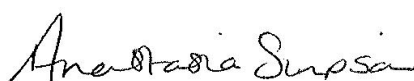


Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

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1. Introduction

Everyone has the right to be safe when accessing services provided by Tendring District Council. The purpose of this policy is to help the Council meet its legal duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to discharge its legal obligations towards adults with needs for care and support. It also sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Council in working together with other professionals and agencies to safeguard vulnerable groups from all forms of abuse and neglect.

As part of the Council's commitment to robust safeguarding, it has a Safeguarding Champions Group consisting of representatives from each Directorate. Each member of this group is responsible for ensuring that all colleagues across the Council are aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures.

1.1 Mission Statement

"Tendring District Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults with needs for care and support, as service users, residents and visitors to the area. The Council acknowledges the importance of working with partner agencies to ensure that children have safe, healthy and happy childhoods and that young people and adults with needs for care and support are given the support they need to enjoy good quality of life and well-being".

This Mission Statement is underpinned by the following:

- valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and adults with needs for care and support as well as promoting their welfare and protection;*
- provision of a current and comprehensive Safeguarding Policy and Procedures which are accessible and promoted to all staff;*
- strategic planning and decision-making which considers the impact on children, young people and adults with care and support needs.*

1.2 Aims

In order to meet its safeguarding duties and responsibilities, the Council will:

- carry out checks via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and use its Recruitment and Induction Procedures to prevent unsuitable people from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults;*
- ensure all employees receive suitable training to understand the types of abuse and their roles and responsibilities with regard to the relevant Council policies and procedures;*
- conduct regular reviews of safeguarding practice throughout the organisation;*
- ensure that the welfare and needs of children and susceptible / vulnerable groups are considered by all Members, employees, volunteers and contracted services when taking decisions in relation to service provision;*
- take seriously and respond appropriately and expediently to all concerns, incidents and allegations;*
- prevent abuse by promoting good practice amongst staff confidence in reporting any concerns;*
- work in partnership with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and share information where required and appropriate; and,*
- undertake a complete review of safeguarding policies and procedures annually and in line with any changes in legislation.*

1.3 Scope

This Policy applies to all services within the remit of Tendring District Council. It covers all aspects of safeguarding for service users, their families, carers, supporters and local residents. It applies to all TDC employees, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, permanent, seconded or temporary, casual workers, voluntary workers, apprentices, work experience students, agency staff, consultants, outside hirers and other contracted persons whatever their position, role, or responsibilities. This also applies to work carried out in all settings (whether Council premises or at external, privately hired venues).

2. Definitions

2.1 Safeguarding

This includes all forms of activity that aims to protect or promote the welfare of individuals and/or groups of people, which ensures prevention of harm, such as safe recruitment, staff training, awareness raising, provision of activities designed to promote inclusion, personalised risk management and risk assessments, confidential data storage, information sharing and referral.

- A “child” refers to the legal definition in UK law being anyone under the age of 18 years.
- An “adult with needs for care and support” largely replaces the pre-Care Act 2014 term ‘vulnerable adult’.

This reflects the local authority’s safeguarding duties that apply in relation to an adult who: (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and. (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

- In this document the term “Member” is interchangeable with “councillor”.
- In this document the term “vulnerability” is interchangeable with “susceptibility” where appropriate (recommendation from Independent Review of Prevent February 2023)

This policy is inclusive of all children and adults with needs for care and support, irrespective of their age, race or ethnicity, religion, disability, sex or sexual orientation.

2.2 Children and Young People

The legal definition of a child according to the Children Act 1989 is ‘a person under the age of 18’, including pre-birth.

Tendring District Council are aware of the requirements set out within the [“Keeping Children safe in Education”](#) - September 2022” document in relation to Apprentice’s that are under the age of 18 years”.

Tendring District Council are aware of the requirements set out within the [“Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023”](#)

2.3 Adult Safeguarding

The Care Act 2014 has established a new statutory framework for care and support including adult safeguarding, which is designed to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.

The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act applies to any person aged 18 or above who:

- has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, **and**
- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The government has established six guiding principles that should underpin all adult safeguarding work:

Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

Prevention: It is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality: The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Protection: Support and representation to those in greatest need.

Partnership: Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to

play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability: Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

The Care Act definition largely replaces the term 'Vulnerable Adults', but it is still used within this document.

2.4 Significant Harm

This is any physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect health, development or quality of life. This includes any impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another person.

3. Recognising Abuse

Even though many councillors, employees and contractors have limited contact with children and with adults with needs for care and support as part of their duties and responsibilities for Tendring District Council, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.

The 10 main types of abuse are Physical; Domestic Abuse; Sexual; Psychological/Emotional; Financial or Material; Modern Slavery (including Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation); Discriminatory; Organisational/Institutional; Neglect or acts of omission; and Self-neglect (which includes Hoarding).

Everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and know what to do if they have concerns. It is however not the responsibility of the Council to investigate or determine whether abuse is taking place. **The Council's responsibility is to identify and report abuse.**

The Council therefore aims to ensure that every member of staff is equipped with the knowledge and confidence to identify and deal effectively with any safeguarding situation or concern that arises.

For more information on how to spot the signs and symptoms, see the Safeguarding page on TED.

4. Other related areas

4.1 Modern Slavery (including Human Trafficking):

The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) is intended to provide law enforcement agencies with stronger legal tools to stamp out modern slavery, ensuring that the perpetrators receive suitably severe punishment, while enhancing the protection of, and support for, victims.

Modern Slavery is estimated to be one of the world's most profitable criminal activities. An assessment published in 2014 conducted by the Home Office estimates that there are between 10,000 and 13,000 victims in the UK. Sexual exploitation is the most common form of modern slavery currently reported by potential victims in the UK, followed by labour exploitation, forced criminal exploitation and domestic servitude. Evidence of criminal behaviour should always be reported to the Police.

Where staff have concerns about a child or adult suffering abuse related to any form of modern slavery, this should be raised with a Designated Safeguarding Officer who should follow the procedures outlined above in respect of 'Raising a safeguarding concern' involving contact with the Children and Families Hub or Adult Social Care. The Children and Families Hub will pass concerns onto the NRM (National Referral Mechanism) to ensure that the child gets the appropriate protection and support. Concerns should always be passed onto the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the case of an adult, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should seek consent to make a referral direct to the NRM to secure appropriate protection and support as co-ordinated by the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU).

