



Safeguarding Children

Policy, Procedures & Guidance

Updated June 2016
Review date: June 2017

Contents

Part 1: SRBC Safeguarding Children Policy		Part 3: Concerns about an Adult's Conduct / Managing Allegations	
Introduction	Page 3	Introduction	25
Definitions	3-5	Safer Working Practices	25-27
Underpinning Principles	5	Public Information	27
The Council & the Broader Safeguarding Agenda	5-8	Conduct Concerns & Whistle-blowing	28
The Council's Safeguarding Commitment	8-10	Managing Allegations	28-29
Safeguarding Roles & Responsibilities within SRBC	10-13	Suspension	29
		Managing Allegations Flowchart	30
Part 2: SRBC Safeguarding Children Procedures		Part 4: Supplementary Guidance	
Introduction	14	Recruitment, Employment & Deployment	31
Taking action where a welfare concern emerges	19	Confidentiality, Data Storage & Information Sharing	32
<i>This section includes guidance on the following:</i>		Partnership Working - Community & Voluntary Organisations receiving Funding from SRBC, Contractors	33
Seeking Advice	15	Equality Impact Assessment & Monitoring	33
SRBC's Designated Safeguarding Officers	15	Appendices	
What if the DSOs are unavailable	15	1 – Safeguarding at SRBC- Quick Guide for Children & Young People	34-35
Immediate risk to life or limb	16	2 - Definitions of Child Abuse & Neglect	36
Referrals to Children's Services	16-18	3 - SRBC's Safeguarding Structure & Links: Strategic & Operational	37
Listening and managing disclosures	18-19	4- Safeguarding Jargon Explained & Links	38-39
Useful safeguarding contact numbers	20	5 - Exemplar Parental Consent & Conditions of Use Form	40-41
Children's Referral Form	22	6 – Visiting Officer's Code of Conduct	42-46

Part 1: SRBC Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

- 1.1 In partnership with other organisations, South Ribble Borough Council¹ delivers a range of services and activities for children, young people [and adults²], some of whom may be vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The Council's safeguarding responsibilities need to be understood and fulfilled in partnership with a range of agencies and professionals and this policy sets out the ways in which the Council and its representatives will work to keep children safe and promote their welfare.
- 1.2 Everyone employed³ by the Council has a responsibility to adhere to and implement this policy and to report suspected abuse or poor practice to the Officers and agencies identified within it. New employees will be required to sign a statement in the Induction Handbook to show that they have read, understood and will comply with this policy.
- 1.3 The Council's online Safeguarding Training module is mandatory for all employees (within two weeks of their appointment) and elected members of the Council; it is also integral to the Council's induction programme, including for volunteers. These commitments are detailed within the Council's 'Our People' Plan which is reviewed each year.
- 1.4 This policy sits alongside and should be implemented in conjunction with other Council policies and procedures. For example: Code(s) of Conduct (including Visiting Officers - **see Appendix 6**), Whistle-blowing, ICT Acceptable Use. This document will be reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance and best practice.

Definitions⁴

- 2.1 **Child(ren):** - Anyone who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday⁵. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders Institution, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.
- 2.2 **Parent:** The term is used generically and refers to parents, carers, guardians i.e. those with parental responsibility.
- 2.3 **Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare:** Is defined as:
- Protecting children from maltreatment;

¹ The Council

² The Council's Safeguarding Adults Policy will be finalised following consultation with the Lancashire Safeguarding Board

³ For the purpose of this policy the term 'employee' relates to any person paid or unpaid working with children and their families on behalf of the Council i.e. a representative of the council for example an Elected Member

⁴ See also Appendix 4 for key safeguarding terms and further information

⁵ 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout

- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Consequently, this policy takes account of and will be implemented in accordance with Lancashire's Continuum of Need and Thresholds Guidance⁶.

