harm, e.g. experiencing or witnessing a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often Significant Harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development.

We recognise the needs and vulnerability of children, young people and vulnerable adults from minority ethnic groups and those who are disabled. The policy and procedures apply to all vulnerable people regardless of gender ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

This policy has been cross-referenced to other policies and procedures of the District Council, which promote the vulnerable people's safety and welfare: Equality and Diversity Policy (see 1.4), Health and Safety Regulations, Disciplinary and Grievance Policies, Equal Opportunities Policy, Harassment Procedures, Recruitment Policy, Confidential Reporting Policy, Code of Conduct, Social Networking Policy. This Safeguarding Policy also links to policies of external organisations (see 6.0 Links to other Policies).

This policy has been produced in line with the Standards for Safeguarding & Protecting Children in Sport (Child Protection in Sport Unit 2003) and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2010.

Legislation most relevant to safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

Children Act 2004, Section 11, Statutory Guidance

Requires a range of organisations (including District Councils) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions, and services provided, are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Organisations must take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised; and where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies take all appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies.

Key Features of Section 11 are:

- senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare;
- a clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children available for all staff;
- a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families;
- staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or (depending on the agency's primary functions) in contact with children and families;
- safe recruitment procedures in place;
- effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- effective information sharing.

The Section 11 duty means that the local authority must make arrangements to ensure two things. Firstly, that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and secondly, that the services they contract out to others are provided having regard to that need.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, Statutory Guidance

Chapter 2, 2.9 lists responsibilities of organisations working with children, which mirror Section 11 and thus reinforces the guidance as detailed above. Working Together 2015.

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

The Independent Safeguarding Authority ISA became the DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service in September 2012 and changes have been implemented to the definition of regulated activity or professions. WFDC complies with registering staff employed in a "regulated activity" and who may be required to be "registered".

No Secrets DOH 2000

Guidance on developing and implementing multi agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse.

Safeguarding Adults ADASS October 2010

A National Framework of Standards for good practice in outcomes in adult protection.

Care Act 2014

Sets the scene for adult safeguarding boards but does not directly refer to district local authorities.

1.2 Responsibilities

For vulnerable people Wyre Forest District Council will:

- Accept the responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care and safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings.
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect from abuse and to reduce the likelihood of allegations made against them.
- Require employees to adopt and abide by the WFDC Code of Conduct, Code of Behaviour for Employees, and the WFDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Make people feel confident in reporting any issues on child and adult protection.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Be committed to working together with other local authorities, Police, National Governing Bodies, Children's and Adult Protection Services, the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) in accordance with their procedures.

1.3 Principles

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of vulnerable people is the primary concern.
- All vulnerable people, whatever their age, gender, racial origin, religious belief, disability and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns but it is the responsibility of Children's/Adult Protection Services and/or Police to determine whether or not abuse has taken place.
- All incidents or allegations of suspicious poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- Confidentiality will be upheld at all times and in line with the Data Protection Act.
- There is a consistent understanding of acceptable behaviour of young people towards other young people within any organised activity, service or programme. (Appendix E: WFDC Code of Conduct for Young People).
- Discrimination, prejudice and oppressive behaviour or language is unacceptable within all activities, programmes or services.

1.4 Equality & Diversity Statement

WFDC recognises and celebrates the diverse nature of the people who live, work in and visit the Wyre Forest District and who work for the Council and its partners / contractors.

- WFDC is guided by its core value that people will be treated fairly and according to their needs.
- WFDC supports and promotes equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery.
- WFDC opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- WFDC accepts that it has a unique and influential position in the community as a major employer and quality service provider. It also accepts that it has a moral obligation to bring about positive change through its extensive contact with the community and its grant-aiding powers for community organisations.

2.0 RECOGNITION OF POOR PRACTICE, ABUSE AND BULLYING

2.1 Introduction

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. WFDC employees have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of an individual towards a vulnerable person. WFDC encourages and expects employees to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a vulnerable person immediately with the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor (8.0 – Essential Contacts).

2.2 Poor Practice

Poor practice includes any behaviour that contravenes the WFDC Code of Behaviour for Employees (Appendix D) and WFDC Code of Conduct.

2.3 What is meant by ‘Abuse’

The abuse or neglect of a child can be caused by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, in a community or institutional setting, by those known to them or, much more rarely, by a stranger.

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons”.

(No Secrets, 2000)

The majority of instances of abuse will constitute a criminal offence. Vulnerable people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

2.3.1 Categories of abuse (this is not an exhaustive list)

Categories can apply to children, young people and adults although Financial and Discriminatory abuse are more specifically applicable to adults.

2.3.1.1 Physical Abuse

Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, being locked in a room, inappropriate methods of restraint, inappropriate sanctions or force feeding.

Within a sports context an example might be hitting as punishment or training beyond a child's developed ability.

2.3.1.2 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

2.3.1.3 Psychological Abuse (emotional abuse)

Includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, rejection, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, difference, harassment, verbal abuse including shouting or swearing, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.

Psychological abuse is the denial of a person's human and civil rights including choice and opinion, privacy and dignity and being able to follow one's own spiritual and cultural beliefs or sexual orientation.

Within an arts context an example might include constant criticism of the young person and undermining their efforts or subjecting them to unrealistic pressure to consistently perform to high expectations.

2.3.1.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving vulnerable people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

In swimming and related activities, which might involve contact with young people, situations where sexual abuse might go unnoticed could be created.

2.3.1.5 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The grooming and sexual exploitation of young people is an often hidden form of child sexual abuse and can take many different forms, occur in a wide range of settings and can be carried out by individuals, by street gangs or by groups.

The victim will be tricked into believing they are in a loving relationship.

CSE can take place in many forms, whether through a seemingly consensual relationship, or a young person being forced to have sex in return for some kind of payment, such as drugs, money, gifts or even protection and affection.

It involves perpetrators grooming their victims in various ways to gain their trust before emotionally and sexually abusing them for their own gain, this is done: in person, via mobiles, or online.

2.3.1.6 Financial or Material Abuse (adults)

Includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with Wills or property or the misappropriation of property or benefits. It also includes the withholding of money or the unauthorised or improper use of a person's money or property, usually to the disadvantage of the person to whom it belongs. Staff borrowing money or objects from a service user would also be considered abuse.

2.3.1.7 Discriminatory Abuse (adults)

Includes racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, comments or jokes or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, any of the above forms of abuse with discrimination as a motive, not responding to dietary needs or not providing appropriate spiritual support. Excluding a person from activities on the basis they are not liked is also discriminatory abuse.

2.3.1.8 Identifying Signs of Possible Abuse

There are certain signs of abuse, both in a vulnerable person's appearance and behaviour, which may alert an individual to the possibility that abuse, is occurring. Some of these signs are common to all types of abuse; others are more specific.

