

Safeguarding Children Policy

Title	Safeguarding Children Policy
Version	5
Date of document	12/08/2026
Owned by	Healthworks Board
Responsible officer	Stacey Nash – Director (Designated Children Safeguarding Lead)
Review date	11/08/2027
Application	Board of trustees, directors, staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Healthworks.
External or statutory documents	North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children's Partnership Procedures can be found here: https://nesubregion.trixonline.co.uk/
Key contacts	Designated Children Safeguarding Lead: Stacey Nash- 0191 2641959 Designated Children Safeguarding Officers: Jo Jackson Julie Stephens Kelly Thompson (Term Time Only) If not available then contact Children's Social Care: Office hours call Initial Response Team: 0191 2772500, Out of office hours call Emergency Duty Team: 0191 2787878. Northumbria Police Phone 999

Policy Statement

Healthworks recognises that the protection and safety of children and young people (those who have not reached their eighteenth birthday or twenty-fifth birthday if they have an additional need) is everyone's responsibility. The organisation is committed to this principle and to the development of best practice with those groups and individuals it supports. This policy, the related procedures and the Code of Practice which follow, establish the roles and responsibilities of all staff, in relation to the protection of children, with whom their work brings them into contact.

Healthworks has a responsibility to offer support, advice and advocacy on behalf of any child or young person who discloses abuse to a member of staff or volunteer. The nominated Safeguarding Children Lead will be responsible for organising this with the young person and the most appropriate member of staff. The approach we will take is based on and reflects the principles of both relevant legislation and guidance relating to the protection of children.

- The welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual orientation have a right to protection from harm or abuse.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on our website. This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)

Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (May 2024)

Early Years Foundation Stage (Sept 2026)

This policy follows procedures and practice that recognise and are consistent with that objective and have been designed to complement North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children's Partnership Procedures which can be found here:

<https://nesubregion.trixonline.co.uk/>

Responsibility

The Board of Trustees is responsible for child protection within Healthworks. They have designated our **Safeguarding Children Lead** to oversee this responsibility on their behalf.

This will include ensuring the implementation, monitoring and reporting progress of this policy.

Stacey Nash- 0191 2641959 (Monday to Friday)

In relation to recruitment and selection of staff, this will also include ensuring that the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are carried out, and that references are requested which include comments about the candidates' suitability to work with/have contact with children. Refer to Recruitment Policy for further information.

It is the responsibility of our Safeguarding Children Lead to ensure that all staff for whom they are responsible for are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and the related procedures and code of practice.

Whilst we recognise that we are not a child protection agency, if children are to be truly protected it is essential that everyone working with children and young people contribute to the work of those with direct responsibility for the protection of children.

As a responsible body, we cannot and should not restrict our sense of duty to those children and young people we identify as our service users. Through their work staff come into contact with a number of children each and every year. By being vigilant and acting where concerns exist, we can play an important part in their protection.

In operating this policy, staff must also be aware that within the field of child protection the usual confidentiality can be overridden. Concerns relating to abuse of children and young people must be reported as outlined in the following procedures.

Guidance in the form of a Code of Practice has also been developed to provide staff with ideas that not only will help to protect children but will also help to identify practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse. Staff should familiarise themselves with this and if it is necessary to carry out practices contrary to it, only do so after discussion with and the approval of their Line Manager/Safeguarding Children Lead.

A copy of Government Guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' can be found at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Remember, non-action is never an option in child protection

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt others much less so. Recognition of abuse and neglect is not always easy or straightforward.

All staff must undertake Safeguarding Level 1 training within their induction period (this can be via E-learn) and refresher training must be attended every two years. Staff who are Level 3 trained must also complete refresher training every two years. Staff need to be fully aware of signs and indicators of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect and confident in their reporting procedures.

Physical Abuse: This can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

Sexual Abuse: This can involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse.

Emotional Abuse: Varying degrees of emotional abuse are present in virtually all child protection incidents but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill health. Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of the child.

Other abuse

Exploitation: This is an umbrella term used to describe the abuse of children who are forced, tricked, coerced or trafficked into exploitative activities. This does not always involve physical contact, it can occur with the use of technology.