- 2.4 **Child Protection**: Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. Safeguarding children, and in particular protecting them from significant harm, depends on effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and areas of expertise.
- 2.5 **Child Abuse**: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)⁷ defines four categories of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. **(See Appendix 2)**. It is important to understand that these may occur alongside one another and are not mutually exclusive.
- 2.6 Everyone must also be aware of other forms of abuse, what to look for and what to do in the event that they suspect, are told about or witness it⁸. For example (and this list is not exhaustive)⁹:
- Complex (organised / multiple) Abuse
 - Honour-based violence (HBV) including Forced Marriage
 - Abuse linked to spiritual and religious beliefs
 - Child Abduction
 - Faith abuse
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Gender-based violence / violence against women and girls
 - Children who run away or go missing from home or care
 - Child Abuse and Disabled Children
 - Preventing radicalisation and extremism
 - Human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour¹⁰
 - Self-harm
 - Domestic abuse
 - Alcohol and substance misuse

⁶ http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/con_need_thresh_guid.pdf

⁷ **See Appendix 1** - a guide for Children and Young People; and / or: <http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20together%20to%20safeguard%20children.pdf>

⁸ Signs and potential indicators of abuse will always be included in safeguarding training for those working with children and families. Information can be accessed via the following links: http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_recog_significant_harm.html www.nspcc.org.uk/core-info

⁹ <http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html#specific>

¹⁰ Following the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the council has a duty to notify the Secretary of State about suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking. Where it is suspected that a child under the age of 18 years is, or may be a potential victim of modern day slavery, a safeguarding referral will be made to Children's Services and Police notified.

- Mental ill-health
- Child Abuse and Communication Technologies
- Children and Families who Go Missing
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)¹¹
- Children Living Away from Home (including Private Fostering¹²)
- Children affected by gang activity
- Abuse perpetrated by other children and young people

Principles which Underpin this Policy

- 3.1 There are a number of key principles which underpin this Policy. First, the safety of children is paramount in all decisions relating to their welfare. Any action taken by staff should ensure that no child is left in immediate danger. When considering whether immediate action is required to protect a child, all agencies should also consider:
- whether action is required to safeguard and protect the welfare of any other children in the same household, or related to the household;
 - the household of an alleged perpetrator; or
 - elsewhere e.g. a work environment.
- The law empowers anyone who has care of a child to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard her/his welfare.
- 3.2 Effective safeguarding requires clear local arrangements for collaboration between professionals and agencies. 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. In order that organisations and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that everyone is aware of the role that they have to play and the role of other professionals.
- 3.3 The Council is fully committed to these principles and expects all of its employees to share and display the same level of commitment *in practice*. Briefly:
- Safeguarding is and will remain a priority for everyone across South Ribble Borough Council, strategically and operationally;
 - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
 - The welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance and will be our primary consideration at all times.

The Council and the Broader Safeguarding Agenda

- 4.1 This policy, and the accompanying procedures, take account of and are consistent with key legislation, alongside national and local guidance. For example (and this list is by no means exhaustive):
- The Children Act 1989
The Children Act 2004

¹¹ [http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/cse_proto.pdf#search="cse"](http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/cse_proto.pdf#search=)

¹² <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/private-fostering.aspx>

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015¹³
Lancashire Safeguarding Children Procedures¹⁴.

- 4.2 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote cooperation between the authority, each of the authority's relevant partners and such other persons or bodies who exercise functions or are engaged in activities in relation to children in the local authority's area as the authority considers appropriate. The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority's area – which includes protection from harm and neglect alongside other outcomes.
- 4.3 Section 11 of the 2004 Act places duties on a range of organisations and individuals, including councils, to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. - whatever their age, culture, gender, disability, language, racial origin, religious background, sexual identity or circumstance. This policy is a clear statement of the Council's commitment.
- 4.4 The essentiality of the Council's clear and robust links with, membership of and contributions to forums such as South Ribble Children's Partnership Board / Lancashire Children and Young People's Trust, South Ribble Community Safety Partnership and Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board cannot be overstated. It is as a well-informed partner within local multi-agency networks that the Council is best placed to adopt a robust, strategic and preventative approach to safeguarding children and young people.
- 4.5 The diagram at **Appendix 2** demonstrates the ways in which the Council links with and contributes to key, multi-agency forums and processes at both strategic and operational levels
- 4.6 There are a number of pieces of legislation, local and national processes and protocols with which the council engages in order to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities.
- 4.7 **PREVENT**¹⁵
The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act came into force on 1 July 2015. It places duties on certain bodies to have due regards to the need to safeguard and PREVENT people from being drawn into terrorism. This includes South Ribble Borough Council which has produced an action plan to ensure that it

¹³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Tgether_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

Version for children and young people:

<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20together%20to%20safeguard%20children.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/>

¹⁵https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

meets the relevant requirements.