Knowing the signs to be aware of is essential for recognising a real or potential problem. However, the presence of any one sign in itself may not necessarily mean abuse is occurring, and conversely, a vulnerable person who is being abused may show none of the obvious signs. Such factors make the issue of abuse more complex, but all concerns and suspicions should be reported and acted upon accordingly. The following are indications that a vulnerable person may be being abused:

- Unexplained bruising or suspicious injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (becoming very quiet, withdrawn, outbursts of temper)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- A vulnerable person has difficulty in making friends
- Changes in appearance such as weight loss

(Indicators of Abuse, WSAB, Policy & Procedures 2010)

2.3.1.9 How to spot warnings signs of CSE

There are a number of warning signs people may spot in a child or young person's behaviour that may indicate something is wrong. These include:

The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

- 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 (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)
- 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

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

- Missing from home or care
- Physical injuries
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Involvement in offending
- Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations
- Absent from school
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites
- Estranged from their family
- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations
- Poor mental health
- Self harm
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide

Children at High Risk of CSE - evidence shows that any child displaying several vulnerabilities from the above lists should be considered to be a high risk of sexual exploitation.

A **CSE pathway in Worcestershire** has been produced (CSE Flowchart Appendix G) to be used where there are concerns about the possibility of CSE. It should be noted that the flowchart is unique in respect of normal safeguarding processes, as it allows for low level non-child specific concerns to be reported. In some instances concerns may not relate to a specific child or young person, but rather to a particular address (such as a commercial premises), to a vehicle, or to the behaviour of an adult or group of adults. It is very important that these non-child specific concerns should also be logged with the Access Centre as they may be significant in terms of developing a fuller picture of suspicious activity. This is an area in which Partners can contribute by providing intelligence.

A **Screening Tool** has been produced for practitioners to use to make an initial judgement about the likely level of risk that CSE is occurring and to assist in having a professional conversation with the Access Centre. The threshold for making a referral to Children's Services will be lower in respect of concerns about CSE. The tool can be found at:

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/552/appendix_2_screening_tool_august_2013

Remember that at all times the welfare of the vulnerable person is paramount. If a vulnerable person's behaviour or your observations give rise to concern then talk to them sensitively to find out if there is anything wrong or discuss your concerns with the WFDC SA (see 8.0 Essential Contacts). It may be appropriate to raise your initial concerns with parents or carers (see 4.3.4).

People should not be making judgements or acting alone. 'Sharing responsibility' by seeking advice from supervisors with a safeguarding lead within the organisation.

2.4 Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to vulnerable people, to the extent that it affects their health and development, or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

Bullying in sport: refers to HWSP CP Policy available from the WFDC Sports Development Officer.

2.4.1 The action WFDC will take:

Whatever its form, bullying is unacceptable within WFDC and it always will be challenged and addressed appropriately. There is an expectation on the ground that 'low level' incidents will be dealt with by employees. However, incidents that are serious e.g. causing marks and injuries or bullying (regardless of seriousness) that persists despite efforts to deal with it should be referred (see 4.6). If in doubt employees should contact Safeguarding Advisor to discuss concerns.

3.0 SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES

3.1 Disclosure & Barring Service criminal record checks

The CRB has become the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).

In 2011 the review of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) arrangements has led to a narrowing of the definition and have been implemented by the DBS. Criminal record checks will only be undertaken for 'eligible posts'. This means that checks should only be undertaken where the post meets the below definition of *Regulated Activity*.

Regulated Activity:

"Involves contact with children (under 18) or vulnerable adults (adults receiving healthcare, living in sheltered housing or residential accommodation, receiving domiciliary care in their own home etc. NB – being elderly does not mean you are classed as vulnerable) and is:

- of a specified nature e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment, transport etc; or
- in a specified place e.g. schools, children's homes & hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes etc
and is carried out either
- frequently – once a week or more. This covers regular repetitive activity;
- intensively – four or more days in a 30 day period; or
- overnight – between 2 – 6am

DBS checks are carried out for WFDC by Worcestershire County Council Human Resources as our umbrella organisation.

Only those posts detailed on the establishment list can be checked as a matter of course. Any additional checks should be discussed first with the DBS Officer at WCC.

WFDC has nominated persons as the Appointed DBS checkers who scrutinise and check DBS forms before they are submitted.

3.1.1 Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All potential candidates will have to fill in the WFDC Application Form.
- All applicants for 'eligible posts' will have a DBS check prior to any work being offered in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- A minimum of two written references will be taken up and may be confirmed by telephone.
- Employees, who are required to have a DBS check, will only have one check upon recruitment. There will be no rechecks.

3.1.2 Interview and Induction:

All employees will be required to undergo an interview under the guidelines of the WFDC Recruitment and Selection Policy. All employees will receive an informal induction upon commencement of employment.

During the Recruitment Process:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including DBS online form if required)
- Personal ID must be verified
- Qualifications should be substantiated
- Gaps in employment history are accounted for
- Job requirements and responsibilities are clarified
- Sign up to the ITC Policy (if appropriate)
- Safeguarding procedures are explained and training needs identified (if appropriate)

3.1.3 Criminal charges, cautions, convictions , reprimands and final warnings

Employees must advise their line manager immediately if charged with or cautioned or convicted of any criminal offence, and for under 18's who may receive a reprimand or final warning, whilst an employee of the district council. While such proceedings will not necessarily affect employment, the council needs to be sure there are no implications for its clients, reputation, and service delivery or in relation to the role to be undertaken.

Managers should check annually as part of the EDR process that employees have nothing to declare.

3.1.4 Portability

DBS checks are portable through the Update Service. This will cost £13 per year for a paid post and free for volunteers. The applicant must have banking online, and they have to register within 14 days of the disclosure issue date. They cannot join retrospectively, so anyone with current DBS disclosures cannot join until their next check. All records will not be monitored, only people who are signed up to the Update Service.

The manager will need to get consent from the applicant to go onto the Update Service portal to check the details. Once they have this and log in (which is free to do) and input the details that are needed, the portal will then show one of four things: Clear (no changes in certificate), Positive (no changes in certificate) Changes (new disclosure needed) or not registered.

3.1.5 Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help employees to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and ensure their practice reduces the likelihood of allegations against them.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond appropriately to concerns expressed by a vulnerable person.
- Work safely, effectively with vulnerable people.

WFDC requires:

- Employees who meet the *regulated activity* threshold are required to have a DBS check and will have to update their safeguarding training every 2-3 years.
- Training levels are appropriate to the employees contact with vulnerable people and their responsibilities for child and adult welfare within WFDC. Training will be provided by WCC.
- Seasonal employees who meet the *regulated activity* threshold during the course of their work e.g. summer Play leaders, Sports Coaches and Rangers, must be DBS checked and safeguarding will be part of their induction training.
- Designated Safeguarding Advisor will receive specific training to support their more enhanced role.
- An employee who moves jobs internally and their responsibilities change may require a different level of safeguarding training.

3.2 Code of Behaviour for Employees working with Young People

In order to ensure adherence and understanding, all individuals working for or on behalf of WFDC will apply the WFDC Code of Behaviour for Employees (Appendix D) and the WFDC Code of Conduct as it relates to their particular role with young people.

Young people taking part in WFDC activities will be expected to treat each other with mutual respect and dignity. WFDC employees will ensure that acceptable standards of behaviour are communicated to participants and adhered to e.g. Code of Conduct for Young People (Appendix E).

3.3 WFDC Guidance and Procedures relating to activities and services

In the course of preventing abuse to vulnerable people WFDC have established guidance and procedures related to activities and services.

