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## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

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## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

### Introduction

This policy should be read alongside the Forest Sports Education Staff Handbook, including the Staff Code of Conduct protocols for staff working with young people both within schools, holiday camps and during all other activities, wherever they are based.

The policy was drawn up in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance 2024, the Department for Education guidance issued under section 157 Education Act 2002, the Handbook of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) and Safeguarding Children and Young people 2014.

The Policy will be reviewed and staff given updated training annually to ensure the contents are understood fully.

This policy can be made available to parents upon request and is published on the Forest Sports Education's website.

This policy can be made available in larger print or another accessible format if required.

### Safeguarding Statement

Forest Sports Education recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people it works with. It endeavors to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:**

**Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge - new**

**Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online New**

**Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development**

**Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**

**Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.**

**Children includes everyone under the age of 18.**

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.**

**Concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.**

**All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.**

**Members of staff are alert to the signs of radicalisation, extremism, abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff should make sure their approach is child centered. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**

**The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and trustees.**

**In line with managing internally, Forest Sports Education may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.**

**Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support. GCC [Family information service \(FIS\)](#) | [Gloucestershire County Council](#)**

## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

### Principles

Welfare of the young person is paramount and adults always act in the interests of the child.

All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.

All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Young people and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

The principles and reporting procedures of this policy relating to Child Protection will also apply to 'Vulnerable Adults' within Forest Sports Education's work with parents/carers, siblings, visitors etc.

### Aims

The Policy aims to:

Ensure that there are effective procedures in place to identify and deal with any child protection issues which may arise including arrangements for handling allegations of abuse against members of staff, volunteers and the CEO.

Ensure that Forest Sports Education develops and implements policies and procedures in accordance with this policy.

Provide a safe and welcoming environment for all pupils, staff, visitors and parent/carers regardless of age, gender, ability, race, language, religion, culture, disability or SEN.

Raise the awareness of all staff through effective communication and training.

Set out the relevant responsibilities.

### Terminology

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from extremism, radicalisation, abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

**Child Protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of Forest Sports Education, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child / young person** refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

**Adults at Risk or Vulnerable Adults** are also protected against abuse by legislation. They are defined as those aged 18 or over who are, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness or who are unable to care for themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This may include adults with learning difficulties, mental health issues, physical impairments or drug or alcohol misuse.

### Purpose of the Policy

Has in place clearly identified senior staff to co-ordinate safeguarding and child protection arrangements with specific roles and responsibilities.

Practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with young people.

### **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Develops/ implements robust procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of, abuse.

Supports young people who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.

Establishes a safe environment in which young people can participate, learn and develop.

Roles and responsibilities

Forest Sports Education will always have in place a nominated staff member for Safeguarding and Child Protection, plus a senior member of staff to co-ordinate safeguarding and child protection arrangements, namely the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

One of their responsibilities is early identification of young people at risk and the correct assessment of their level of need. This allows for appropriate support to be offered quickly and can help to avoid escalation of concerns.

#### **The DSL:**

Is appropriately trained

Acts as a source of support and expertise to Forest Sports Education

Keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely

Refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate

Develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies

ensures that all staff are trained and have regular updates i.e. start of the academic year in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education publication and Policy review, signing to indicate they have undertaken training and have read and understood the annual Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is updated annually

Ensures there is a record of staff attendance at safeguarding training, recorded as part of the Forest Sports Education Single Central Record

The Deputy DSL is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the Designated Lead, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of young people. In the event of the long-term absence of the Designated Lead, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

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### **The CEO**

Ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.

Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures.

### **The Staff:**

All staff, will be informed of the DSL name and Forest Sports Education's policy for the protection of children: during their first induction to FSE, through the staff/personnel handbook, through whole staff training or briefing meetings.

All staff need to be alert to the signs of harm and abuse. They should report any concerns if not immediately, as soon as possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or named deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. If in any doubt staff should consult with the Designated Lead.

All staff must follow the procedures laid down in Appendices 1 & 2.

All relevant national and local procedures will be made available for staff reference.

### **Safer Recruitment**

Forest Sports Education endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*:

All applicants will be vetted. Applicants' personal details set out on the application form will be Verified, and qualifications checked. A CV will not be accepted as the sole form of application.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process FSE will consider carrying out an online search as part of its due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. Candidates will be informed of this search prior to it being carried out. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which FSE might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

All the necessary safer recruitment checks (including DBS checks) are carried out on all appointees including staff, volunteers and those that serve on the board of trustees).