4.8 Lancashire's Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) provides key information which helps to inform and develop understanding between partner agencies and informs the strategy across the county.

4.9 **Workshops to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP)**
Existing and new frontline council officers are expected to attend WRAP training and sessions are delivered periodically throughout the year¹⁶.

4.10 **Channel**
The term 'Channel'¹⁷ or 'Channel Programme' refers to a multi-agency process which aims to draw vulnerable individuals away from extremism before they become involved in criminal activity; its effectiveness relies heavily upon information sharing between agencies.

4.11 Channel provides a mechanism for :
(i) Identifying individuals who may be at risk of / vulnerable to being drawn into extremism;
(ii) Assessing the nature and extent of any risk; and, where necessary
(iii) Referring cases to a multi-agency Panel which decides on the most appropriate package of support to divert and support the individual at risk.

4.12 The panel consists of partner agencies such as the police, local authorities, children's social care, probation, education, youth offending teams, The UK Border Agency and community and voluntary services. Involvement in the Channel Programme is voluntary and it is the choice of individuals as to whether they engage. It should also be clear that Channel is not about stigmatising or prosecuting individuals; its primary focuses are diversionary and supportive, via the provision of education and mentoring.

4.13 Where concerns are raised in this context, the council will implement this procedure and a referral will be made to the Channel Panel in Lancashire¹⁸. Advice may also be sought from Lancashire Police:

Police Engagement Officers (South, West and North Lancashire)

01772 209830 / 01772 209733 / 01772 209822 / 01772 209689

Lancashire's Channel Co-ordinator: 01772413029

Prevent / Channel referrals: Concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

4.14 **MAPPA**

¹⁶ WRAP 2 training has been completed and the Council is equipped to deliver WRAP3 across the organisation.

¹⁷https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf

¹⁸http://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_violent_extremism.html#understanding_radical

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are designed to protect the public from serious harm by sexual and violent offenders¹⁹. MAPPA is not a statutory body but is a mechanism through which agencies can enhance and discharge their statutory responsibilities and protect the public in a co-ordinated manner. The council recognises its duty to cooperate with responsible authorities on particular aspects of offender management, including risks posed to and by offenders.

4.15 **MARAC**

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC²⁰) are confidential meetings which are convened to discuss how to help and protect victims at high risk of murder or serious harm. MARACs have four aims:

- (i) To safeguard adult victims
- (ii) To address the behaviour of perpetrators
- (iii) To safeguard professionals
- (iv) To link into other, related safeguarding processes e.g. those pertaining to child protection

The process facilitates the sharing of key information for these purposes, which will then shape and inform appropriate action plans

4.16 MARACs are attended by representatives from various agencies including children's services and the police. Occasionally representatives of the council may be required to attend and contribute to a MARAC

4.17 **Asylum Resettlement**

The Council has committed to integrate five Syrian refugee families into the borough as part of the Government's resettlement programme (2016-21). Lancashire County Council is the lead authority working with the 14 other local authorities, and will coordinate the work in accordance with an agreed strategy and delivery model.

4.18 These examples are by no means exhaustive but should help to make clear the breadth of the council's responsibilities and the depth of its commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare.

The Council's Safeguarding Commitment

5.1 To fulfil its commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, the Council will ensure that:

- Safeguarding is prioritised and that this is made explicit in key policy documents and commissioning strategies, in accordance with guidance from the local authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures i.e.