3.3.1 Use of photography, video recording, image recording and mobile phone cameras

There is national evidence that some people have used events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people.

When using professional photographers or inviting the press to a WFDC activity, WFDC will:-

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- The photographer must wear identification at all times during the event.
- Not allow unsupervised access to vulnerable people or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Parents and spectators intending to photograph or video at an event will be required to register with the event organiser if they wish to use photographic equipment.
- Individuals registered to use photographic equipment will be issued with identification.
- Vulnerable people and their parents/carers will be informed to report any concerns to the event organiser.
- Concerns raised over inappropriate or intrusive photography will be reported to the event organiser and recorded as a child protection concern.
- See WF Dance Festival CP Policy, HWSP Child Protection Policy

3.3.2 Organised photographic opportunities

- The majority of promotional and press releases are organised through the Communications & Engagement Officer. These are generally agreed by both parties in advance. We undertake not to use the vulnerable person's images unless we have written consent for both the taking and publication of films or photographs from the parent, carer or Head Teacher in the case of schools.
- When a media photographer arrives at our venue he/she will be required to have formal ID and have it to hand at all times. If there is any doubt about the ID the Communications & Engagement Officer should be contacted.
- The image rights will be negotiated between the Communications & Engagement Officer and the photographer.
- WFDC will ensure that the vulnerable person's names are not mentioned in their publications if requested by the parents/guardians/carers or schools in line with their Child Protection Policy.
- Written consent (on WFDC Consent Form) on behalf of an under 18 year old must be obtained on WFDC organised photographic opportunities.

3.3.3 Unofficial photographic and filming opportunities taken by parent/carers and others

A) Parks and Open Spaces and Nature Reserves

It is not practical to control unofficial filming and photography in parks and open spaces and nature reserves that are owned by Wyre Forest District Council.

If concerns are raised during:

- an event organised by Wyre Forest District Council or outside bodies
- normal operating hours

They should be reported to the event organiser or directly to the police. As the incident is in the public domain, this should be reported as a police matter and Wyre Forest District Council has no direct responsibility to act, other than contacting the police to respond.

B) Town Hall and Museum

These facilities are managed by Wyre Forest District Council and may be visited by members of the public or hired for private functions/events.

Hirers (as appropriate) will be made aware of the Wyre Forest District Council Safeguarding Policy. It is the responsibility of the hirer to communicate their own policies and arrangements to parents/carers, although these should not contravene the policy of Wyre Forest District Council.

All events organised by Wyre Forest District Council at these facilities will be covered by the Council's policy under 3.3.1/3.3.2.

Minimum standards in relation to safeguarding are incorporated as part of the normal operating procedures for each facility.

3.3.5 Internet

- Young people on work experience or others participating in one of our clubs may need supervised access to the internet. At WFDC access to inappropriate web sites and chat rooms is prevented by specialist blocking software.
- There are systems in place for monitoring usage of the internet and all employees have log in passwords, which can easily be traced. Any employees discovered to have accessed or placed *sexually abusive images of vulnerable people* on the Internet will be subject to the Internet Security Policy and WFDC Disciplinary procedures.
- Employees will have awareness of cyber bullying and grooming issues and can refer to WFDC Social Networking Policy.

Further guidance and procedures relating to activities and services can be found in Appendix I.

- Work Experience and Extended Work Experience
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- Guidance for employees to do home and site visits
- Our policy on working with Agency employees

4.0 PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH VULNERABLE PEOPLE

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES, SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The procedures should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with vulnerable people has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a vulnerable person
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a vulnerable person;
or
- behaved towards a vulnerable person/s in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with vulnerable people.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- enquiries and assessment by children/adult social care about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection or in need of services
- consideration by WFDC of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

4.2 Responding to Disclosures

4.2.1 Actions to Take:

The individual receiving information concerning a disclosure should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the vulnerable person.
- Tell the vulnerable person he/she is not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Take what the vulnerable person says seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- It is likely that the vulnerable person will be frightened and unsure of what will happen. Be open and honest in explaining to the vulnerable person what will happen next.
- Do not make promises to keep the information a secret. The vulnerable person must be told that the information will be passed on. Explain to them that concerns will have to be shared with someone who is in a position to act.
- Complete an Incident Report Form (Appendix B), the exact questions asked and the answers given – using the same vocabulary as the vulnerable person. The recording should be completed as soon as possible and on the same working day. It should be signed and dated.
- Do not take sole responsibility: Contact and consult the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor stating that you wish to discuss a possible abuse incident and pass on the Incident Report Form. This way you can begin to protect the vulnerable person by referring concerns to the appropriate agencies and so that you can get some support for yourself in what could be a difficult situation (Appendix A – A Quick Guide to Procedures).

Not all vulnerable people are able to express themselves verbally. In this instance where there are concerns an Incident Report Form (Appendix B) should be completed and the same procedures for making a referral followed. When dealing with a vulnerable person who does not have the mental capacity to make decisions (Mental Capacity Act) advice needs to be sought in making a 'best interest decision'.

4.2.2 Actions to be avoided:

The individual receiving the disclosure should not:

- Panic
- Dismiss the concern
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets

It is therefore critical that practitioners feel confident about determining when specific services should be accessed and the processes for doing so.

This guidance sets out a framework for understanding the threshold criteria for differing levels of response. Whilst it is recognised that many services will have thresholds which sit within the framework to enable children and young people to access a higher level of specialist support, this guidance has a particular focus on the threshold for accessing services from Children's Social Care. A shared understanding of this threshold helps to ensure that resources are targeted effectively at those children and young people who most require them, and supports practitioners in making appropriate referrals. The threshold framework also supports multi-agency working by the development of a common language and an agreed model across the children's workforce in Worcestershire for responding to need.

The models and process diagrams have been developed to support the Threshold Guidance and to illustrate what you as a practitioner need to do if you identify a child about whom you are concerned. In addition, the Guidance takes you through the information that you will need to make a referral to Children's Social Care, provides examples of both good and poor quality written referrals, and sets out what you can expect if you have contact with the Access Centre.

4.3.4 Sharing concerns with Parents and Carers

WFDC is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers where there are concerns about their child or vulnerable adult. In most situations any initial concerns about a vulnerable person will be shared with parents and carers, as there may be a reasonable explanation that clarifies initial concerns. For example, if a young person seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. He/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement.

4.3.5 When it is not appropriate to share concerns with Parents and Carers

Circumstances may arise, where sharing concerns with parents or carers may put a vulnerable person at greater risk, (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse will be reported to the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor as soon as possible and recorded appropriately. Advice and guidance should be sought from the Access Centre with respect to consulting with parents. However, if a Vulnerable Adult has mental capacity and does not want their information shared the agency has no right to share it unless it is believed that others are at risk.

4.3.6 Designated Officer

WFDC has a designated Safeguarding Advisor at a senior manager level in Community Wellbeing and Environment Division (CWE) to handle child protection issues (8.0 – Essential Contacts) in liaison with Human Resources and Legal sections.

The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will receive appropriate training and information.