Information about the NRM, including guidance and the referral form, is available on the www.gov.uk website..

Where no referral has been made, the Council has a duty to notify the Home Office of potential victims of Modern Slavery via the MS1 form. In accordance with section 43(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the Council is committed to co-operating with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner whose role is to act in the interests of victims and potential victims by ensuring that the law enforcement response to modern slavery is coordinated.

Modern Slavery offences involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people, who with the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, abuse of power or deception, are exploited for the purposes of prostitution, forced labour, slavery or other similar practices. This can occur either from one country to another or even within the same country, county or town.

Some victims are forced to work in places like cannabis factories, nail bars, brothels and car washes. There is no typical victim and some victims don't understand that they have been exploited and are entitled to help and support.

4.2 Prevent:

Section 26 of the [Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) placed a new duty upon local authorities including district councils to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism" (Updated April 2021).

The PREVENT Strategy has objectives, to:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
 - Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
 - Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

It includes all forms of violent terrorism and non-violent extremism - including Islamist and far-right supremacist forms. '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."

Concerns about the possible radicalisation of an individual should be raised with the Safeguarding Lead Professional or with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who is the operational lead. The DSL will use the 'notice' 'check, share' procedure available on the Gov.Uk website.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm the Police should be contacted on 999. In order to protect an individual from radicalisation, a Prevent Referral Form should be completed and submitted to Essex Police (as detailed on the form) or you can call Essex Police Prevent Team for advice on 0800 789 321.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should always be made aware of a referral.

Consent is normally required to make a referral, and further details on this and other matters are dealt with in the document [Prevent Duty Guidance for Local Authorities – Dec 2023](#)

Where the individual is at risk of abuse or neglect, standard safeguarding procedures apply as per 'Raising a Concern' (highlighted further above). Prevent should not involve covert activity against communities or individuals but should involve the sharing of personal information to ensure that a person at risk of radicalisation is given appropriate support. Following a referral as above, support may be co-ordinated by the local CHANNEL Panel.

Working principles include the need for proportionality and the principle of consent (unless seeking this could put a person at risk). The Council's approach is consistent with existing safeguarding processes to include secure record keeping in accordance with the legislation around data protection. Tendring District Council, working alongside the Tendring Community Safety Partnership, has agreed a Prevent Strategy and Action Plan

4.3 Domestic Abuse:

The Council adopts the Government's definition of domestic abuse as being: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality".

Such abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Survivors/victims may be affected by domestic abuse in a number of ways:

- Loss of opportunity
- Isolation from family/friends
- Loss of income or work
- Homelessness
- Emotional/psychological effects such as experiences of anxiety,

Depression or lowered sense of self-worth • Poor health • Physical injury or ongoing impairment • Death The effects of domestic abuse on survivors/victims include the direct effects on them and their relationships with other people, particularly their children.

Domestic abuse or violence is a crime and should be reported to the Police. The duty to share information for the prevention, or detection, of a crime overrules the usual principles of Data Protection (as per s.29 of the Act)

What staff should do if they become aware of domestic abuse or violence:

- In an emergency call 999.
- In non-emergency cases and for general advice, please call 101
- Staff should contact a Designated Officer who will advise on making a referral to the Children and Families Hub (if the concern is about a child) or Adult Social Care (if the concern is about an adult) where relevant.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should also be contacted.

Further information on this issue and contact details for local and national agencies that support victims/ survivors of domestic abuse and violence are included on the <https://safercommunitiestending.co.uk/> website.

4.4 Honour Based Abuse (HBA):

Honour Based Abuse is an international term used by many cultures for justification of abuse and violence. It is a crime or incident committed in order to protect or defend the family or community 'honour'. Honour Based Abuse may sometimes be used as a collective term for Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

4.5 Forced Marriage:

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

4.6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

Female genital mutilation (FGM) includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women. FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003:

- makes it illegal to practice FGM in the UK
- makes it illegal to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country
- makes it illegal to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad
- has a penalty of up to 14 years in prison and, or, a fine

Section 4 of the [Serious Crime Act \(2015\)](#) extends sections one to three to "extra-territorial acts" so that it is also an offence for a UK national or permanent UK resident to:

- perform FGM abroad
- assist a girl to perform FGM on herself outside the UK; and

- assist (from outside the UK) a non-UK national or resident to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or permanent UK resident.

Suspensions may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for FGM to take place abroad. These include knowing that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and is preparing for the child to take a holiday, arranging vaccinations, or planning absence from school.

The child may also talk about a 'special procedure/ceremony' that is going to take place. Girls are at particular risk of FGM during summer holidays.

This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM. Further information and resources on FGM are available on this page:

[ESCB - FGM of the ESCB website.](#)

Where staff have concerns that a child may be a possible or potential victim of Forced Marriage or FGM, this should be raised with the Lead Safeguarding Officer via the existing procedures outlined above in respect of 'Raising a safeguarding concern' involving contact with the Children and Families Hub or Adult Social Care. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will also ensure that the Police are contacted where a criminal offence is suspected.

4.6 Child Exploitation (CE): Exploitation includes sexual, criminal (including county lines), modern slavery and online. Children who are exploited usually do not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship or see themselves as a victim. Exploitation is not the child's fault. Abusers are very clever in the way they manipulate young people. Increasingly often young people are being groomed remotely to carry out 'jobs' in their community, for their exploiters who live on the other side of the country.

How have exploitation methods changed/become more hidden

- Girl's report finding it easier to travel around the county as they are challenged less than boys.
- Possible increased use of taxis/private hire vehicles by children being exploited.
- More exploitation happening at private addresses and unused business premises.
- Social media has replaced face to face interaction. Young people are craving to connect with others and unfortunately, this can lead to grooming.