¹⁹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/406117/MAPPA_guidance_2012_part1_v4_Feb_2015.pdf

²⁰http://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_domestic_violence_abuse.html?zoom_highlight=MARAC#intro

- including arrangements for sharing information²¹;
- There are clear line of accountability and governance within and across the organisation;
- Elected Members and Senior Officers display a strong commitment to the implementation of robust and effective safeguarding policies, procedures and practice in order to drive and maintain a safer organisational culture;
- Close links are maintained with the LSCB and section 11 audits are completed on request;
- Promoting a 'Dedicated Safeguarding Week' in October each year, during which Safeguarding Champions (see para. 6.11) and managers promote safeguarding across the organisation by:
 - Ensuring its continued high profile;
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are clear and accessible for everyone. It promotes children's welfare through both the commissioning and the provision of services i.e. by ensuring that human resources policies and procedures, including contractual arrangements, are robust and that they take full account of relevant statute and guidance vis-à-vis vetting, barring and licensing requirements;
- It listens to and engages in meaningful dialogue with children and service users, seeking their views in ways appropriate to their age and understanding, and takes account of those both in individual decisions and the establishment or development and improvement of services;
- Safeguarding is integral to induction for all officers, elected members and volunteers;
- Employees undertake mandatory safeguarding training within two weeks of being appointed. Where relevant, they will also be required to attend additional training appropriate to their role and responsibilities which this is refreshed at appropriate intervals / in-line with LSCB recommendations;
- Expectations are clear and codes of conduct are in place for employees, volunteers and contractors - which will foster best and safer practice;
- There are clear and robust procedures in place for whistle-blowing and dealing with complaints alongside any concerns about the conduct of adults working with children;
- There are clear procedures in place in respect of the management of any allegations against employees, including sources of advice and support for them;
- Employees have a clear understanding of how to work together to help keep children and young people safe online / when using technology.

5.2 Minimally, therefore, the Council will ensure that all employees and representatives, including volunteers, know:

- How to identify where there may be a problem or safeguarding / child protection issue;
- Where to obtain appropriate advice when they have a concern;
- How to record, manage and, where appropriate, share sensitive

²¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

- information for the purpose of safeguarding children and young people;
- Refer concerns to relevant agencies;
 - Conduct themselves in a way which, because of its inherent consistency, transparency and professionalism, safeguards individuals and the organisation alike.

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities within and across the Council

- 6.1 Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. No individual within the Council has an investigative role where child abuse or neglect is alleged or suspected; this is the responsibility of the Police and Lancashire County Council's Children's Services.

Chief Executive

- 6.2 The Council's Chief Executive takes ultimate responsibility for safeguarding arrangements across the organisation, acting as a driving-force and a key conduit between strategy and operation, policy, procedure and practice.

Elected Members

- 6.3 All Members of the Council have a strategic role and should satisfy themselves that the Council as a whole is discharging its statutory responsibilities and demonstrates good practice wherever possible. It is essential that safeguarding and child protection is prioritised and adequately resourced. All elected Members have a responsibility in this regard.
- 6.4 There are two simple questions which anyone involved in the governance and / or scrutiny of safeguarding should consider:
- (i) Are children and young people accessing services delivered and / or commissioned by us safe, physically and emotionally?**
 - ii) How do we know this?**
- 6.5 The Cabinet and Members of some Committees have additional and specific responsibilities. For example, those responsible for licensing, governance and scrutiny have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the central tenets of this [and related] policy and procedures are embedded and implemented *in practice* i.e. by seeking assurances that requisite checks are undertaken and up-to-date and that information sharing occurs in that context, in-line with [inter-agency] safeguarding protocols and procedures.
- 6.6 Safeguarding training for Members will be refreshed and updated on a regular basis, either via Learning Hour sessions / online or face-to-face training.
- 6.7 Members with more specific, safeguarding-related responsibilities e.g. for licensing will receive training appropriate to their role. (This has been commissioned via Lancashire Constabulary and the Safeguarding Children Board. Similarly, training on the specific issue of taxi licensing will also be delivered to Members).
- 6.8 If a Member has any information which raises concerns about harm or potential harm to any child, a child protection referral should be made

immediately in-line with this Policy. If a Member has concerns about immediate danger needing an emergency response or thinks a crime is being committed the police should be contacted.

Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) within the Council

6.9 South Ribble Borough Council has in place two safeguarding Lead Officers; these are senior officers who are responsible for key aspects of safeguarding policy and practice within and across the organisation.

i) **DSO1: The Director of Development, Enterprise and Communities**

Will act as a strategic and operational decision maker for the Council on safeguarding children issues, both internally and externally by:

- Acting as a key organisational contact internally i.e. for directorate Safeguarding / Child Protection Leads and Council employees per se;
- Liaising with LCC Children's Services and other organisations as required e.g. Police;
- Promoting safeguarding and child protection throughout the Council in conjunction with Directors and Elected Members;
- Ensuring that this Policy is disseminated and embedded across the Council and that it is reviewed and updated regularly;
- Representing South Ribble Borough Council on relevant local groups;
- Maintaining a level of up-to-date knowledge and training commensurate with the role and responsibilities.

ii) **DSO2: The Head of Human Resources**

Will deputise for and support DSO1 (above) and:

- Provide an additional point of contact for directorate Safeguarding Champions and Council employees;
- Report incidents to and/or act as a point of contact with other external agencies and professionals;
- Ensure that all employees are aware of safer working practice guidance and related policies and procedures, including whistle-blowing and the management of allegations;
- Ensure that the Council's recruitment and selection processes are consistent and robust in-line with best [safeguarding] practice, national guidance and legal requirements. For example,
 - in respect of DBS and barred list checks and re-checks as appropriate, including the maintenance of *appropriate* records in respect of such checks in-line with the relevant statute and guidance;
 - ensuring that the Council's policy on seeking and providing references is suitably specific and robust vis-à-vis suitability;
- Ensure that the Corporate Training Programme affords employees access to appropriate, high quality safeguarding training commensurate with their role and responsibilities.

Directors & Heads of Service

6.10 Are responsible for:

- Nominate and name a lead Safeguarding Champion who will act as a point

- of contact within their directorate / service area for information on SRBC safeguarding processes;
- Regularly review posts regarding the need for a DBS check and liaise with the Head of Human Resources where any uncertainty remains or advice is required.

Directorate Safeguarding Champions

6.11 Are responsible for:

- Acting as an ambassador on all safeguarding matters within their service area;
- Attending and participating in quarterly Safeguarding Champions Meetings;
- Keeping abreast of safeguarding issues and developments in order to disseminate across and update their service area;
- Undertaking appropriate safeguarding training in order to keep up-to-date;
- Ensuring that safeguarding is integral to team briefings and meetings within their service area.

Line Managers

6.12 Are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all of their employees are aware of, understand and know how to apply this policy, procedures and related guidance *in practice*;
- Ensuring that employees have access to safeguarding training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities which is refreshed at appropriate intervals in-line with LSCB guidance;
- Ensure that any contractors, agents or other representatives engaged and/or commissioned by them to undertake duties on behalf of the Council which involves or may involve contact with children understand and comply with this policy /procedures and any additional protocols or guidance relevant to their role;
- Ensure that no employee has significant unsupervised access to children pending receipt of satisfactory checks at the appropriate level;
- Ensure that all employees adhere to the Council's Code(s) of Conduct and guidance on safer and appropriate practice;
- Ensure that only employees who have been checked at the appropriate level have significant, unsupervised access to children;
- Take all practicable steps to minimise the scope for avoidable lone-working with children by any of their staff;
- Complete a risk assessment for each post prior to advertising a vacancy i.e. to determine the likelihood of the post holder working with children and, as appropriate, refer to the Work Experience Guidance for Managers;
- Ensuring that Work Experience Guidance for Managers is referred to before placements are agreed

All Employees

6.13 It is the responsibility of *all* Council employees, in consultation with their Line Manager, to ensure that:

- They have access to, have read and understand this policy and related

- procedures; it must be implemented at *all* times;
- Undertake and refresh safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities;
 - They do not compromise themselves or the Council by engaging in activity with children without a satisfactory DBS check;
 - They have access to and are familiar with this policy and related guidance vis-à-vis best / safe practice and codes of conduct;
 - Moreover, they understand and accept the responsibility to challenge and report poor and/or inappropriate practice;
 - They understand and are clear about the Council's procedures for reporting concerns about children's welfare e.g. listening to children and dealing with 'disclosures', recording and reporting, key personnel / sources of advice and support / key points of contact intra and inter-organizationally;
 - They understand and are clear about the respective procedures for handling complaints, whistle-blowing, raising concerns about the conduct of an adult and the management of allegations.