The Safeguarding Advisor will be responsible for informing Children's or Adult Protection Services of any alleged incident of abuse without delay and will be required to follow this up in writing within 24 hrs of the report. (Appendix D – WFDC Safeguarding Advisor Roles and Responsibilities) In the event that the first named Safeguarding Advisor is unavailable, the person with the concerns will contact their senior manager. In the event that neither officer can be contacted then Children/Adult Protection Services should be contacted directly. All incidents reported directly to Children's/Adult Protection Services must also be reported to the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor at the earliest opportunity. (7.0 - Essential Contacts).

4.3.7 Expert Advice

If you are not sure what to do, contact the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor. You can also obtain advice by telephoning the Access Centre or call the NSPCC 24-hour free phone helpline. The Police also have specially trained child protection teams who will give guidance and support. Please note that Children's and Adult Protection Services are happy to discuss any concerns you may have about child protection and will be able to advise on whether it is necessary to make an official referral.

Refer to section 8.0 – Essential Contacts.

4.3.8 Records and Information

Information that is passed to Children's/Adult Protection Services or the Police must be as helpful as possible. It is therefore essential that a detailed record be made at the time of the disclosure/concern using the Incident Report form (Appendix B).

All alleged incidents of abuse are to be reported to the Police or Children's/Adult Services without delay by the Safeguarding Advisor. Referrals made by telephone to Children's/Adult Protection Services or the Police are to be confirmed in writing by the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor within 24 hours. A record will be kept of the name and position of the Officer to whom the concerns were passed, of advice given, together with the date and time of the call and agreed actions including feedback to the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor.

A record of referrals will be held by the officer making the referral for future reference.

4.4 Allegations against WFDC Employees

Abuse can and does occur outside the family setting. It is crucial that those involved in delivering an activity or providing a service are aware of the possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken. It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the vulnerable person, arising from abuse or harassment by an employee should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Advisor (Appendix A – A Quick Guide to Procedures).

4.4.1 Seek Advice

Occasions may arise where the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor is informed of situations where there is uncertainty about whether the allegation made constitutes abuse and is therefore unclear about what action to take. Allegations made may be about poor practice but those responsible should always seek advice if there is any doubt as the incident may be one of a series of incidents which together cause concern.

4.4.2 Confidentiality

If you have concerns about a person's behaviour towards a vulnerable person it is important that you share your concerns with the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor. It is acknowledged that it may be difficult for an individual to report his / her concern about a colleague's practice and WFDC will support and protect anyone who (without malicious intent), reports an incident of poor practice or suspected abuse involving a WFDC employee. Procedures outlined in the Confidential Reporting Policy will be adhered to. WFDC will ensure that confidentiality of the referrer is maintained in all incidents of suspected abuse unless this would expose a vulnerable person to greater risk or expose others including professionals to serious harm or potentially lead to interference with the administration of justice. Information will be handled and disseminated on a "need to know" basis only. This includes the following people:

- Parents/carers of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Children/Adult Protection Services, Police.
- Designated officers within WFDC e.g. Safeguarding Advisor, Human Resources.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a young person).
- Advice should be sought from Children/Adult Services or Police before any approach is made to the alleged perpetrator, or the parents if the alleged perpetrator is a young person.

The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will be responsible for ensuring that the information is stored in a secure place (by Human Resources) where access will be limited to certain designated people. Data Protection legislation will be upheld and strictly adhered to. All concerns will be taken seriously and managed accordingly within the policies and procedures of WFDC and for the welfare of vulnerable people.

4.4.3 If the referral relates to concern about of abuse or neglect outside of a WFDC activity or service

- Concerns should be reported to Safeguarding Advisor as in section 4.3.5.
- The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will notify the local Children's/Adult Protection Services or the Police.
- No further action will be taken under WFDC procedures.
- WFDC may need to explore any support required for the vulnerable person and person making the referral.

4.4.4 If the referral relates to concern about of abuse or neglect within a WFDC activity or service

- The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will notify the local Children's/Adult Protection Services or the Police.
- The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will deal with any media enquiries through the Communications Team and decide (in consultation with HR and Senior Management) on any action required to suspend the individual involved following advice from Children's/Adult Protection Services and/or the Police.
- A full investigation will be conducted in line with the disciplinary procedures. (Appendix A – A Quick Guide to Procedures).

4.4.5 Action if there are Concerns

The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will judge whether the disclosure is poor practice alone or suspected abuse and in doing so may discuss with Children's/Adult Protection Services to clarify concerns before reaching a decision.

4.4.6 Poor Practice

- If the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor considers the allegation to be poor practice, it will be dealt with as a misconduct issue and in line with Council's Disciplinary Procedure referred to the employees Line Manager.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the designated WFDC Safeguarding Advisor, or if the matter has been dealt with inadequately, it will be referred to the Director/Human Resources (8.0 - Essential Contacts), who will then make a decision about appropriate action.

4.4.7 Allegation against the Safeguarding Advisor

If the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor is the subject of the suspicion or allegation, the HR Manager or Director will be responsible for taking the appropriate action outlined above.

4.4.8 If an allegation is made against you

If you are the person who is the subject of an allegation, the situation will be explained to you in due course and you may be asked to stop working for WFDC whilst investigations take place. This may result in suspension whilst an investigation is carried out, ensuring all parties involved are protected.

Following the investigation, the appropriateness of you returning to work will be assessed and will be dependent on the outcome of the WFDC internal investigation and all other available information (including information from the Police and Children's/Adult Protection Services). WFDC will assess on a case-by-case basis the support that can be offered to an individual who has an allegation made against them.

4.4.9 Internal Enquiries and Suspension

The WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will make an immediate recommendation to the Director/HR about whether to suspend an employee accused of abuse pending a Children's/Adult Protection Services or Police investigation.

Irrespective of the findings of the Children's/Adult Protection Services or Police enquiries, WFDC will assess all individual cases under the disciplinary procedures to decide whether an employee should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other employees.

This decision may be difficult in incidents where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In this instance WFDC will make a decision based on all available information that could suggest that more likely than not the allegation is true. The welfare of the vulnerable person will always remain paramount and disciplinary procedures will be drawn to a conclusion to ensure the protection of vulnerable person.

4.4.10 Support to Deal with the Aftermath

Consideration will be given to what support WFDC can offer to the vulnerable person and their parents/carers and employees. Details of Helplines and support groups will be provided. (8.0 – Essential Contacts).

Referrals to Occupational Health or counselling may be available through HR for employees.

Consideration will also be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

4.5 Allegations of Historical or Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time (often years) after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a young person or by an employee who is still currently working with young people). In this instance WFDC will follow the procedures as previously outlined and will report the matter to Children's/Adult Protection Services or the Police as other vulnerable people may be at risk.

Any individual who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with vulnerable people.

4.6 Action if bullying is suspected

Any allegations of bullying within any WFDC activity will be taken seriously and steps taken to eliminate the actions.

4.6.1 Action to help the Victim and Prevent Bullying

In order to prevent bullying from occurring and to help victims of bullying, WFDC will:

- Encourage all vulnerable people to speak and share their concerns by creating an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe.
- Speak with the victim and the bully (ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them although do not promise to keep the information confidential.
- Keep a record on Employees Personal File for 15 months of what is said.
- Report any concerns to the person in charge of the particular activity where the bullying is occurring. If the person in charge feels that they cannot deal with the allegation or the abuse is severe and/or persists, the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor will be informed.