Female Genital Mutilation: This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups

Breast ironing: Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely

Radicalisation: All schools, childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” This duty is known as the Prevent Duty. **Please see Appendix 1 The Prevent Duty.**

Staff are also aware that safeguarding concerns may include child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines activity, domestic abuse, online abuse, peer on peer abuse, serious violence, forced marriage, honour based abuse, modern slavery and trafficking.

Child Protection Procedure

Part 1

This procedure is to be followed if you think a child may be at risk of abuse, is being, or has been, abused.

The Senior Management team of Healthworks are responsible for ensuring that all staff, for whom they are responsible, are aware of and understand the importance of implementing these procedures.

It is recognised a percentage of the children that you come into contact with will, through the nature of their experiences, demonstrate behaviours which might be indicators of child abuse. You are not expected to suddenly become an expert in child protection, nor are you expected to investigate child abuse. You are, however, expected to comply with these procedures.

Staff who for any reason become concerned that a child may be at risk of abuse, is being, or has been abused, must immediately report to their line manager. Your line manager will discuss your concerns with you to clarify their cause and obtain all the known relevant information. This will then be reported to Children’s Social Care.

Our Designated Safeguarding Children Lead must also be informed as soon as possible.

Newcastle Children’s Services Contact Numbers

Office hours call Initial Response Team: 0191 2772500,

Out of office hours call Emergency Duty Team: 0191 2787878.

If your concerns are raised by something you become aware of while in a school, or through a school related activity, undertaken in the course of your work, you must immediately inform the **school’s Safeguarding Children ‘Designated Teacher’**, and then follow the instruction as outlined above.

Child Protection Procedure

Part 2

This procedure is to be followed if a child tells you that they are being, or have been, abused:

Children will occasionally disclose abuse to an adult that they have come to feel they can trust. This happens for many reasons but the important thing to remember is that if they do tell you, they are doing so in the hope that you will act to stop it happening even if they ask you not to do anything with the information.

Children may feel as if they are betraying someone they are close to and whom they love. It is not unusual for a child to love the abuser but want the abuse to stop, especially when that person is a parent or carer. Equally, it may be someone they fear, for example, an adult whom they perceive to be able to influence decisions concerning their future. Either way, it takes great courage for a child to talk to an adult about abuse and your response will be crucial.

It is important to remember too, that it can be more difficult for some children to tell, than for others. Children who have experienced prejudice and discrimination through racism may well believe that people from other ethnic groups or backgrounds don't really care about them. They may have little reason to trust those they see as authority figures and may wonder whether you will be any different.

Children with a disability will have to overcome barriers before disclosing abuse. They may well rely on the abuser for their daily care and have no knowledge of alternative sources of support. They may have come to believe that they are of little worth and comply with the instructions of adults.

If a child discloses abuse to you in the course of your work, it is important to react appropriately:

DO: • Remain calm and receptive • Listen without interrupting • Only ask questions of clarification if you are unclear what the child is saying • Make it clear that you take them seriously	DO NOT: • Allow your shock or distaste to show • Probe for more information/ask other questions • Make assumptions or speculate • Make negative comments about the abuser • Make promises you cannot keep
---	--

• Acknowledge their courage in telling you • Tell them they are not responsible for the abuse • Let them know you will do what you can to help them	• Agree to keep the information secret
---	--

It is essential that everything possible is done to protect the children who place trust in us. If a child tells you that they are being, or have been abused, you must.

- Make an immediate record of what the child has said, using their own words.
- Follow the instructions for reporting to your Line manager, as set out in procedure one.
- Tell them that you will have to inform your Line Manager
- Be aware of your own feelings and get support.

Child Protection procedure

Part Three

Managing Allegations

All allegations regarding adults working or volunteering with children will be recorded, reviewed and managed in accordance with local safeguarding procedures and LADO guidance. Concerns must be reported immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Melanie Scott **0191 277 4636**.

Decision to suspend

If the advice given by the LADO is to suspend the member of staff then the following actions must be taken:

- A meeting with the member of staff **must** take place immediately to clearly inform them that they will be suspended without prejudice following the allegation. The member of staff **must** not be informed at this point the nature of the allegation.
- The member of staff will be asked to leave the premises and advised to make no contact with services or staff members.
- The manager and the member of staff must not discuss the allegation with any other persons both in and outside of the provision. This information **must** only be shared on a need to know basis.
- The member of staff will be offered support by our HR Manager and if they are a member of a union they will be advised to contact their union rep.
- All information regarding the allegation/suspension **must** be thoroughly recorded and stored in a confidential and secure manner.