This information will be held on Forest Sports Education Single Central Record.

Annual confirmation statement of no change in conviction status, to be included in staff probation and annual Performance Management process.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

Complete an application form

Provide two referees, including last employer and at least one who can comment on the applicant's Suitability to work with children

Provide evidence of identity and qualifications

Be checked through the DBS as appropriate to their role and be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (from 2010 onwards)

Be interviewed by senior members of staff, one of which has undergone safer recruitment training.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with Forest Sports Education's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs. All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by Forest Sports Education, our own Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures will apply in conjunction with the host venue where appropriate i.e. school site. If other organisations provide services or activities on our behalf we will ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place.

Forest Sports Education will continue to take full responsibility for the safeguarding of children in its sole care.

## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

### Identifying and Reporting Cases

#### Recognising abuse

To ensure that young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute radicalisation, extremism, abuse, neglect **and exploitation**.

**Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.**

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect **and exploitation** (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

There are five categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and **exploitation**.

#### **a Children at risk**

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)

Has a mental health need

Is a young carer

Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines

**Is frequently missing/goes missing, unexplainable and / or persistent absence from education, home or care.**

Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation

Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending

Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol Misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.

Is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves

Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

Is a privately fostered child.

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### **Physical abuse**

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

### **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

### **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **3.6. Cybercrime**

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing the company's computer network to look for personal / sensitive data, inappropriate material, actions such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, plus other areas of concern



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such as online bullying or general on-line safety.

'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

**Note** that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as online bullying or general on-line safety. Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Forest Sports Education will do all that it reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the companies IT system. As part of this process, it should ensure that it has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. It will ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

### a. Safeguarding Issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of:

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

**Child-on-child** abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage

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relationship abuse')

physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse) sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence). Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) up skirting, 12 which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or no penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

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CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

### **Serious violence**

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

### **Safeguarding children who are vulnerable to extremism**

The school seeks to protect children and young people against the message of violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Forest Sports Education will therefore:

Ensure that staff members are trained to recognise signs of possible abuse, neglect or threat of radicalisation and will know what to do if they suspect a child is suffering harm. All staff receive Prevent training with safeguarding discussed regularly in staff meetings or briefings.

Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

Ensure children know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried.

Ensure there are clear systems in place for all staff to follow.

### **Prevent Duty**

The duty to actively promote 'Fundamental British Values' has been live from 1st July 2015. This was first set out by the government in the 'Prevent' Strategy in 2011.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 has introduced the Prevent Duty for various bodies including all FE colleges, adult education providers and independent learning providers with SFA funding or with over 250 students enrolled.

The Prevent Duty has "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"

Anti-Terrorism and Security Act 2015: Schedule 3, Section 21.

### **What is our responsibility?**

Assess the risks of people being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.

All staff to actively promote British values.

Raise awareness of the Prevent duty and British values to all staff and learners.

Establish a reporting procedure for all concerns relating to people being drawn into terrorism.

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### **What is Extremism?**

Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas (HM Government Prevent Strategy, 2011).

### **What is radicalisation?**

Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

### **What are British Values?**

British Values are defined as “democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs”; institutions are expected to encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

### **Vulnerability / risk indicators**

The following lists are not exhaustive and all or none may be present in individual cases of concern. Nor does it mean that vulnerable people / young people experiencing these factors are automatically at risk of exploitation for the purposes of extremism. The accepted view is that a complex relationship between the various aspects of an individual's identity determines their vulnerability to extremism.

The following factors may increase an individual's vulnerability:

Identity crisis – Being distanced from cultural and or religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them.

Personal crisis – Family tensions; sense of isolation; absent or missing in education; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

Personal circumstances – Homelessness, cost of living crisis; migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.

Unmet aspirations – Perceptions of injustice; feelings of failure; rejection of civic life.

Criminality – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement / reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups.

### **Procedures for reporting concerns**

Any identified concerns as the result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest that the person supports terrorism and/or extremism, must be reported to the named Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and no later than the end of the working day. (Same procedure as Safeguarding).

#### **Key contact details**

Forest Sports Education Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Home Office helpline. Open Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm (excluding bank holidays). Email: [counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk) Telephone 020 7340 7264

Police: Telephone 101 (999 in emergency)

Support, Training & Advice Gloucestershire PREVENT Partnership Board Coordinator Tel: 01452 888766, Email: [jayne.putland@glosfire.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.putland@glosfire.gov.uk)

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### b Child Mental Health

See Appendix 6: Child Mental Health more detail.