Visiting Officers

6.14 Obviously, the responsibilities applicable to employees includes Visiting Officers. In addition, they must also ensure that they are familiar and comply with the code of conduct pertaining to visits. **(See Appendix 6)**

Volunteers

6.15 The Council really values the contributions of those who help us to deliver services and activities by giving their time and sharing their experience and expertise freely. The Council will ensure that:

- Volunteers are recruited safely;
- Information sessions for volunteers always include core safeguarding information and guidance;
- Officers present at and responsible for particular activities and / or events understand and fulfil their responsibilities in terms of briefing volunteers on safeguarding and related matters prior to their active participation.

Part 2: SRBC Safeguarding Children Procedures

Introduction

- 7.1 Any and all concerns, allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse must be treated seriously and handled sensitively; the best interests of children must be the paramount consideration at all times. Everyone has a responsibility to take appropriate action and to adhere to these procedures in circumstances where concerns emerge about a child's welfare; doing nothing is never an option.
- 7.2 Employees or representatives of the Council may become aware of the possibility of abuse in various ways. They might:
- See the abuse happening;
 - Suspect or have concerns about the possibility because of potential indicators; or
 - Have concerns reported to them by a third party.
- 7.3 No one within the Council has an investigative role insofar as suspected abuse or neglect is concerned; that is a matter for the Police and Children's Services.
- 7.4 It is *not* the responsibility of a Council representative to decide whether, or to prove or disprove, a child is being abused. It *is, however*, their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them accurately and quickly to the relevant Officer / agency in line with this policy and LSCB procedures and protocols. (This applies to concerns about any child, not just those with whom employees come into direct contact).
- 7.5 If you have information which raises concerns about harm or potential harm to any child, a child protection referral should be made immediately in-line with this Policy. If you have concerns about immediate danger, need an emergency response or think a crime is being or has been committed, the police should be contacted and, where relevant, a child protection referral made to children's services.

Taking Action Where a Child Welfare or Protection Concern Emerges²²

- 8.1 Where a welfare or protection concern emerges about a child, employees must complete **Children's Social Care Referral Form**-see page 22. This must be forwarded to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or DSO2 in their absence) as soon as possible and always within 72 hours.

²² http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/con_need_thresh_guid.pdf

Seeking Advice – 'lower level' concerns: The Role of Line Managers and Safeguarding Champions

- 8.2 Employees should consult a manager about worries or what appear to be 'less serious' welfare concerns i.e. where you have a 'niggle' or 'gut feeling' about something.
- 8.3 In addition, each Directorate / service area has a **safeguarding champion** for safeguarding children; this is the point of contact where employees need further information on SRBC safeguarding processes that is also available on the intranet and in the policy.

SRBC Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)

- 8.4 The Council's has nominated two Designated Safeguarding Officers who will:
- Act as sources of advice and support for Safeguarding Champions, and all employees where the manager is unavailable, where concerns emerge about a child's welfare / protection. It will be the LOs who make referrals to other agencies, as appropriate. However, when they are not available this responsibility falls to the managers or employee.²³
 - Ensure that timely, high quality information is made available to the relevant [investigative] agencies in circumstances where referrals need to be made;
 - Follow-up referrals in order to establish next steps / outcomes as appropriate;
 - Maintain, monitor and review Council incident reports and referrals to ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures are being adhered to and that they are effective

South Ribble Borough Council's DSOs are:

DSO1: Denise Johnson 01772 625 558

Deputy / DSO2: Steve Nugent 01772 625 261

What if the DSOs are Unavailable?

- 8.5 In the event that the SRBC DSOs are unavailable, for whatever reason, employees will need to exercise their professional judgement as to the nature, significance and immediacy of any risk to a child and act accordingly; again, this should happen in consultation with a Manager wherever possible.

²³ Again, 'employee' refers to anyone engaging in work on behalf of the Council, paid or unpaid

Immediate Risk to Life or Limb

- 8.6 Where there is immediate and serious risk to a child and / or where a crime may have been committed you should contact Police - see page 20 for contact numbers. A child protection / section 47 referral should also be made to Children's Services and it is important to establish who is doing this and to check that it has happened.