4.6.2 WFDC employees have a responsibility to deal with the individual's accused of bullying by:

- Talking with the bully to explain the consequences of their behaviour.
- Seeking an apology from the bully to the victim.
- Informing the bully's parents/carers.
- Insisting on the return of "borrowed" items.
- Imposing sanctions as necessary such as suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- Encouraging and supporting the bully to change behaviour.
- Informing the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor of all incidents and actions.
- Keep a written record on Employees Personal File for 15 months of all incidents and actions taken.
- Ensuring the presence of a second individual as a witness when dealing with the incident.
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

5.0 WFDC SAFEGUARDING SERVICES, PROCEDURES & GROUPS

5.1 Housing

The Council, through the Strategic Housing Services (SHS) and its two contracted service providers: Worcestershire Care and Repair and Community Housing Group, provide a number of services to young people and vulnerable adults. Any concerns employees have regarding the impact housing issues are having on a young person or vulnerable adult can be channelled through the SHS team or one of their contracted service providers. The team will work with contracted providers to ensure they have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.

The SHS team also provide services through a number of third parties and the voluntary sector and will work with these organisations to ensure they have an awareness of safeguarding issues and policies in place where appropriate.

Within our procurement process all B & B accommodation providers must agree to follow our safeguarding policy.

5.2 Wyre Forest Vulnerable Adults Group

The Community Safety & Partnerships Officer facilitates an officer group to co-ordinate a multi agency response to cases involving vulnerable adults. This approach mirrors arrangements in Bromsgrove & Redditch districts.

5.3 WFDC Internal Officer Group

A group of WFDC officers meets regularly throughout the year to keep up to date with safeguarding matters ensuring that the Policy is implemented corporately and where we work with external partners. This includes representatives from the Human Resources, Housing, Community Safety and Cultural Services.

5.4 Contracted Services

Under Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, the local authority must ensure that the services contracted out to others are provided having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

WFDC will ensure this includes:

- Procurement of services,
- Grants to the voluntary sector,
- Service Level Agreements,
- Shared Services, or
- Partnership arrangements

Organisations must prove to WFDC that they have regard to the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults (depending on the make up of their target group and the service/partnership in question).

WFDC Legal Services and Procurement Officer will ensure that having regard to the need is covered in contractual arrangements.

6.0 REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and procedural document has been issued by Wyre Forest District Council was adopted on 18th October 2011, the predecessor policy having been approved in July 2008. It will be next subject to review whenever there is a significant change in the organisation or its operating procedures or a relevant change in legislation.

It will be the responsibility of the WFDC Human Resources in conjunction with the WFDC Safeguarding Advisor to notify employees of any changes in the documentation and / or changes in relation to their roles and responsibilities.

7.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

HWSP Child Protection Policy

WFDC Dance Festival Policy

Places for People Leisure Ltd Child Protection Policy

WFDC Code of Conduct for Employees

WFDC Recruitment and Procedures Policy

WFDC Disciplinary and Grievance Policies

WFDC Equality and Diversity statement

WFDC Confidential Reporting Policy

WFDC Harassment and Bullying Policy

WFDC Health and Safety Regulations

WFDC ICT Policy and Procedures

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) policies and guidance

Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) policies and guidance

WFDC Temporary Accommodation Use Policy

8.0 ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

Name	Job Title	Contact Number
Lesley Fox – WFDC Safeguarding Advisor	Community Development Manager	01562 732976
Kay Higman - WFDC Lead Officer	Cultural Services Manager	01562 732902
Kathryn Washington	Community Safety & Partnerships Manager	01562 732956
Loz Samuels	Arts & Play Development Officer	01562 732977
Local Authority District's representative on WSCB	Redditch & Bromsgrove DC CEO	01527 64252
Rachael Simpson - Departmental Contacts	Human Resources	01562 732701
Jon Hancock - WSCB: North Worcs Local Authority Children's Services	Designated Officer (LADO)	01905 752816
	Family Front Door Public (8.00am - 6.00pm)	01905 822666
	Family Front Door Out of hours (6.00pm - 8.00am)	01905 768020
Adult Social Care Services		01905 768053
West Mercia Police (Vulnerable adults, Child Protection & Domestic Violence) North Worcestershire (Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove, Redditch)	Public Protection Unit	03003333000 101 non emergency 999 emergency
Nighstop		01562 820110
<u>National Contacts</u>		
NSPCC 24 hr Child Protection	Helpline (Free phone)	0808 800 5000
Childline UK		0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
Victim support		0207 735 9166

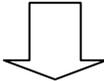
A Quick Guide to Procedures

Flow Chart 1

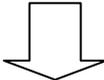
Appropriate action when concerns about a young person are raised through direct disclosure or observation, or a young person discloses to you.

A young person or adult discloses an incident to you

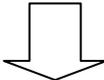
Yes



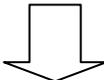
You are working on behalf of or for WFDC delivering an activity or service



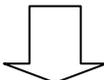
Contact the WFDC SA who will refer it to Children's Services or the Police



If it is not possible to contact the WFDC SA contact Children's Services or the Police