A meeting is held with relevant professionals including Children's Social Care Service, Police, OFSTED, your line manager and the employer. This group of professionals will make a decision on the appropriate course of action, and the member of staff will be informed.

It is the responsibility of the lead agencies above to maintain contact and update the member of staff throughout the investigation. Healthworks will refrain from contacting the member of staff until advised to do otherwise.

If the group decide that there will be no further action the member of staff will be invited to return to work with appropriate support. However if the group decide based on evidence that there has been a criminal act committed then Healthworks will follow their disciplinary procedure under gross misconduct.

Child Protection: Code of Good Practice

This code has been developed to provide you with advice that not only will help to protect children but will also help you and your colleagues identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse.

Good practice will also protect Healthworks through reducing the possibility of anyone using their roles to gain access to children in order to abuse.

While it is not intended that this code should restrict staff from normal ways of working, for example, comforting distressed child through providing a hug, there is much they can do to avoid situations that may give rise to misinterpretation, which will also work to protect children.

If in doubt consider how an action may be perceived as opposed to how it is intended, Wherever possible you should be guided by the following advice.

If it is necessary to carry out practices to the contrary to the code of practice below, you should only do so after discussion and with the approval of your Line Manager.

Not all staff or volunteers will have regular contact with children, however all staff and appropriate volunteers should be aware of what is expected of them in the case of face to face work with children. They should be able to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to keep children safe and to protect themselves from allegations of misconduct.

- always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times
- do make sure you have read the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns
- you must act upon concerns about a child's welfare or the inappropriate behaviour of any adults at your activities
- always aim to work in an open environment and exercise caution about being alone with a child or young person.
- physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset. Always prompt children to carry out personal care (such as applying suncream, adjusting clothing) themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help
- if you have to speak to a child/young person about their behaviour remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'
- do listen to children and young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem

- do talk explicitly to children and young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- do treat all children equally, and with respect and dignity, challenge discriminating comments and behaviour and promote positive attitudes towards differences
- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- always be easily identifiable: wear your Healthworks clothing and identification badge at all times
- always secure parental consent in writing using Healthworks forms
- always question any unknown adult who enters Healthworks premises and/or who attempts to engage with the children

You must NEVER:

- use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement or use physical force against a child or young person
- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, or use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language - children's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour should always be challenged
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child or young person
- invite a young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times or off-site
- smoke, take unprescribed drugs or drink alcohol in the company of/whilst responsible for children
- use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to befriend children / young people (see Social media policy)
- give your personal contact details / personal website details to children or young people
- take photos of children without the written consent of parents/guardians

Safer Recruitment

Healthworks is committed to safer recruitment processes. Members of staff are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, right to work checks, verifying identity, taking up references and checking work history. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. Please refer to Recruitment Policy for further information.

All staff will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role. Safeguarding knowledge will be updated regularly and formal refresher training will be undertaken at least every two years or sooner where legislative or local safeguarding changes require.

Digital Images

Photos which are to be used for fulfilment of obligations to commissioners and grant funded projects may be stored for the length of our contract or project. Photos kept for this purpose are minimal.

At events where photographs are taken we will have:

- Photograph permission forms for children to be completed by their parent/carer
- Signs at the entrance to the venue to warn the public that photographs may be taken at the event.
- A notice 'Please take note an official photographer is on site taking photographs/filming for publicity purposes'

People may withdraw their consent at any time.

Pre-school

All staff are trained in line with the Criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS (Sept 2026). Our training provider is Newcastle City Council. Safeguarding training is renewed every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Children Lead ensures support, advice and guidance for all staff to meet their safeguarding responsibilities.

Online Safety

It is important that children and young people receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and can recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and the virtual world.

Terms such as 'e-safety', 'online', 'communication technologies' and 'digital technologies' refer to fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks; the issues are:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

I.C.T Equipment

Healthworks ensures that all computers have up-to-date virus protection installed. Tablets are only used by educators for the purposes of observation, assessment, and planning and to take photographs for individual children's learning journeys.