Child Sexual Exploitation can occur using technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and /or economic or other resources. There are 3 important and recognisable elements of child sexual exploitation:

- Children are 'groomed' and there is power, and control held by the perpetrator/s
- An 'exchange' (such as gift, food, money, drugs etc.) is present, this could be to a third party and not always to the child themselves
- Sexual acts or the exchange of sexual images is present

The sexual exploitation of children and young people can be seen in varied forms which can be described through understanding models of CSE. It is important to recognise that these models do not necessarily work in isolation and various models can be operating concurrently (these models are an amalgamation of models reported by Barnardo's, Children's Society and Safe & Sound).

- Inappropriate relationship model
- Organised network and trafficking model
- Gangs and Group model
- Peer on Peer • Older Adult 'Boyfriend'/'Girlfriend' model
- Online Grooming model

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 34 states 'governments must protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation'. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on key organisations to ensure that they work together to improve the wellbeing of children.

The Council is committed to play its full part in tackling CSE which includes reporting concerns and increasing awareness. It endorses the ESCB statement that this problem "cannot be dealt with by individual organisations working alone and that a multi-disciplinary commitment is required to tackle and respond to CSE

Staff with concerns about a specific child being at risk of CSE should speak to a Designated Safeguarding Officer for their service. He or she will assist the member of staff in taking the right steps summarised below as derived from Essex CSE & Missing Arrangements

Non-person-specific Information about CSE activity should be included on the Essex Police Child Information Sharing Form available on the [CSE Toolbox](#), or information can be emailed to OC.triage.team.essex@essex.pnn.police.uk.

Person-specific concerns should be detailed on the CSE Risk Vulnerabilities Assessment which can also be found on the CSE Toolbox.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm the Police should always be called on 999. Whenever information is shared, the Safeguarding Coordinator should be made aware.

Further information and guidance on CSE can be found here: [CSE guidance for Professionals](#). Further information about CSE can be found on the Essex Police and ESCB websites and by referring to the [SET Operating Procedures SET Operating Procedures - May 2019](#)

5. Responsibilities of TDC

The Council's Management Team recognise the important role they play in ensuring the safeguarding agenda is driven across the whole organisation. They understand the Council's responsibility to work in partnership and share information with other agencies. The Council's Assistant Director of Partnerships is the Lead Professional for Safeguarding and Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager is the Lead Officer for the Council and is responsible for the direction and management of safeguarding within the organisation. The Council's Portfolio Holder for Partnerships is the Members Safeguarding Champion.

Safeguarding is referred to in senior management meetings and information is disseminated through service teams and included within service strategies and business plans.

6. Service Roles

There are a range of functions carried out by TDC, which have a positive outcome on the wellbeing of children, young people and adults with needs for care and support, and staff in these service areas are in a position to identify safeguarding issues, which have a direct impact on vulnerable people. For example:

6.1 Housing Services – The Council directly supports the health and life chances of children, young people and adults by improving standards of housing: preventing and responding to homelessness and by working closely with other local services and agencies. Other work includes allocation of housing to those in most need and proactive support to people with disabilities to enable them to get the necessary adaptations to help them participate fully in everyday life. Housing staff also work with MAPPA (Multi-Agency Protection Panel Arrangements) and MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Case Conference) to ensure vulnerable people are safeguarded within the district.

6.2 Community Safety – As well as undertaking core work to reduce crime and fear of crime, the Community Safety Team plays a key role in ensuring the safety of local children, young people and adults. The Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager / Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer manages the Community Safety Team and is responsible for receiving all safeguarding concerns from across the authority, triaging them and taking appropriate action. The team also provides a signposting service to vulnerable people to enable them to access local support.

6.3 Planning Services – This service can impact upon the wellbeing of children, young people and adults with care and support needs, through the design of new housing developments. The provision of play facilities and 'green space' ensures that families have facilities to enhance wellbeing and good design helps to ensure that people are safer in their communities.

6.4 Environmental Services – Services provided by the Council's Environmental Team include the monitoring of noise complaints, food hygiene and nutrition, but officers also inspect conditions in Council-owned, private rented accommodation and local businesses.

6.5 Licensing - The Council is responsible for carrying out certain licensing functions. Protection of children from harm is a licensing objective that the Council is legally obliged to consider as part of its licensing function when licensing premises under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005

6.6 Financial Services / Benefits and Revenues – With responsibility for administration of Benefit payments and Council Tax, the Council's Financial Team helps to ensure that children, young people and adults with needs for care and support are protected from the effects of poverty and that family income is maximised.

6.7 People– This department implements the Council's Recruitment Policy and Induction Procedures, so that all relevant employees are subject to the appropriate checks prior to appointment. The Learning and Development Manager and the Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager will monitor the level and type of safeguarding training required by staff and maintains records of training received and timeframes for refresher training.

7. Designated Roles in Tendring District Council

7.1 Elected Member Champion - The Portfolio Holder for Partnerships holds the position of Member Champion for Safeguarding and is responsible for promoting the importance of safeguarding amongst all Members.

7.2 Safeguarding Lead Professional – This position is held by the Assistant Director Partnerships and has overall accountability for safeguarding children, young people and adults with support needs.

7.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager, who is responsible for advising the Lead Professional in regard to concerns, referrals and safeguarding allegations against staff. They also have overall responsibility for ensuring that staff are aware of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, are appropriately trained, understand their responsibilities, and have a range of safeguarding experience. The DSL will chair the Safeguarding Champions meeting

7.4 Assistant Director Partnerships – This postholder is responsible for ensuring that the Council has up to date Safeguarding policies, procedures, training and that any allegations regarding professionals in the workplace are investigated appropriately.

7.4 Safeguarding Champions – this group of staff nominated as a Safeguarding Champion or their service area will meet quarterly to discuss safeguarding matters, stay up to speed with any changes and cascade information and training options to their team members.

7.5 Designated Safeguarding Reporting Officers – Those staff members attending the Safeguarding Champions Group are known as the Designated Reporting Officers. They are responsible for disseminating safeguarding information, identifying training requirements of staff and providing best practice examples within their service areas.

7.6 Named Senior Officer (whistleblowing – allegations against staff)

The Assistant Director, Partnerships, is the first point of call for staff reporting safeguarding allegations against employees and refers to the Lead Professional and Lead Officer on this.