How to Make a Child Protection / Section 47 Referral to Children's Services²⁴

- 9.1 The referral should be made to Children's Services in the **area where the child usually resides**²⁵- see contacts on page 20
- 9.2 For child protection / Section 47 referrals, the referral is made by telephone. A Children's Services Referral Form²⁶ should then be forwarded as soon as possible and within 48 hours maximum. In Lancashire the form should be sent to: cypreferrals@lancashire.gov.uk
- 9.3 *If in doubt you should refer!* Don't worry unduly about the process at this stage! What is important is that the right information is shared with the right agencies and professionals in order to safeguard a child.
- 9.4 If you have time, make a record of your concerns using Children's Social Care Referral Form - page 22 – this includes some prompts to help you record the most important information – and any action you have taken (This is clearly explained on the Form itself). Have the form or any key information you have noted to hand as this should help to ensure that you don't forget to pass on anything that is really important.
- 9.5 Council employees making referrals should dial the appropriate number above:
- State who they are, where they are from (role / job title) and that they are calling to make a child protection referral;
 - Establish who (job title) they are speaking to;
 - Clarify the process for sharing any written information / records;
 - Clarify what if any further action needs to be taken, when and by whom;

What Information Should be Provided by the Referrer?

- 9.6 You should provide as much of the following information as is available **(if you don't have it just provide as much as you can)**:
- Full name, date of birth and gender of child/ren;
 - Full family address and any known previous addresses;

²⁴ http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_referral_social_care.html

²⁵ National contact numbers for Children's Services in different areas can be found by entering a child / family's postcode at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

²⁶ <http://www.lancashirechildrenstrust.org.uk/web/viewdoc.aspx?id=117022>

- Identity of those with parental responsibility;
- Names, date of birth and information about all household members, including any other children in the family, and significant people who live outside the child's household;
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents / carers;
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid;
- Any special needs of the child/ren;
- Any significant / important recent or historical events / incidents in the child or family's life;
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location, identity and current whereabouts of the suspected alleged perpetrator;
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition;
- Whether the child is currently safe or is in need of immediate protection - in which case you would contact the Police;
- Child's account and the parent's' response to the concerns if known;
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of the child and parents / carers;
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies / professionals information about parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral.

9.7 Having made the referral, make a clear and concise record of the conversation and notify SRBC's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Deputy as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Provide them with the record of the conversation as outlined above and a copy of Children's Social Care Referral Form.

9.8 You may be asked or think it a good idea to forward Form CP1 as part of any referral. If you do this you must make a copy of the form and ensure that it is retained for SRBC's records. In any event, [a copy of] the completed Children's Social Care Referral Form must be forwarded to the SRBC DSO(s) within 24-72 hours²⁷

What if no one listens or takes any action and I am still worried?

- 9.9 If you report a concern about a child's welfare and no one listens or is doing anything you should tell someone else! You may choose to:
- Report the matter to another senior SRBC officer / manager immediately;
 - Implement the Council's whistle-blowing procedure;
 - Contact an external agency - see contacts at page 19.
 - Remember, doing nothing is not an option and the welfare of a

²⁷ 72 hours being the maximum i.e. where a referral is made on a Friday evening the LOs will be available and need the form first thing on Monday morning, latest

child must always be your paramount consideration!

Discussing Child Protection Concerns & Referrals with Parents

- 9.10 The consent of a parent or carer is not required in order to make a child protection referral. Under most circumstances parents should be *informed* that the Council has a duty to refer to Children's Services under certain circumstances.
- 9.11 Parents must **not** be informed where to do so might increase the risk of harm or impede an enquiry / investigation e.g. possible sexual abuse within the family, Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII), Honour-based Violence.

What happens Next?

- 10.1 Children's Services have up to 24 hours to decide what, if any, action to take following a referral. In the first instance, they should check existing and, if necessary, gather further information upon which to base their decision. Options and strategic issues will frequently be discussed with colleagues from other agencies i.e. Police - this may take the form of a face-to-face meeting in some, more complex cases.
- 10.2 Response options (this list isn't exhaustive) also include:
- Taking no further action;
 - Signposting to and/or co-ordinating support services;
 - Initiate child protection (Section 47) enquiries;
 - Undertake an assessment of the child and/or family's needs and circumstances;
 - Convene a Child Protection Conference.
- 10.3 Children's Social Care should decide on a course of action. They should acknowledge receipt of a referral and the decision made of the response to be taken within **ONE** working day. If the referrer has not received an acknowledgement within **THREE** working days they should make contact with the relevant manager in the Children's Social Care Team to ensure the referring agency records are updated with the outcome of the referral.