Internet access

Children never have unsupervised access to the internet. The Pre-school Manager ensures that risk assessments in relation to e-safety are completed. Only reputable sites with a focus on early learning are used and video sharing sites such as YouTube are not accessed due to the risk of inappropriate content.

Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age-appropriate way:

- only go online with a grown up
- be kind online **and** keep information about me safely
- only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
- tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet

Staff support children's resilience in relation to issues they may face online, and address issues such as staying safe, appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age-appropriate ways.

Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

The Pre-school Manager ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.

Strategies to minimise risk include:

- Check apps, websites and search results before using them with children.
- Children in Early Years should always be supervised when accessing the internet.
- Ensure safety modes and filters are applied - default settings tend not to ensure a high level of privacy or security. But remember you still need to supervise children closely.
- Role model safe behaviour and privacy awareness. Talk to children about safe use, for example ask permission before taking a child's picture even if parental consent has been given.
- Check privacy settings to make sure personal data is not being shared inadvertently or inappropriately.

Personal mobile phones – staff and visitors (includes internet enabled devices)

Personal mobile phones and internet enabled devices are not used by staff during working hours. This does not include breaks where personal mobiles may be used in a safe place where no children are present. Personal mobile phones are stored in the office cupboard however in an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office with permission.

Staff ensure that contact details of the setting are known to family and people who may need to contact them in an emergency.

Staff do not use personal equipment to take photographs of children.

Parents/carers and visitors do not use their mobile phones on the premises. Visitors are advised of a private space where they can use their mobile.

Cameras and videos

Photographs/recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, e.g. to record learning and development, or for displays, and are only taken on equipment belonging to the Healthworks. Children are given the opportunity to consent to their photograph being taken, even if parent/carer permissions are in place.

Where parents/carers request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, general permission is first gained from all parents/carers for their children to be included. Parents are told they do not have a right to photograph or upload photos of anyone else's children.

Photographs/recordings of children are only made if relevant permissions are in place.

If photographs are used for publicity, parental consent is gained.

Appendix 1

The Prevent Duty and Promoting British Values

The prevent of duty care policy is part of our wider safeguarding duties in keeping children safe from harm, and this policy reinforces our existing duties by spreading understanding of the prevention of radicalisation therefore to ensure that we adhere to and achieve the Prevent Duty we will endeavor to:

- Provide Channel Awareness / Prevent training for staff and any other training deemed appropriate. Part of this training will enable practitioners to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation.
- We will build the children's resilience by promoting fundamental British values and enable them to challenge extremist views (In early years, the statutory framework for the EYFS sets standards for learning, development and care for children 0-5, thereby assisting personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world)
- As with managing our safeguarding risks, our staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection (children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or may seek to hide their views). The Key Person approach means we already know our children well and so we will notice any changes in behaviour, demeanor or personality quickly.
- We will work in partnership with Newcastle Safeguarding Children's Partnership for guidance and support.
- We will build up effective engagement with parents/carers and families (This is important as they are in a Key Person position to spot signs of radicalisation)
- We will assist and advise families who raise concerns with us. It is important to assist and advise families who raise concerns and be able to point them in the right direction and the right support mechanisms.
- We will ensure that any resources used in the setting are age appropriate for the children in our care and that our staff have the knowledge and confidence to use the resources effectively.
- People from any walks of life can be drawn into radicalisation and not necessarily from a particular religion or ethnicity. Terrorism is not promoted by any religion.

Cultivating 'British' Values

The best way to help children resist extremist views or challenge views is to teach them to think critically and become independent learners, which is fundamental to the characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

We endeavour to support our children through the EYFS by providing playful learning opportunities to help them develop positive diverse and communal identities, as well as their well-being, their empathy and emotional literacy, while continuing to take action to eradicate inequalities, bullying, discrimination, exclusion, aggression and violence; all of which fosters and secures, children's pro-social behaviours and responsible citizenship and real sense of belonging.

What to do if you suspect that children are at the risk of radicalisation.