7.7 Safeguarding Officers

The DSL is responsible for the operational management and implementation of the Council's Safeguarding Strategy, Policy and Procedures. They co-ordinate, promote and deliver safeguarding training. They ensure concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies and that they are recorded, monitored and reviewed.

8. The role of Council Staff and Members

8.1 Service Directors

Service Directors are responsible for ensuring that, Managers, Supervisors, Team Leaders and staff within their Directorate are aware of the contents of this Policy and the accompanying Procedures, and that the Council's duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults with needs for care and support are met and effectively discharged.

8.2 Managers and Supervisors / Team Leaders

Managers and Supervisors / Team Leaders are responsible for complying with the requirements of this Policy and accompanying Procedures and for the promotion of a staff culture which recognises the rights of children, young people and adults with needs for care and support and the Council's responsibility for their safety when receiving its services.

8.3 The HR Team

The People Team is responsible for ensuring that safe recruitment procedures are followed and that appropriate checks are made. This includes Disclosure and Barring Service Checks prior to any employee that will have unsupervised/substantial contact with children and young people, or who will undertake certain prescribed activities with adults with care and support needs, before starting work with the Council. The Head of People Performance and Projects has lead responsibility for dealing with allegations against members of staff.

8.4 Employees

All employees, volunteers and agency staff are responsible for complying with the requirements of this Policy and Procedures. Staff should take all reasonable steps to ensure (within the context of their duties) that risks are minimised and that children, young and vulnerable people are protected and their welfare promoted when using Council services.

*To effectively implement this policy, **all** employees have a responsibility to:*

- be aware of, and abide by this Policy and accompanying Procedures*
- undertake safeguarding training at the level identified in respect of their work*
- ensure that they work in such a way that they do not place vulnerable people in a position of risk*
- report any incidents of safeguarding concern to their line manager immediately*
- co-operate with any risk assessment process undertaken by their manager or designated person*
- ensure that they behave appropriately towards any children, young person or adult with needs for care and support who they come into contact with whilst carrying out their duties*
- seek advice (as per the procedures) in respect of any safeguarding concerns or the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs.*

Employees who come into contact with children, young people or adults with needs for care and support, whilst working away from their office base, or whilst lone working, must act in an appropriate manner and not put themselves at risk from allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

8.5 Elected Members

The Council is committed to ensuring that its Elected Members are appropriately trained and aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and those of the authority. This includes awareness of the Council's safeguarding duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and The Care Act 2014.

Councillors/Members: Councillors are required to adhere to the Policy. If they do not, there may be grounds for reporting their behaviour to the Government Committee, which may require an investigation under the Councillor Code of Conduct. If a safeguarding issue occurs relating to a Councillor, the Designated Officer informed of the breach should contact the Monitoring Officer immediately. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, the councillor will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face criminal investigation. Annual awareness training will be offered to councillors

9. Contractors

All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that contractors working for the Council are monitored appropriately. All contractors and sub-contractors working with, or providing services for the Council are required to demonstrate they have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures or agree to sign up to the TDC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, to ensure they meet the Council's safeguarding requirements. Where contact with children and adults with needs for care and support is a necessary part of the contracted service, it is the responsibility of the manager who is using the services of the contractor, to ensure that satisfactory DBS checks have been completed where appropriate and that contracted staff are vigilant in respect of safeguarding issues.

10. Grant Applicants

As a minimum, all organisations receiving funding from the Council will be expected to have a safeguarding policy and procedure in place, which is understood by employees and volunteers and available to service users, irrespective of how the grant has been awarded.

11. Safe Recruitment

It is a criminal offence for an employer not to undertake the appropriate checks on an employee working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs, or to knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with these groups. The Council takes all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable

people are prevented from working with vulnerable groups, regardless of their position.

All job descriptions are assessed to identify which roles are likely to involve regular/substantial unsupervised contact with children and adults with care and support needs. For all new employees, confirmation of employment will be dependent on satisfactory checks where appropriate.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Plus checks are sought where staff will have unsupervised and substantial contact with children and young people or who will undertake certain prescribed activities with adults with needs for care and support as part of their duties or responsibilities.

12. Supervision

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and for creating an environment where they feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role. This is reinforced through 'supervision', which can be part of staff 1:1 meetings or as a group and all staff are entitled to access this support.

These meetings might be planned or ad hoc and could involve monitoring work in hand, reviewing progress against work plans, developing solutions or simply discussing problems and concerns.

13. Training

The level to which individual employees should be trained in safeguarding is determined in accordance with Essex Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards guidelines. All staff will undertake the Council's e-learning training package on Skillgate this package covers both Level 1 & 2 Safeguarding models for both Children's and Adults, which reinforces the basic learning and will enable all staff to be equipped with the knowledge and confidence to identify and report any incidents of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All Managers also need to undertake training, to ensure that they have a sound working knowledge of relevant legislation, fully understand their duty of care and responsibilities and can be advocates of best practice in safeguarding.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns about behaviour of others in the work place made in good faith without fear of repercussion.

The Council's Whistleblowing Policy covers any staff concerns about colleagues in regard to safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs and staff need to feel confident in reporting these. The Policy provides guidance and assurance regarding the process to be followed in respect of raising concerns. It also provides details of alternative ways to report concerns confidentially outside of the Council.

Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

The SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding Guidelines outline the basic safeguarding procedures, which should be followed by all local authorities in Essex. The Council has however developed its own simplified safeguarding procedures and requires all staff and Members to follow these.

There may also be occasions when agencies in another county have to be contacted to report a safeguarding concern, for example, if an incident occurs at an TDC activity but the child or adult lives in a neighbouring district or county. Emergency contact information for these teams is given at the end of the Procedures.

To report a concern about a child to Children's Social Care please use the reporting portal :

[Report a concern about a child | Essex County Council](#)

To report a concern about an adult to Adult Social Care please use the reporting portal : [Report a concern about an adult | Essex County Council](#)

External Agencies

Essex County Council: Essex County Council is the Children's Services Authority and provider of Adult Social Care for Essex. It has a duty to conduct enquiries where it's suspected that a child who lives in, or is found in a local authority area, is suffering from, or likely to suffer significant harm in the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Under the Care Act, there is now a duty to conduct enquiries regarding adults. TDC has a duty to assist and provide information in support of these enquiries.