Mental health is as important to a child's safety and wellbeing as their physical health. It can impact on all aspects of their life, including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health can also change over time, to varying degrees of seriousness, and for different reasons.

Negative experiences such as abuse and neglect can adversely impact a child's mental health. Mental health issues can also sometimes lead to safeguarding and child protection issues, for example if a child's mental health begins to put them or other people at risk of harm.

### Who is at risk?

Any child or young person can develop mental health issues. But research has shown there are some factors that are associated with children and young people's long-term mental health: abuse and neglect, additional needs and disabilities, children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, life events, living in care, LGBTQ+ children and young people.

**Common warning signs** of mental health issues include: sudden mood and behaviour changes, self-harming, unexplained physical changes, such as weight loss or gain, sudden poor academic behaviour or performance, sleeping problems, changes in social habits, such as withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family.

These signs suggest that a child may be struggling, but there could be a number of different explanations for them.

**Child Line indicators** on how a child is feeling at that particular point in time have been categorised as: Doing OK, Struggling, Unwell, in crisis.

These indicators can help inform the appropriate support and referral requirements.

### Taking appropriate action

Any staff with concerns over a child's mental health or their actions / behaviours as a result of their mental health, should follow Forest Sports Education's Safeguarding Reporting procedures, as they would for any concern, disclosure or incident. If working in a school, they should also inform the school's DSL.

### Indicators of abuse – what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

It is staff responsibility to report concerns, but not to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

Have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries

Show signs of pain or discomfort

Keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather

Be concerned about changing

## **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Look unkempt and uncared for  
Change their eating habits  
Have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships  
Appear fearful  
Be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety  
Self-harm  
Show signs of not wanting to go home  
Display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn  
Challenge authority  
Become uninterested in their activities  
Be constantly tired or preoccupied  
Be wary of physical contact  
Be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol  
Display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.  
Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

### **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well-buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

In an emergency, staff should take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999  
Report concern to the DSL by the end of the day  
Do not start an investigation  
Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family  
complete a record of concern  
Seek support if distressed.

### **If you suspect a young person is at risk of harm**

There will be occasions when staff suspect that a student may be at risk, but without any 'real' evidence. In these circumstances, staff should try to give the young person the opportunity to talk. The signs noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine to ask the young person if they are OK or if they can be helped in any way.

Staff should discuss the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity. If the student does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the stated protocol. If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

If a student discloses to staff

If a young person talks to staff about any risks to his / her safety or wellbeing, the adult must let the young person know as soon as possible that they must pass the information on at the earliest opportunity.

During the conversation with the young person, staff should:

## **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Allow them to speak freely

Remain calm and not over-react – the young people may stop talking if they feel they are causing upset

Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the student.

Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened.

At an appropriate time tell the young person that in order to help them you must pass the information on.

Avoid automatically offering any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.

Tell the young person what will happen next. The student may agree to go with you to see the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.

Report verbally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Seek support if distressed.

### **Notifying parents**

Forest Sports Education will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if Forest Sports Education believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children's social care.

### **Referral to children's social care**

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that the young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The young person (subject to their understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the student.

### **Children with sexually harmful behaviour**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying. However, there will be occasions when a student's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and Forest Sports Education will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole community.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

It is recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

#### **Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the young person and staff involved but also to ensure that release into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Lead / DDSL (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 1998 principles.

Information is: processed for limited purposes

## **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Adequate, relevant and not excessive

Accurate

Kept no longer than necessary

Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights secure.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that students and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a young person or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the CEO. The Data Protection Act does not prevent Forest Sports Education's staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

### **Reporting directly to child protection agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

The situation is an emergency and the DSL and DDSL are all unavailable

They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the student's safety.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a young person or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a young person that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a student, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a young person or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the CEO and Trustees. The Complaints Policy is available on the website.

### **If you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a young person are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the CEO.

### **Staff who are the subject of an allegation**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an



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innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. Allegations against staff should be reported to the CEO. Allegations against the CEO should be reported to the DDSL's.

### **Staff Training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff will receive training during their induction. All staff, including the DSL will receive training that is updated at least every three years.

### **Good Practice Guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards young people we need to agree standards of good practice. Staff are expected to maintain the Code of Conduct and adhere to the following principles. Good practice includes:

Treating all young people with respect

Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately

Involving young people in decisions that affect them

Encouraging positive and safe behaviour among students

Being a good listener

Being alert to changes in students' behaviour

Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse

Reading and understanding the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, physical contact and information-sharing

Asking the young person's permission before doing anything for them of a physical nature, such as

Assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid

Maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language

Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse.