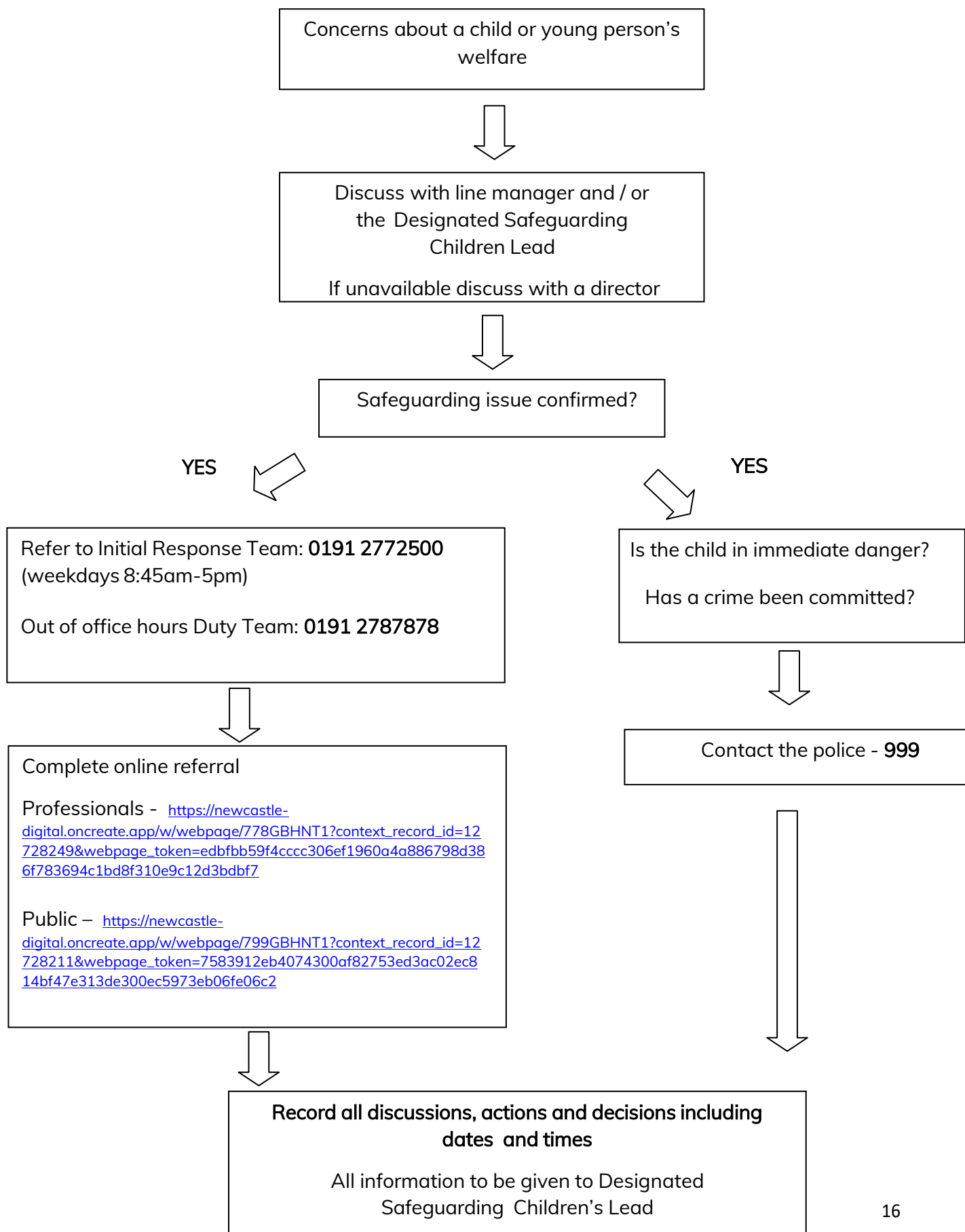
Follow Healthworks Safeguarding Procedures and discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Children Lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care.

The Safeguarding Children Lead can also contact the local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number). They will then talk in confidence about the concerns and help to access support and advice.

The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable staff to raise concerns relating to extremism directly. Concerns can also be raised by email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk. Please note that the helpline is not intended for use in emergency situations, such as a child being at immediate risk of harm or a security incident, in which case the normal emergency procedures should be followed.