The role of the Essex Safeguarding Boards

Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB) is a statutory multi-agency organisation, which brings together agencies who work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The objective of this Board is to coordinate and oversee the work of local partners and agencies in regard to safeguarding and to advise and direct improved safeguarding practice.

Essex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB). The Care Act 2014 placed the Adult's Board on a statutory footing. The Board oversees and leads adult safeguarding across the locality and is interested in a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect. The Board must publish a strategic plan and annual report, setting out how it will meet its main objective and what the members will do to achieve these objectives. It must also conduct any Safeguarding Adult Reviews in accordance with the Care Act.

North Essex Stay Safe Group

North Essex Stay Safe Group consists of representatives including NHS, Essex Social Care, Police, Probation, Education, Voluntary Sector and District Councils. This group is responsible for delivering an action plan to improve safeguarding practice in North Essex and for considering actions to address emerging issues.

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN ESSEX The Council recognises that safeguarding children is not only about preventing abuse and neglect: It is also about promoting children's health and development in order to help provide optimum life chances. Providing effective support to help find solutions at an early stage can prevent problems escalating. The publication *Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex* includes guidance that applies to Council staff working with children and families to provide Early Help, targeted and specialist support.

The Council is required to work with others to support children and families in order to prevent their needs escalating to a higher level. The document includes the conceptual model and "windscreen" as a way of developing a shared understanding and approach across all services and partnerships, and in order to ensure a consistent approach. Further information on the [Essex Effective Support for Children and Families can be accessed here](#):

CONFIDENTIALITY Employees have a duty to share information relating to suspected abuse with Essex Social Care and Essex Police.

Employees must not:

- Discuss any allegations of abuse or bullying, substantiated or not, with anyone from Tendring District Council other than with their line manager, a Designated Officer, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Discuss any allegations of abuse or bullying, substantiated or not, with any member of an external agency (excluding Essex Social Care and Essex Police), other than as part of a referral or investigation,
- Discuss any allegations of abuse or bullying, substantiated or not, with any other interested party, including parents, carers, and relatives of the child, without the express permission of the person with overall responsibility for the investigation.

This does not exclude the employee from the need or right to consult with a solicitor, trade union representative or other bona fide legal adviser.

CONSENT Consent is not required to breach confidentiality and make a safeguarding referral where:

- a serious crime has been committed
- the alleged perpetrator may go on to abuse others
- the child is deemed to be at serious risk of harm
- the adult with needs for care and support is deemed to be at serious risk of harm (unless the individual has capacity, and the concern is around 'selfneglect')
- there is a statutory requirement such as Children's Act 1989, Mental Health Act 1983, Care Standards Act 2000
- the public interest overrides the interest of the individual
- a member of staff or volunteer is the person accused of abuse.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually unless legislation or processes change in the interim.

Monitoring mechanisms include:

- External (Section 11) audit (ESCB)
- External Staff Safeguarding Survey (ESAB)
- internal audits;

- *recording of staff training at different levels;*
- *reporting to the Council's Senior Management Team;*
- *Serious Case Reviews, Serious Case Reviews*
- *Domestic Homicide Reviews and Serious Adult Reviews; and positive engagement with Essex Safeguarding Boards, including the sharing of best practice and membership of communication and strategic groups within their structures. The policy will be substantially reviewed every five years although it may be subject to minor corrections or operational updates annually.*

Other relevant TDC documents

Other TDC policies and procedures that may be read in conjunction with, or be linked to this policy are:

- *Honour Based Abuse Policy and Procedures*
- *Whistleblowing Policy (Confidential Reporting)*
- *Disciplinary Policy*
- *Corporate Information Sharing Policy (monitoring internet access of staff)*
- *Recruitment Policy and Procedures*
- *Domestic Violence in the Workplace – Policy and Manager's Toolkit*
- *Prevent Policy*

Staff should monitor internal Council bulletins and intranet pages for new and updated versions of relevant safeguarding policies.

External documents

This policy is intended to support staff working within TDC and is supplementary to the:

- *Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) - Child Protection Procedures (Updated May 2022).*
- *Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) - Safeguarding Adult Guidelines.*
- *ECSB – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements*

Staff should also see the Council's intranet in the new dedicated 'Safeguarding' page for more in-depth information on various aspects of safeguarding.

Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

Who is responsible for making a referral?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and anyone can raise a safeguarding concern. If a member of staff sees something that worries them, they have a responsibility to report it. Staff are not however, responsible for deciding whether or not someone is being abused, or for carrying out investigations.

All safeguarding concerns should be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance, although, out of hours, staff will need to make their own referrals as directed in the procedures.

Confidentiality and Consent

Employees must not discuss any allegations of abuse, substantiated or not, with:

- anyone from TDC other than their line manager and other designated members of staff as outlined in the relevant safeguarding procedure;
- any member of an external agency (excluding Essex Social Care and Essex Police), other than as part of a formal investigation; or with,
- any other interested party, including parents, carers and relatives of the child, young person or adult without the express permission of the person with overall responsibility for the investigation.

Staff must consider whether seeking **consent** from a victim might increase the risk to them, cause an unjustified delay or if it could prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.

Consent is not required where:

- other people or children could be at risk from the person causing harm
- it is necessary to prevent crime, or if a serious crime may have been committed
- there is a high risk to the health and safety of the adult at risk
- the person lacks capacity to consent*
- where the alleged perpetrator may go on to abuse others
- there is a statutory requirement
- the public interest overrides the interest of the individual
- when a staff member is the person accused of abuse, malpractice or poor professional standards.

****Mental capacity***

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 requires an assumption that an adult has full capacity to make decisions unless it can be shown that they lack capacity to make a decision for themselves, at the time the decision needs to be made. Any decision made, or action taken, on behalf of someone who lacks the capacity to make the decision or act for themselves, must be made in their best interests.