### **Abuse of trust**

**All Forest Sports Education staff are aware that they are in a position of trust and inappropriate behaviour towards students, whatever their age, is unacceptable. Staff are aware that their conduct towards students must be beyond reproach.**

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the FSE staff and a young person under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that student is over the age of consent.

Whistleblowing

Forest Sports Education's Whistleblowing Policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

### **Reasons for Allegations**

The procedure below is followed when staff or volunteers have (or are alleged to have):

## **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Behaved in a way that has harmed a young person, or may have harmed a young person.

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a young person

Behaved towards a young person in a way that indicates that he or she would pose a risk of harm if he or she worked regularly or closely with children.

All staff, Trustees and volunteers have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this procedure so that they can understand what to do if they receive an allegation against a member of staff or have concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff.

### **Confidentiality**

Forest Sports Education will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. FSE will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), police and social care services as to managing confidentiality as appropriate.

### **Procedure**

Procedure for managing allegations against staff (including volunteers and the CEO)

An allegation made against a member of staff must be reported immediately to the CEO. Should the initial allegation first be made to any other member of staff then that member of staff must either request the person raising the allegation to report it to the CEO or if that is not possible, to pass details of the allegation to the CEO immediately.

Where the allegation is made against the CEO, the person must immediately inform the nominated Trustee for Child Protection, without first notifying the CEO.

If the allegations involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the person must immediately inform the CEO without first informing the DSL.

The LADO will be informed of all allegations which appear to meet the above criteria

The CEO will discuss the matter with the LADO and where necessary, the

LADO will obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which the allegation was made.

FSE will act in accordance with advice given by the LADO and will not investigate allegations or inform any individuals without the LADO's consent. FSE may take action in the event of allegations against staff in accordance with its disciplinary procedures. If the member of staff (including a volunteer) is deemed unsuitable to work with children and FSE ceases to use their services, FSE will make a detailed and prompt report to the Disclosure and Barring Service within one month of the member of staff leaving the company.

### **Suspension**

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation but will be considered where the circumstances warrant it, including:

There is cause to suspect a child or other children at FSE is or are at risk of significant harm

The allegation warrants investigation by the police

The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

It is necessary to progress the investigation.

If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justifications will be recorded by FSE and the individual will be notified of the reasons usually within one working day.

### **Duty of Care**

Forest Sports Education recognises that it has a duty of care towards its employees and will ensure support is in place for individuals facing an allegation. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations and given an explanation of the likely course of action as soon as possible, unless external agencies object to this. A representative will be appointed by FSE to keep the individual informed of progress of the case and to consider what other support is available and appropriate for the individual.

### **Record keeping**

Forest Sports Education will keep a clear and comprehensive record of any allegation made, the action taken and decisions reached. FSE will provide the accused person with a copy of the record following

### **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

consultation with the appropriate agencies and once agreement has been reached as to what information can be disclosed. The record will be kept confidentially on the personnel file.

#### **Malicious or unfounded allegations**

The CEO will consider whether to take action in accordance with Forest Sports Education's behaviour policy where an allegation by a student is shown to be malicious or deliberately invented. Allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records and any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious will not be referred to in references.

#### **Timescales**

It is in everyone's interest for cases to be resolved as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation.

#### **Monitoring & Review**

The CEO will undertake an annual review of Forest Sports Education Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures. In the event that any deficiencies or weaknesses are identified these will be remedied without delay.