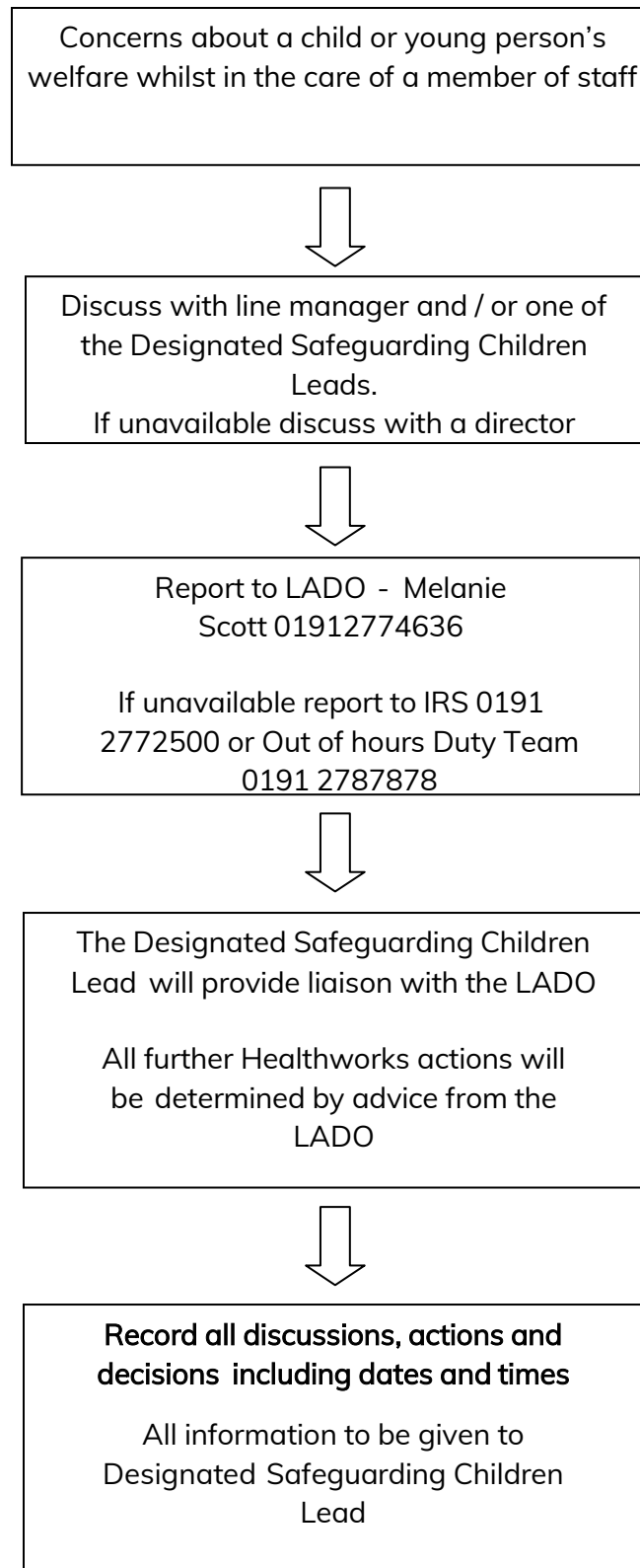
Appendix 2

Safeguarding Children Flow Chart



Appendix 3

Safeguarding Children Allegations Flow Chart



Appendix 4

Pro forma for recording disclosures, allegations or signs of abuse witnessed.

To be completed by person receiving disclosure, allegation or witnessing signs of abuse.

Name of person disclosing, alleging or displaying signs of abuse:

Date and time disclosure received / signs of abuse witnessed:

Day	Month	Year	Time
			: am/pm

Is the person disclosing...

Male ☐ Female ☐

What is their date of birth?

Day	Month	Year

What is their address:

Please detail what the person said (word for word) or signs of abuse witnessed:

Other observations / comments:

Name of person completing this form:

Signed:

Dated:

To be completed by nominated Healthworks representative.

Name of representative:

Date and time form received:

Day	Month	Year	Time
			: am/pm

Action taken and date:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 5

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

Childcare Act 2016

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, this is known as the Prevent Duty

Data Protection Act 2018

Education Act 2011

Education and Skills Act 2008

Information Sharing, May 2024

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 amendment The Human Rights Act 1998

The Protection of Children Act 1999

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, 2015

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

On-line Training

Newcastle Local Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed an e-learning training module in Safeguarding Children; this course is the preferred method of delivery for this level of training. The course 'Safeguarding Level 1' can be found at:

<https://www.newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk/e-learning/>