Issues of mental capacity and the ability to give informed consent are central to decisions and actions surrounding safeguarding adults. All interventions need to take into account the ability of adults to make informed choices about the way they want to live and the risks they want to take. This includes their ability:

- to understand the implications of their situation.
- to take action themselves to prevent abuse.
- to participate to the fullest extent possible in decision-making about interventions.

Data Protection

All copies of the Safeguarding Report Form are retained on the Council's secure database, in accordance with data protection and as per the Retention of Records Policy. All copies of Referral Forms sent to Essex Social Care are retained by the Safeguarding Team, in a secure location to ensure confidentiality.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is a vital part of early intervention and preventative work, to promote welfare, for wider public protection and in improving outcomes for all. However, people want to be confident that their personal information is kept safe and secure, and that staff maintain their privacy.

Decisions about what information is shared and with whom will therefore be taken on a case-by-case basis. Information should be:

- *necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared.*
- *shared only with those who have a need for it.*
- *be up to date and shared in a timely fashion.*
- *be shared accurately and securely.*

In all cases where information is shared, the following information should be recorded:

- *date and time.*
- *an accurate summary of information shared.*
- *who the information was shared with.*
- *whether it was shared with or without consent (if without consent, whether the child or family or employee were informed).*
- *how the information was shared and any receipt of it having been received.*

Evidence-gathering and preserving

The Police are always responsible for the gathering and preservation of evidence to pursue criminal allegations against people causing harm. Staff should contact them immediately if they feel a crime has taken place. However, the first concern must be to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the alleged victim.

Staff can play an important part in ensuring that evidence is not contaminated or lost.

Staff should:

- *try not to disturb the scene, clothing or victim if at all possible.*
- *try to discourage the vulnerable person from washing, showering or bathing, or from washing their clothes if the allegation or disclosure concerns a possible rape or sexual assault.*
- *secure the scene (e.g. lock the door if possible).*
- *ensure nothing is removed from the scene and it is left exactly as it was found.*
- *contact the Police and ask for advice if in doubt.*

General email to send safeguarding concerns or enquiries safeguarding@tendringdc.gov.uk

Allegations against Staff or Members

The Council takes seriously any complaints made about the conduct of staff and volunteers in respect of their contact with children, young people, families and adults with care and support needs. This includes any person who works with children or adults in a voluntary activity or in a personal capacity:

All allegations received by the Council will be investigated fully, and, where applicable, action will be taken against the member of staff via the disciplinary procedure. If deemed necessary, the member of staff will be re-deployed or suspended whilst the investigation takes place. The decision to suspend lies with the appropriate Director in consultation with the Head of People, Performance and Projects, or in their absence, the Chief Executive or another member of the Senior Management Team.

In addition, depending on the situation it may be appropriate to involve the police, where it is deemed a possible criminal offence has been committed. This decision will be made by Head of People, in conjunction with a member of the Senior Management Team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the event of a serious allegation against a member of staff regarding children, the Council will follow the procedures set out in the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Procedures and may involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) employed by Essex County Council.

The Council has a legal duty to refer unsuitable individuals to criminal records agencies whether they have resigned, moved roles or been dismissed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be responsible for making the decision, and ensuring the matter is referred to the relevant disclosure and barring agency.

Completing Safeguarding Report Forms

*The TDC Safeguarding Report Form is to be used for **all** concerns regarding children, young people and adults with needs for care and support. As a result, not all fields will be relevant, **but all relevant fields must be completed**. The officer completing the form is responsible for its content and for its delivery to the Safeguarding Team within the timescales given.*

*The TDC Form is available on the intranet under the 'Safeguarding' section and should be downloaded **each time** it is needed. Forms must be completed electronically and emailed to the address given. Any employee not having access to the intranet must contact their line manager to complete the form on their behalf. On receipt of the form a member of the Safeguarding Team will start the assessment process.*

As the Designated Safeguarding Lead may need to cut and paste information from the Safeguarding Report Form onto external forms, it should be completed as accurately and carefully as possible. Staff should also reduce the amount of additional documents that are attached e.g. amalgamate and/or edit information rather than sending lots of emails to provide background information.

The Safeguarding Report Form will also act as an accurate record for staff to keep in their own confidential and 'locked down' files. Staff must remember that their reports may be used as evidence in a court of law or at a case review or inspection.

Making direct referrals

If staff have to make their own external referral (if it is out of office hours); they must send copies of this and any other accompanying material to the Safeguarding email the next working day.

External safeguarding portals are available on line for direct referrals.

To report a concern about a child to Children's Social Care please use the reporting portal : [Report a concern about a child | Essex County Council](#)

To report a concern about an adult to Adult Social Care please use the reporting portal : [Report a concern about an adult | Essex County Council](#)

Housing Services safeguarding procedures

In addition to the safeguarding procedures, the Council's Housing Service may need to make a referral to Essex Social Care in relation to homeless 16-17 year olds and intentionally homeless households with children. This contact is made for an assessment of whether they are a child in need to whom a duty is owed by Essex Social Care under terms of the Children Act 1989.

Other safeguarding procedures

It may be necessary to contact specialist agencies regarding some forms of abuse. There may also be extra forms to complete. Staff should always refer concerns to the Safeguarding Team, but if this is not possible, staff should follow the following procedures (sending information to the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible).

If you believe someone is in immediate danger or risk, call Essex Police on

999.

If it's not an emergency, call the Police on 101.

Modern Slavery (including Human Trafficking)

*For advice staff should ring the **Modern Day Slavery Helpline** on 0800 0121 700; or the **Salvation Army Helpline** on 0300 3038 151 (24 hours a day, seven days a week).*

PREVENT (radicalisation)

*The Safeguarding Team follow the usual SET Procedures and send a copy of the relevant form(s) to the specialist Police team via their email address: **Prevent@essex.pnn.police.uk***

Domestic Abuse

Staff can report domestic abuse directly to Essex Police via their Domestic Abuse Central Referral Unit (CRU) by calling 101 extension 180340; or by calling the dedicated abuse non-emergency number 0800 358 0351.

*For up-to-date information, staff should look at the Essex Police Website at **www.essex.police.uk***

If children or adults with needs for care and support are involved, staff should also contact Essex Social Care - see the 'Making direct referrals' section above.