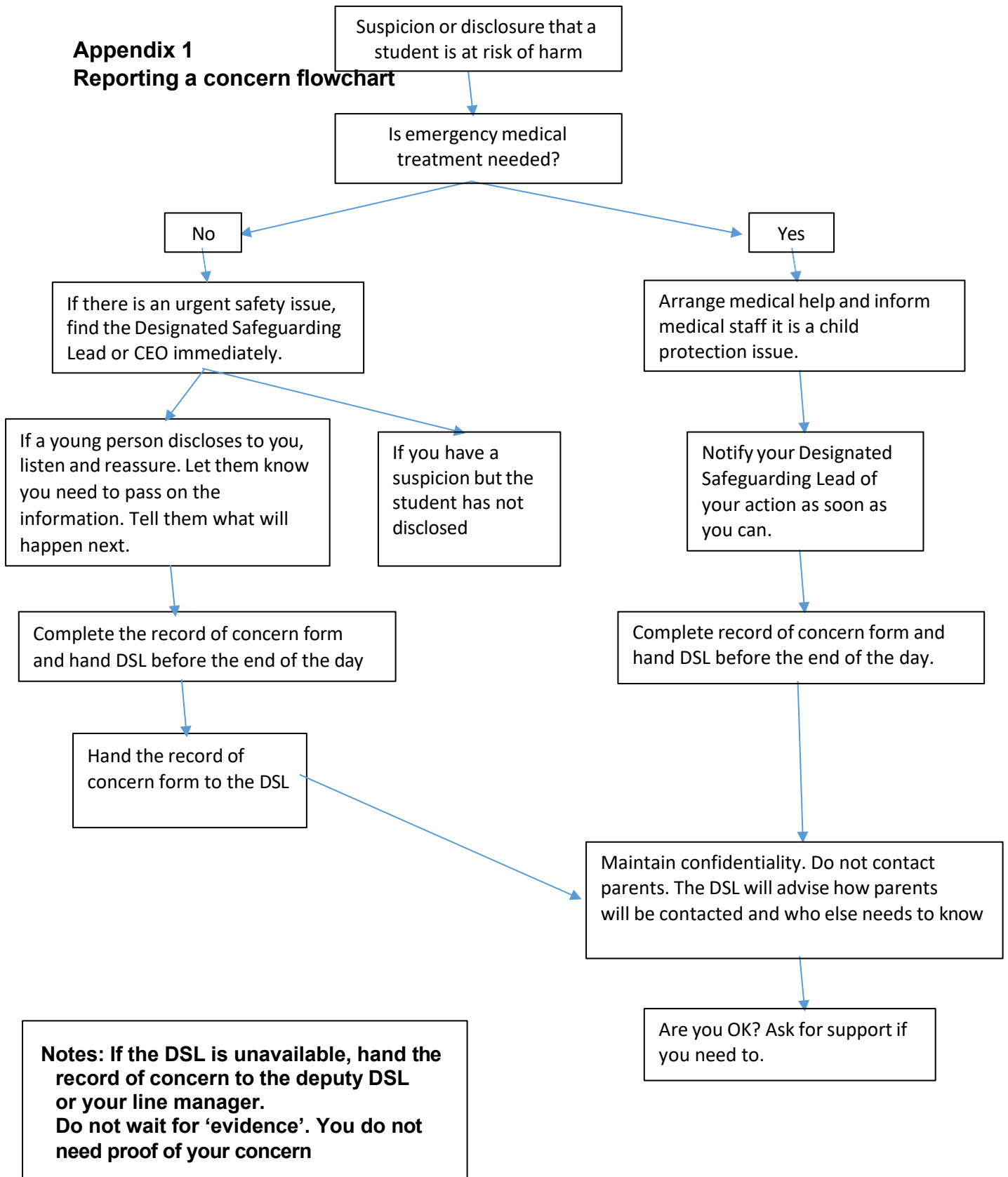
Date of next review

Oct 2025

Richard Kear

## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

### Appendix 1 Reporting a concern flowchart



## Appendix 2

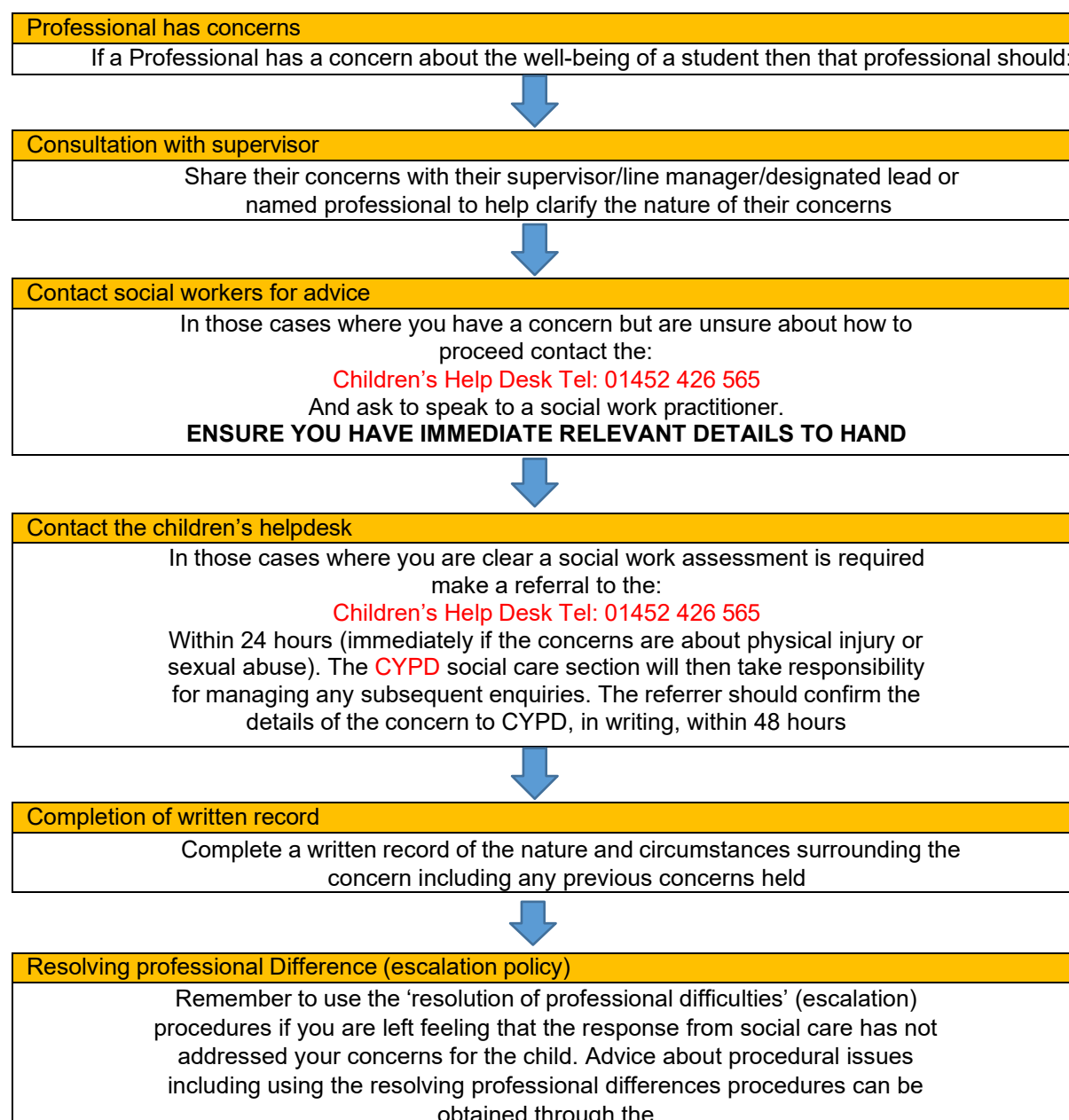
### Appendix 2

#### Procedure where abuse is suspected/disclosed:

Any member of staff who by virtue of a student's behaviour or appearance becomes suspicious of abuse, or is told that abuse has taken place, should immediately inform the DSL.

If a young person begins to talk about an abusive incident, s/he should be allowed to speak, and be listened to carefully. Time should be taken to gain an understanding of what the young person is trying to say. No promise of confidentiality should be made.

The DSL should briefly and accurately record the concern and the young person's comments in writing and then follow the process below (from GSCB Procedures).



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**Safeguarding Children Service on 01452 58 3629**

For out of hours social work advice please contact the

**Emergency Duty Team on 01452 614 194**

### **Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns**

Staff, volunteers are required to complete the safeguarding incident form and pass it to Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have a safeguarding concern about a child in their care

## Appendix 4

### Contact Details

#### **Gloucestershire Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs):**

Nigel Hatten: 01452 426994 [nigel.hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Jenny Kadodia): 01452 426320 [jenny.kadodia@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.kadodia@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
(Allegations Management Co-Ordinator)

Out of office hours: 01452 614194 or 101

**In an emergency always ring 999**

#### **Herefordshire Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs):**

The Herefordshire LADO team can be contacted as follows:

Email: [LADO@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Tel: 01432 261739

Completed LADO Referrals should be sent to [LADO@Herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@Herefordshire.gov.uk)

**In an emergency always ring 999**

#### **Monmouthshire Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO's):**

Children's Services: 01291 635669 [childduty@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:childduty@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

If it is outside of office hours – Out of Hours and Bank Holidays Emergency Duty  
Team: 0800 328 4432 in an emergency dial 999

## Appendix 5

### Code of conduct for staff and volunteers

Forest Sports Education coaches and volunteers involved in sport and physical activity for children and young people have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence.

Staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of Forest Sports Education.
- Not expected to refrain from any outside activity (whether paid or unpaid) unless, in the reasonable opinion of the Trustees, such an activity would interfere with the efficient discharge of duties.
- Ensure the safety of all children by providing effective supervision, proper pre-planning of coaching sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Treat all young people fairly and ensure they feel valued. Have no favourites.
- Encourage all children not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Appreciate the efforts of all young people and not over-train the young people.
- Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind or poor practice to go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the line with the club's procedures. Parents will be informed.
- Never use sanctions that humiliate or harm young people.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club & qualified first aider.
- Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless absolutely necessary and in the presence of others.
- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Establish and address the additional needs of disabled participants or other vulnerable groups.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Respect and listen to the opinions of young people.
- Take time to explain coaching techniques to ensure they are clearly understood.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (wearing FSE kit, disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking, consumption of alcohol or under the influence of drugs (including medication) that may have an adverse effect on the individual's ability to



## **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

provide supervision. No alcohol to be in or on premises any time when children are present or about to be present.

- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Only using mobile phones / personal devices for emergencies or agreed Forest Sports Education's work, in front of children.
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Make the sport/activity fun.
- Staff should not give a child special attention or preferential treatment.
- Staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Staff should not, spend time with a child in a private or isolated place.
- Staff should not transport children without another adult being present.
- Staff should not engage in a sexual relationship with a young person for whom they are responsible.
- Staff should not act as a particular child's "listening ear".
- Staff should not give small gifts, money, calls, emails, or social networking sites to communicate with a child.
- Staff should not be overly affectionate with a child.
- Staff should not be flirtatious or make suggestive remarks or comments of a sexual nature around a child.
- Staff should take note of other children making jokes or references about another member of staff and specific students.

Staff and volunteers have the right to:

- Access on-going training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for youths, particularly on Safeguarding.
- Support in the reporting suspected abuse or poor practice.
- Access to professional support services.
- Fair and equitable treatment by the governing body/club.
- Be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members and parents.
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children.

### **Low-level concerns:**

All staff are expected to report low level concerns including whistleblowing, following all Forest Sports Education procedures:

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the DSL or LADO.

### **Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:**

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to FSE's policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Humiliating pupils.

### **Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy**

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

Any minor misdemeanors and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person.

Serious or persistent breach of the code will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal from Forest Sports Education.

## Appendix 6

**Child Mental Health****Key legislation**

In **England and Wales**, the [Mental Health Act \(MHA\) 1983](#) covers the assessment, treatment and rights of people with a mental health condition. It applies to all children and young people under the age of 18. The Act allows for people to be detained in hospital if they need treatment for a mental health condition. It gives children the right to appeal against detention.

The Mental Health Act 1983 was amended by the [Mental Health Act 2007](#). This strengthened children's safeguards, for example adding a duty to ensure an age-appropriate environment for children and young people.

Mental health is as important to a child's safety and wellbeing as their physical health. It can impact on all aspects of their life, including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health can also change over time, to varying degrees of seriousness, and for different reasons.

Negative experiences such as abuse and neglect can adversely impact a child's mental health. Mental health issues can also sometimes lead to safeguarding and child protection issues, for example if a child's mental health begins to put them or other people at risk of harm.

**Supporting children with mental health issues**

It can be hard for adults to recognise when a child needs support with mental health issues. And it can be difficult for young people to speak out about the challenges they're facing. So it's crucial that anyone who works or volunteers with children is able to recognise the signs that a child may be struggling with their mental health. And that they know how to take appropriate action to support children and young people in getting the help they need.

**Who is at risk?**

Any child or young person can develop mental health issues. But research has shown there are some factors that are associated with children and young people's long-term mental health.

**Abuse and neglect**

The traumatic impact of abuse and neglect increases the likelihood of children developing a range of mental health issues – both during childhood and in later life. These include anxiety, depression, eating disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Specific types of abuse may be connected to certain mental health issues. Children who have experienced emotional abuse may be more likely to develop anxiety and depression compared with children who have experienced other types of abuse.

Abuse and neglect can also make children more vulnerable to developing more than one mental health condition at one time (known as composite mental health issues).

Providing effective mental health support for children who have experienced abuse and neglect can help them recover from its effects.

**Additional needs and disabilities**

Children and young people with additional needs and disabilities may face a range of challenges including reduced mobility, prejudice, discrimination and bullying. These challenges may lead to lower self-confidence, difficulty forming peer networks and social exclusion, putting them at higher risk of developing mental health issues.