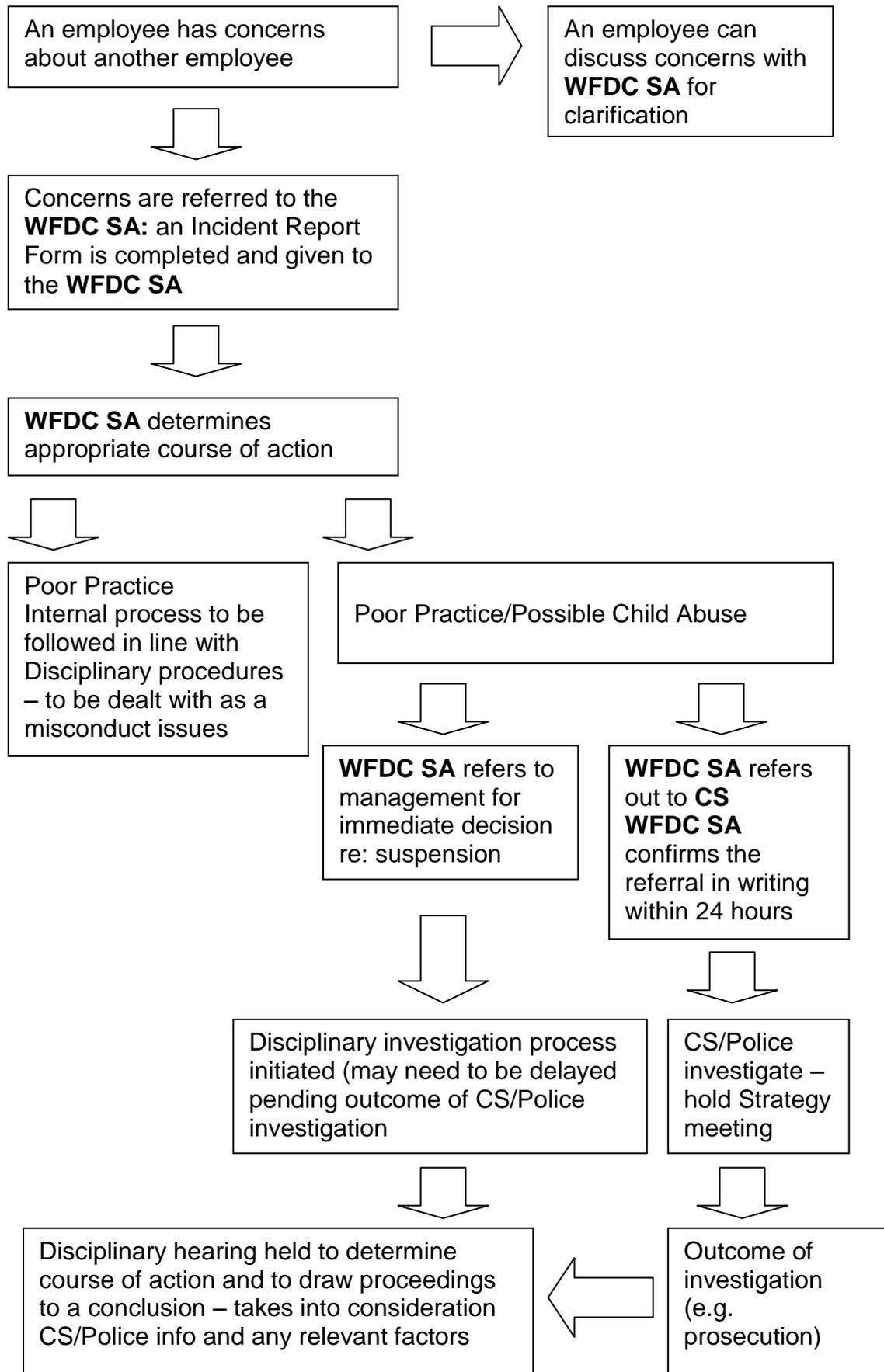


Inform the WFDC SA as soon as possible



Complete an incident report form and forward to the WFDC SA

You have concerns about the behaviour of an employee towards a young person



Wyre Forest District Council Incident Report Form**Reporting an incident that has been disclosed to you**

Depending on the circumstances, and if the risk is very high, do not spend time filling in this form but go straight to the SA who will contact Children's Services immediately

Your Name:	
Your Position:	Contact No.
Person's Name:	
Person's Address:	
Parents/Carers name and address:	
Contact No.	
Age and date of birth if under 18:	
Ethnic origin:	
Does the person have a disability? If yes give details.	
Date and time of disclosure:	
Venue where disclosure was made:	
Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details.	
Brief description of what has prompted concerns: include dates, times etc of any specific incidents.	
Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? (NB. Do not ask the person to show you)	
What exactly did the person say? What did you reply? (NB. Do not question the person. You can reassure. Just listen. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details?
Details of actions taken so far:
Details of actions you intend to take:
Name and contact details for witnesses to the incident:
Contact details to whom this information has been passed to: Name: Position: Organisation: Date and time that the information was forwarded:
Agreed action, including feedback from statutory agency:
Signature: Date:
This form should be placed in a sealed envelope, marked Confidential and for the attention of Lesley Fox, Safeguarding Advisor, Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. WFDC will only collect and process personal information provided on this form for no other purpose than for the purpose of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Wyre Forest District Council Safeguarding Advisor Roles And Responsibilities

The role of the designated person is to:

- Be available to any employee or young person to discuss any child protection or poor practice concerns.
- Receive referrals or reports of possible child abuse or poor practice.
- Have an understanding of legislation and government guidance relevant to this role.
- Have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the statutory agencies within the field of child protection.
- Responsible for child protection - establish contact with the senior member of Children's Services Department within Worcestershire.
- Provide information and advice on child protection within the organisation and act as a local source of advice on child protection matters.
- Ensure that the WFDC Safeguarding Policy is adhered to and support the interest of young people on WFDC activities and events.
- Ensure that Children's Services or Police are informed of relevant concerns about individual young people.
- To establish contact with the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and to be aware of local procedures.
- Manage the administration/organise the paperwork and record the information received.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing following the correct procedures.
- Maintain accurate records relating to the concerns raised and/or ongoing investigations affecting WFDC.
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed about any action taken, along with any further action required.
- To uphold confidentiality as appropriate, in all child protection matters.
- Advise the organisation of child protection training needs.

Wyre Forest District Council Code of Behaviour for Employees working with Young People

This Code of Behaviour outlines good practice when working with young people. An environment which allows bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism is not acceptable.

You must:

- Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- Provide a male and female employee to accompany young people when trips are organised.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage them and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Build a balanced relationship based on mutual trust that empowers young people to share in decision-making processes.
- Give enthusiastic feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the needs of every young person as an individual.
- Secure parental consent in writing to acting *loco parentis* if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or medical treatment.
- Have emergency contact and medical details for participants in their care.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that even physical contact with a young person may be misinterpreted.
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with young people.
- Operate within WFDC Policies, Procedures and Guidance.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and language and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- Ensure access to a phone or mobile.
- Give guidance and support for inexperienced employees.

You must not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with young people.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of young people.
- Take a young person alone on car journeys, however short.
- Give a young person your personal telephone number.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Rely on your good name or that of WFDC to protect you.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'.
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

What action will be taken if an employee breaks the Code of Behaviour?

1. If a decision needs to be made which potentially could contravene this code of a minor nature then there should be appropriate discussions with the Line Manager and risk assessments carried out.
2. If any of the above should occur you should report them immediately to the Line Manager and ensure a written record of the event is completed.
3. If the incident was deemed to be of a more serious nature then the incident would be dealt with through the WFDC Disciplinary process.
4. Parents should also be notified of the incident:
 - If you accidentally hurt a young person
 - If they appear to be distressed in any manner by your actions
 - If a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done or said

N.B It may sometimes be necessary for employees to do things of a personal nature for a young person, particularly if they are young or disabled. These should only be carried out with the full understanding and written consent of parents and the individuals involved. Employees should be responsive to the person's reactions. In the event that the person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and where possible give choices. This may be for example where you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing or where there is physical contact or lifting/assisting to carry out activities. Individuals are advised to avoid completing tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Wyre Forest District Council Code of Conduct for Young People

This policy will be characterised by a positive, child centred approach to caring for young people. We recognise the need for rules within any setting and the necessity for managing difficult behaviour.

This policy will ensure that young people are treated fairly and are protected under the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.

The aim of the policy is:

- To ensure that young people are safe and treated fairly at all times.
- To respect and value each young person as individuals.
- To encourage co-operative and kind behaviour between young people.
- For young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- For young people to take pride in their own and others good behaviour.
- To give employees specific guidelines on how behaviour will be managed.

We expect young people to:

- Treat everyone equally with respect and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
- Know and abide by the rules and spirit of the event.
- Avoid violence and rough play and help anyone that may be injured.
- Accept the decisions of those in authority without question or complaint.
- Exercise self-control at all times.
- Give maximum effort and strive to achieve your best.
- Learn to accept success and failure, victory and defeat with humility and dignity respectively and without excessive emotional displays.
- Abide by the instructions of the employees and officials provided they do not contradict the spirit of this code.
- Treat everyone how you would like to be treated.
- Do not use foul, sexist or racist language at any time.
- Be a good sport, applaud good performance.
- Remember to have fun, improve skills and feel good.