Procedure A: Immediate Risk

For incidents where staff believe that a child, young person or adult with care or support needs is in **immediate danger of physical or psychological harm** and that the situation calls for **immediate action or intervention**. (Staff may have witnessed the incident themselves, had a vulnerable person disclosure directly to them or they are given information from a third party).

In these situations, staff should:

1. **CALL 999** and report what they've seen or heard to the relevant emergency service.

If staff are able, they should ensure that they have all relevant details to hand before contacting the emergency services e.g. any relevant addresses, telephone numbers etc.

Record all details immediately in order to give as much information as possible to the emergency services and/or investigating agency. (These details will also form the basis of the Safeguarding Report Form which will have to be completed after the incident).

2. Stay until the Police and/or the ambulance crew arrive if they've witnessed an incident themselves.
3. Ask any other witnesses if they can stay and provide support to the victim if possible, but only if it's safe to do so without compromising the situation.
4. Talk to the victim and record whatever is said in writing as soon as possible, but only if the perpetrator is not at the scene.
5. Inform their Line Manager as soon as possible after the situation has been resolved and submit the Safeguarding Report Form to the Safeguarding Team **within one working day** of the incident occurring.

Staff should be as accurate as possible when recording information as it could be used in court.

Procedure B: No Immediate Risk

Where staff have their own concerns about a vulnerable person or if a third party has told a member of staff about their concerns. Also if a child, young person or adult with needs for care and support has disclosed something directly to the member of staff, which may be considered a safeguarding concern, or may involve a crime.

These concerns are of a **serious nature**, which staff believe **could lead to harm**, but where the victim is **not in any immediate danger** of harm and **immediate action is not required**.

Staff should:

1. Record what is said as accurately as possible.
2. Reassure the vulnerable person and explain that information will be passed on – that staff are unable to keep the information a secret and that they will be seeking help for them.
3. Report it to the Safeguarding Team via the Safeguarding Report Form within **one working day** of the concern being raised/established.

If staff are unsure whether their concern is a safeguarding issue, they should ring the LADO to discuss.

Procedure C: Allegations against staff

This procedure also covers allegations made against anyone acting on behalf of TDC including volunteers or Elected Members.

Staff should:

1. Try to get a witness to their conversation with the person reporting the allegation if it is made in person.
2. Take accurate notes of the allegation and not ask leading questions. Staff should transfer this information in as much detail as possible to a Safeguarding Report Form as soon as they can. **DO NOT SEND THIS FORM TO THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM.**
3. Immediately contact

- **People Team: Katie Wilkins**
- **Safeguarding Lead Professional, Anastasia Simpson**

4. If the allegation is made in writing, follow the above procedure from no. 3.

It will be up to the Named Senior Officer (or the Deputy/Safeguarding Lead in her absence) to determine whether the Safeguarding Report Form is forwarded to the Safeguarding Team.

Suspension of the staff member is not automatic and is considered a neutral act. Where suspension is not appropriate, consideration will be given to putting safeguards in place to protect the vulnerable person.

Safeguarding Report Form – Confidential



Please **TYPE** all information on this form. **DO NOT SCAN**

Referrer's Details	
Your Name:	Job Title:
Your Department:	Your phone number(s):
Your Line Manager's Name and Job Title:	
Date form completed:	

Who are you concerned about? (add boxes if needed)					
First Name	Surname	Date of Birth/Age/ Estimated Due Date	Gender	Ethnicity	Adult or child?

Address:	Post Code:
Contact Tel. Nos(s):	Tenancy type: (eg. Council; owner; private rent; housing association):
Email address (if available):	

Others to be included eg. Perpetrator / Parents / Carers / other relevant household members (add boxes if needed)						
Name	Date of Birth/Age	Relationship to person(s) at risk	Gender	Ethnicity	Address	Contact Tel. No(s)/email:

Any medical conditions, disabilities, mental health concerns or substance misuse issues?:	Other information e.g. need interpreter?;
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Consent	
Does the adult at risk or parent/guardian know you're raising a concern?	Do they consent to a referral being made?

What is the Safeguarding Concern?	
Date/time of incident/concern:	Any other agencies involved? eg. Police / RSL ?:
Describe your concern here:	
Have you taken any action?:	