**Children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities**

Children from black and minority ethnic groups may experience: racism, discrimination and prejudice – this can be direct, indirect or institutional, an increased stigma around mental health issues in the community.

## Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy

### Life events

Stressful or traumatic situations and experiences, such as bereavement or sudden changes in environment, can trigger mental health issues.

### Living in care

Children in care are more likely than their peers to have a mental health difficulty. This can be due to isolation and loneliness. Children in care may also have experienced abuse or neglect, which increases the likelihood of developing mental health issues.

### LGBTQ+ children and young people

LGBTQ+ children and young people may experience: prejudice, discrimination and bullying, a fear of or an actual rejection from family and/or friends, feeling excluded or like an outsider.

There are ways you can identify if it is important LGBTQ+ children are provided with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns, along with safe toilet and changing spaces. Child needs support with their mental health: by being attentive to a child or young person's mood and behaviour, you can recognise patterns that suggest they need support.

**Common warning signs** of mental health issues include:

- sudden mood and behaviour changes
- self-harming
- unexplained physical changes, such as weight loss or gain
- sudden poor academic behaviour or performance
- sleeping problems
- changes in social habits, such as withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family.

These signs suggest that a child may be struggling, but there could be a number of different explanations for them.

**Don't attempt to diagnose mental health issues yourself or make assumptions about what's happening in a child's life.**

Recognising that a child or young person may be struggling with their mental health is the first step in helping them. The next step is to respond appropriately.

The following principles will help you discuss mental health and wellbeing sensitively.

### Use the right language

When talking with a child, use language that they understand. This will differ according to their age and stage of development. Make sure you understand the language the child is using and how they are using certain terms. For example, a child may use the word "anxiety" to describe a feeling of general nervousness or as a way to describe severe anxiety attacks. By paying attention to the language children use to describe their feelings, you can reflect the terms they use in your own language. This will help them feel listened to.

Some children may have difficulty communicating, for example if they have additional needs or disabilities. Make sure you give these children the time and support they need to talk.

### Create an open environment

It's important to create an open and safe environment where children and young people are comfortable speaking about their mental health. Make sure children and young people know who they can talk to — and make this pool of people as wide as possible. For example, discussions about mental health and wellbeing can be integrated into the activities and put on an equal footing with physical health.

Some children with mental health problems will have experienced abuse. An open environment will help them talk about the challenges they are facing and may help them feel able to tell you what's been happening to them.

### Promote mental health and wellbeing

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Anyone who works with children and young people has a responsibility to promote their mental health and emotional wellbeing. This can include: helping with online wellbeing, encouraging exercise, maintaining routines.

**Child Line indicators** on how a child is feeling at that particular point in time. You can use it to better understand a young person's mental health and wellbeing. It's important to remember that a person's mental health changes continuously – so you should refer to this continuum regularly.

### **\* Doing OK**

Communicates effectively with others. Seeks help when needed. Can focus on specific issues. Has healthy relationships. Identifies and tries to solve problems. Uses healthy coping strategies.

### **\* Struggling**

Struggles communicating with others. Is unsure how to access help. Relationships are beginning to suffer. Begins to use unhealthy coping strategies. Has some sleep issues, low energy and fatigue. Is able to engage well in some areas.

### **\* Unwell**

Feels overwhelmed and isolated. Struggles to focus on specific issues. Struggles to access and/or engage with services. Has disturbed sleep. May have suicidal thoughts. Relies on unhealthy coping strategies. May already have a mental health diagnosis. Is ambivalent towards change.

### **\* In crisis**

Has made recent suicide attempts. Is distrustful of support services. Mental health symptoms are unmanageable. Has escalating self-harming behaviours. Distress may not reduce when talking. Not engaging at home or school. Is resistant to change.

## **Taking appropriate action**

Any staff with concerns over a child's mental health or their actions / behaviours as a result of their mental health, should follow Forest Sports Education's Safeguarding Reporting procedures, as they would for any concern, disclosure or incident. If working in a school, they should also inform the school's DSL.

## Appendix 7

## Confirmation of receipt of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Date of joining Forest Sports Education</b>	
<b>Post</b>	
<b>Date of induction</b>	
<b>Name and designation of staff member responsible for induction:</b>	
<p><b>I confirm that I have received and read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.</b>  <b>I have been made aware of my duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare.</b>  <b>The procedure for reporting concerns about a young person has been explained to me.</b></p>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<p><b>Please sign and return this form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead</b></p>	