When working on activities organised by WFDC employees we will:

- Give priority to the best interests of the young people in decisions that they make about them.
- Keep young people safe from all harm and protect them.
- Wherever possible let young people have a say in what affects them.
- Treat young people respectfully at all times.
- Be consistent and fair, keeping promises (where possible) made to young people.
- Actively work to help all young people feel welcome, happy and at ease.

What action will be taken if young people break their code of conduct?

1. A warning and explanation of why the behaviour is unacceptable.
2. A record is made in the Community Development Section Low Level Incident Book with an explanation of the incident.
3. Employees will employ their own system of warnings and minor sanctions e.g. time out (5 minutes max); 3 strikes and you are out. Young people must be aware of these sanctions from the outset.
4. If the young person's safety and/or others is being compromised due to their behaviour prompt action should be taken by the employee.
5. A session ban may be imposed.
6. Parents/carers are informed if their child is involved in unacceptable behaviour.
7. A behaviour contract between the young person, parent/carer, and WFDC employees may be agreed to get the young person back into the mainstream.
8. In some circumstances a young person may be permanently banned from participating on WFDC schemes.

Wyre Forest District Council Guidelines and Procedures for Activities and Services

1. Work Experience and Extended Work Experience

- It is important to distinguish between work experience and extended work experience (sometimes called work placement). Work experience refers to Key Stage 4 children going into a work environment for 1 – 2 weeks. Extended work experience refers to young people experiencing a working environment, possibly by undertaking work based learning over a longer period of time, 1 or 2 days per week, to achieve vocational qualifications.
- This is arranged by schools and Further Education providers and Local Education Authorities with employers or training organisations contracted to carry out this function, and can be either a full or part time basis. WFDC takes approaches through Human Resources and each Division has an officer to manage enquiries and liaise with employees.
- It is good practice to arrange a pre visit interview with the candidate. This may be the schools procedure in any event. The responsible teacher may advise the young person to telephone the manager before the start date if time does not allow an interview.
- Section Heads should ensure that Risk Assessments are in place for work experience students.

2. Trips, Tours and Holiday Clubs

- All trips, tours and holiday clubs will undergo the necessary level of preparation and will cover Health and Safety requirements such as risk assessments. Where play schemes are registered with OFSTED their standards will be adhered to.
- It is vital that any transport arrangements pay due regard to safeguarding young people and that adequate supervision is provided if young people are taken on trips and tours. Parents and carers must be notified and sign a form giving permission for young people to attend.
- **Recommended ratios** must be adhered to before commencement. In some cases employees may consider it appropriate to increase the level of supervision depending on the activity and the nature of young people taking part. Normally the ratio adult: child over 8 is 1: 12, under 8 is 1: 8.
- A person will be nominated to be the lead officer on outdoor transported trips. If parents and volunteers accompany any trip or activity, then they will be under the direction of that nominated person. The use of parents or volunteers shall not compromise employees/child ratios and in no way substitute the “duty of care” WFDC should be showing. At no time should persons accompanying their own children be left alone with children who are not their own – although we do recognise that parents have a valuable and crucial role to play.

- A complete list of all children and adults will be drawn up and head counted on departure and arrival. All children should be seen to be picked up on return unless specifically told otherwise in writing and signed for by the parent/carer in advance – a verbal undertaking is not acceptable. It is the duty of the parent to inform employees of this wish.
- In the event of a “new” person being requested to collect a child, an additional registration form must be completed by the parent. At no time will a child be handed over without full confirmation by the parent/carer.
- In the event that a parent/carer fails to collect a child the 2 members of employees must be present at all times. We ask a parent to inform us of any likely delays as soon as they are known. If no parent has arrived then it is the duty of the lead officer to try to make contact with the parent/carer. If no parent/carer has arrived after 30 minutes then the Police should be called. It is important to gauge what response time may be expected and advice sought therein from the Police.
- Before each trip, the lead officer must have registration forms, first aid kit, medical notes and medicines (if appropriate) and a mobile phone. Any hospital referrals must be relayed to parents/carers immediately.
- When organising a trip the lead officer must nominate an employee who is ‘on call’ should there be an emergency. This officer must have all the trip details (including names and contact details of participants) so that parents/carers can be contacted if necessary.

3. Residentials

- WFDC does not organise residentials for young people. However, from time to time employees may be involved in a partnership project that may include an overnight stay.
- On these occasions WFDC employees will provide secondary support to the organising body such as Connexions (PAYP), Youth Service. The lead organisation must have a policy on residentials which WFDC employees must be aware of before taking part in the event.
- A Welfare Plan must be drawn up prior to the residential by the lead organisation.

4. Transporting Young People

- A reputable transport company with the appropriate insurance will be used.
- Sufficient supervisors (team managers, coaches, parents) will be present on the coaches.
- Each person will have a seat and seat belt regulations will be adhered to.
- Parents/carers will be provided with details of both pick up and drop off points and times.
- Employees of a supervisory capacity will have the following information for each participant.
 - Name / contact number
 - Pick up / drop off point and time
 - Name of parent/carer collecting the participant
 - Emergency contact number
 - Medical details
- Participants will not be left unsupervised.
- It is not good practice to take young people alone on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents or carers, and someone in charge of the organisation. Employees should be able to state the purpose and anticipated length of the route. You must be insured for business use. The child should sit in the rear seat. If there were 3 young people in your care, two should sit in the back and one in the front. When the first child is returned to the parent the remaining young people should be sat in the back seats.

5. Lost/found young people

- When operating from a building we will endeavour to make all inside and outside areas as secure as possible. Whilst great care is taken to ensure the young people in our care are always accounted for, we do however have procedures for lost and found children (see following pages).
- If young people are on outdoor trips the lead officer is responsible as identified above. In the case of outdoor sites such as parks and nature reserves, employees are aware of the potential risk of lost young people and how to deal with these situations.
- Lost young people will only be handed over to the designated person named by the parent/carer on the registration form. In the case of parks and open spaces where young people are not on official trips, but nonetheless leisure users, the handing over of young people will only be done at the behest of Police involvement.

6. Procedure for dealing with lost young people

- On suspicion of a lost young person the officer will conduct a roll call without alarming them.
- The lead officer and one extra employee will conduct a thorough search of the building and grounds and the immediate vicinity.
- Employees conducting the search and remaining employees will ensure a calm manner and normal routine will be conducted.
- If the young person is not found, the Police and the child's parent/carer will be contacted. The SA will be informed.
- A full report will be produced on WFDC *Incident, Accident or Ill-Health For*.
- The relevant authorities will be informed.
- Employees will work closely with the Police, parents, and other authorities to ensure all relevant information is made available to aid the safe recovery of the young person.
- The incident will be evaluated and fully discussed with the employees and SA, Children's Services and the Police and, if appropriate, procedures reviewed. Policies will be amended if necessary.

7. Procedure for dealing with found young people

- Get down to the young person's height, show them your name badge and tell them where you work. In the first instance try to find out their name, giving the child time to respond as they may be extremely distressed. If that proves difficult then look for a discarded jumper or coat, as often there are name tags in clothing. Do not physically touch the young person to find out these details and seek another employee, as soon as possible, to help. Take the young person's name, age, address and telephone number if possible. If you cannot obtain any details at all then you must call the Police.
- Carry out a brief search of the immediate area with the young person. Mostly lost young people are near their family who are simply obscured by people or objects. Ask the young person where they last saw the parent/carer/guardian. Older young people sometimes have been left on site by parents who are to return later, be vigilant as to where and how long young people are waiting for parents to return.