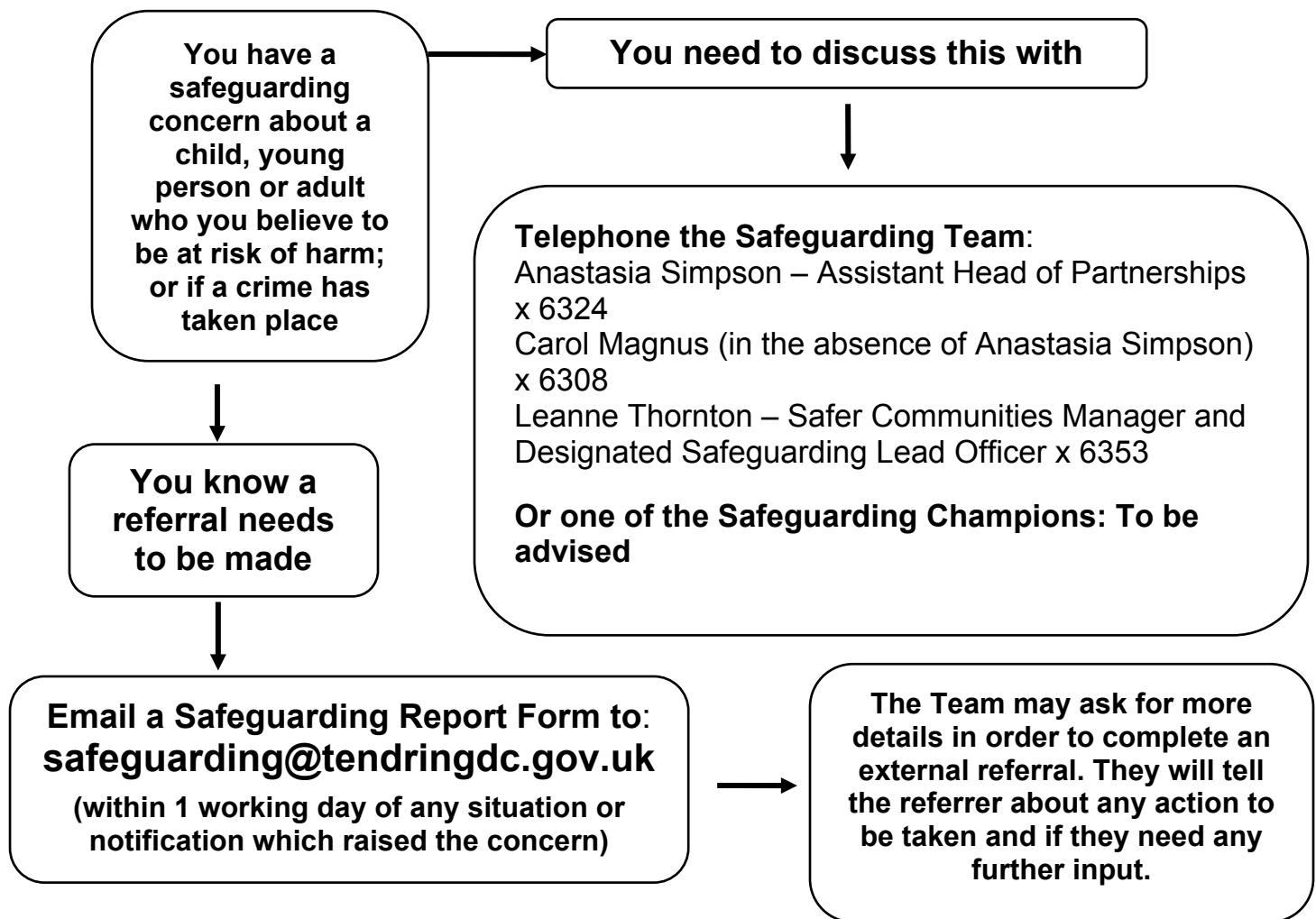
Please send this form to: **safeguarding@tendringdc.gov.uk** (NOT to individuals)

TDC Staff Guide to Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

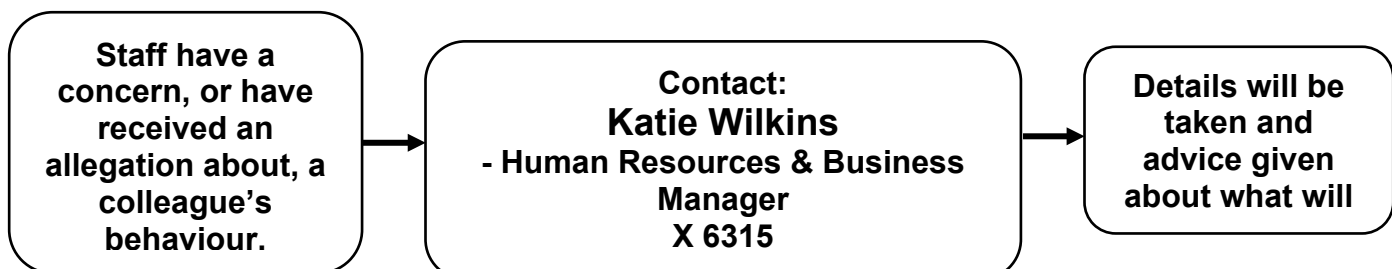
Procedure A: Immediate Risk



Procedure B: No Immediate Risk



Procedure C: Allegations against Staff



Types of Abuse

There are ten main types of abuse. The table below includes key physical and behavioural indicators that staff should look out for:

Type of Abuse	Physical Indicator	Behaviour Indicator
Physical	• Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries • Bruises which reflect hand marks • Cigarette burns • Bite marks • Broken bones • Scalds	• Fear of parent being contacted • Aggressive or angry outburst • Running away • Fear of going home • Flinching • Depression • Keeping arms/legs covered • Withdrawn behaviour • Reluctance to change clothes
Psychological	• Developmental delay • Sudden speech disorders • Loss of appetite / loss of weight • Disturbed sleep	• Neurotic behaviour, hair twisting or rocking • Unable to play/take part • Fear of making mistakes • Self harm or mutilation • Fear of parents being contacted
Neglect and Self Neglect	• Constant hunger, stealing food • Unkempt state • Weight loss / underweight • Inappropriate dress • Untreated physical illnesses • Constant tiredness	• Truancy / Late for school • Withholding of 'necessaries', eg nutrition, medication, healthcare, social stimulation • Withholding assistance to use the toilet, keep clean, warm and comfortable • Disregarding one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
Sexual	• Pain/itching in the genital area • Bruising/bleeding near genital area • STIs • Vaginal discharge / infection • Stomach pains • Discomfort when walking sitting • Pregnancy	• Sudden change in behaviour • Nightmares • Unexplained sources of money • Sexual drawings / language • Bedwetting • Self-harming behaviours • Secrets which cannot be told to anyone • Behaving beyond their age
Financial or Material	• Stealing money • Prevention of necessary care options	• Never having money for activities, snacks or treats • Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills • Personal possessions of value go missing from home without explanation • Pressure or misappropriation of property, wills, bank accounts, benefits or assets
Discriminatory	• Ignoring dietary requirements	• Direct or indirect discrimination based on race, gender, culture, disability, sexuality, religion, belief or values • Omitting services or activities based on preconceived ideas about someone's age or condition
Organisational	• Poor care planning • Inflexible routines • Lack of privacy	• The routine / practice or management that is not responsive to or respectful to the individuals swerved

		• Little opportunity for outside activities
Domestic Abuse	• Signs of psychological, physical, sexual and financial abuse • Female Genital Mutilation • Forced marriage	• Being prevented from seeing family / friends or attending college / work / appointments • Being followed or continually being asked where they are • Feeling scared of others • Being threatened personally or threats against family / friends • Being prevented from leaving home, withholding finances • Being forced to do something unwanted for their partner
Modern Slavery	• Signs of physical or psychological abuse • May appear malnourished or unkempt or appear withdrawn	• Signs of isolation • Being prevented from travelling freely or going out on their own • Appearing to be under the control or influence of others • Appearing to be unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work