- Small young people may become very distressed. In this case 2 employees should stay with the young person all the time, preferably the one person who has made initial contact – this avoids confusing the youngster. Alert all other employees on duty. Never leave a young person unattended. If a young person refuses to stay then call the Police immediately and stay vigilant to their direction.
- At no time put the young person in a vehicle. (See Appendix F 4. Transporting Young People). At the discretion of the SA contact the Police after 30 minutes of unsuccessful search. If out of normal hours and the SA is not available contact the Police directly and inform the SA at the next possible time.
- If the parents are found, ask for identification. Do not release young people to anyone under the age of 16.

8. Procedure for dealing with young people who decide they wish to leave the activity that you are in charge of.

- WFDC play schemes operate a **closed access policy** (see WFDC Play Development Policies and Procedures).

Should a young person leave the session without prior permission employees will:

- Employees will try to find out why the young person wishes to leave and sort out the issue if possible.
- Gently restrain the young person if they are in danger to themselves, employees or venue property.
- Follow the young person home if employees ratio permits (although this would be unlikely).
- Refer to registration form and contact parent/guardians immediately.

9. Restraining young people

- Employees should consider using physical force towards a young person only when they are in danger or there is a danger to others.
- Any incidents of this kind will be recorded on the Incident Form and reported to the SA and to parents on the same day.
- WFDC recognises that at all times employees might need to intervene and that unease and unwillingness to act appropriately could lead to the needs of the children being neglected, or their safety being put at risk.

10. Our policy on working in schools

- Employees who visit schools in the course of their duties have during curriculum or extra curricular time to deliver an activity or service should wear the official WFDC Identification badge.
- During curriculum time for WFDC employees who are in close contact with young people such as sports coach, plumber, builder, grounds maintenance, play leader, artist, ranger, **a teacher must always be present** (at least within sight of the group). The teacher has *loco parentis*, which is the legal responsibility for the young people.
- When WFDC are responsible for organising the activity at a school during extra curricular time and are 'hiring' the facility e.g. gymnasium, hall, field area, then an employee from the school should be on site. The person in charge of the activity should be familiar with the school site and its regulations. The Head Teacher has responsibility for all employees working on their premises.
- The line manager of the employee working in schools should check the schools Child Protection Policy and the reporting route.

11. Guidance for employees to do home and site visits

- Where it is practical to do so employees should prearrange the visit, preferably in writing.
- Colleagues should be notified of the date, time, address of the visit and the expected return time of the officer.
- Employees should wear/show the WFDC Identification badge/card.
- If a young person answers the door and the adult who has made the appointment is not present (and has made no other arrangements) the member of WFDC employees should not enter the premises but rearrange the visit.
- Refer to Code of Behaviour for Employees (Appendix D).
- Inadvertent contact with young people on their own may occur (e.g. refuse collectors pulling a bin out from a rear garden and coming into contact with a scantily clad young person) in which case they should leave the area and report the incident to their Line Manager.
- Refer to Intranet for more detailed guidance.

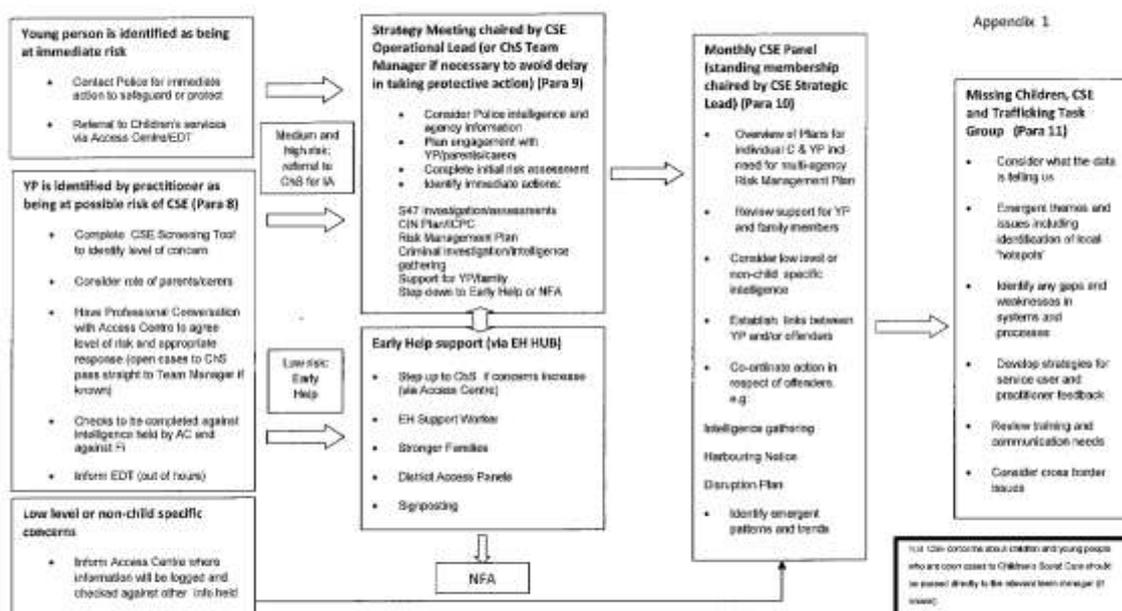
12. Our policy on working with Agency employees

Wherever an agency is used to supply temporary employees WFDC will provide a copy of our Safeguarding Policy.

- The agency will be required to supply WFDC with their own Policy/procedures for our reference.
- Agency employees who have the potential to be in contact with young people in the course of their temporary duties must complete a DBS check prior to taking up responsibilities for WFDC.

Appendix G

CSE Flowchart



Glossary of Terms

WFDC: Wyre Forest District Council

'Employees' includes all council employees, full or part time, volunteers and anyone working on a paid or unpaid basis on behalf of WFDC.

'Young people' relates to children and young people under the age of 18.

Vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or above:

“Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation”.

(No Secrets, 2000 Paragraph 2.3)

The term Vulnerable Adult can be interchanged with “Adult at Risk”

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB): Children Act 2004 requires the local authority to establish an LSCB from April 2006. WSCB co-ordinates work of Board partners to ensure that they are effective in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. District representation on the Board is required.

Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) is the body which sets direction and oversees the implementation of the strategy and the developing service. District representation on the Board is required.

LADO: Local Authority Designated Officer: The role of the LADO is to determine and advise organisations about the conduct of individuals which could question their suitability to work with children or young people.

HWSP: Herefordshire & Worcestershire Sports Partnership (County Sports Partnership/HWSP). Partnership of 6 District Councils, Herefordshire, University College Worcester.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS): uses the Police National Computer record to check disclosure of applicants when they are applying to work with vulnerable people.

Enhanced or Standard Disclosure: the level of criminal record check required in respect of the application.

Occupational Health (OH): is the agency through which WFDC refers all medical matters for employees. Support services such as counselling are organised by OH.

ChS: Children’s Services Department.