Listening to Children and Dealing with 'Disclosures'

- 11.1 Asking inappropriate questions, conducting quasi-interviews and/or investigations and/or trying to 'diagnose' injuries on children might result, albeit unintentionally, in increased risk of harm. Moreover, child protection and, in some cases, criminal justice processes may be impeded and crucial evidence 'contaminated'; this must be avoided.
- 11.2 There are a series of simple ground-rules to follow in circumstances where a child tells an adult about [possible or suspected] abuse:
- Remember that this is about *listening* (as opposed to interviewing,

investigating or interrogating)

- Do not make [false] promises to the child about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets'²⁸
- If you have to *clarify* information then use minimal prompts wherever possible e.g. go on, tell me more about that, what happened next ...
- If you *must* ask questions in order to clarify a particular fact then closed questions - i.e. those which illicit yes or no answers – should be absolutely avoided wherever possible as these can be construed as 'leading'
- Avoid displays of shock, anger, disgust etc and expressing opinions about what might have happened, those involved etc as this may act as barriers to a child who has something extremely frightening, confusing and difficult to say. The key is to *respond* to the child as opposed to reacting to what they say.
- Make sure that any immediate risks are understood and taken account of insofar as that is possible i.e. that the child is safe there and then (**Where there is immediate risk Police should be contacted** – this may occur following consultation with one of the Council's Lead Officers, depending on particular circumstances);
- Reassure the child and make clear to them what you need to do now.

Making a Record of a Concern or Following a 'Disclosure'

- 11.3 You should be mindful that records pertaining to suspicions or allegations of abuse may be accessed by various people, including parents and other professionals, under certain circumstances and that they may also be integral to criminal investigations and / or legal proceedings in some cases.
- 11.4 If you receive information which indicates that a child has been, is being or may be abused it is essential to focus on and accurately record the *facts* as you understand them i.e. who, what, when, where? Times, dates, places and people are important to record.
- 11.5 When quoting what someone has said directly you must do so using **their** words. If you are going to quote then record what exactly was said using the language that the person used e.g. *do not* apply what seem to be reasonable adult equivalents to children's words or present an interpretation as a fact.

Useful Safeguarding Contacts

²⁸ Do not interrupt a young person or make a statement about sharing information immediately that they begin to speak; this puts barriers in the way and actively stops children from talking to us about abuse. If they ask you to keep a 'secret' explain why that isn't possible. Alternatively, explain what you need to do now once they have told you what they needed to. Children, especially those who are older, often realise that you will need to pass the information on.

SRBC Designated Safeguarding Officers

Denise Johnson 01772 625 558
Steve Nugent 01772 625 261

Children's Services

Lancashire 0300 123 6720 (8am – 8pm)
Out of Hours / Emergency Duty Team 0300 123 6722
Blackburn-with-Darwen 01254 666 400
Out of Hours / Emergency Duty Team 01254 587 547
Blackpool (24 hrs) 01253 477 299 (24 hrs)

Police Public Protection Units

Preston 01772 209688 / 209682
Blackpool 01253 404080 / 404099
Accrington (inc.B-w-D) 01254 353082 / 353077
Lancaster 01524 596758 / 496764
Ormskirk / W. Lancs 01695 466335
Outside office hours (all areas) 0845 125 3545

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - Allegations Management)

Tim Booth 01772 536694
Tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk

Child Sexual Exploitation

Operation Deter (Preston, Chorley, South Ribble, West Lancs) 01772 209 122

Radicalisation & Extremism PREVENT & Channel

Police Engagement Officers (South, West and North Lancs) 01772 209830 / 01772 209733 /
01772 209822 / 01772 209689

Lancashire's Channel Co-ordinator 01772413029
Concern@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

Anti-terrorism hotline 0800 789 321

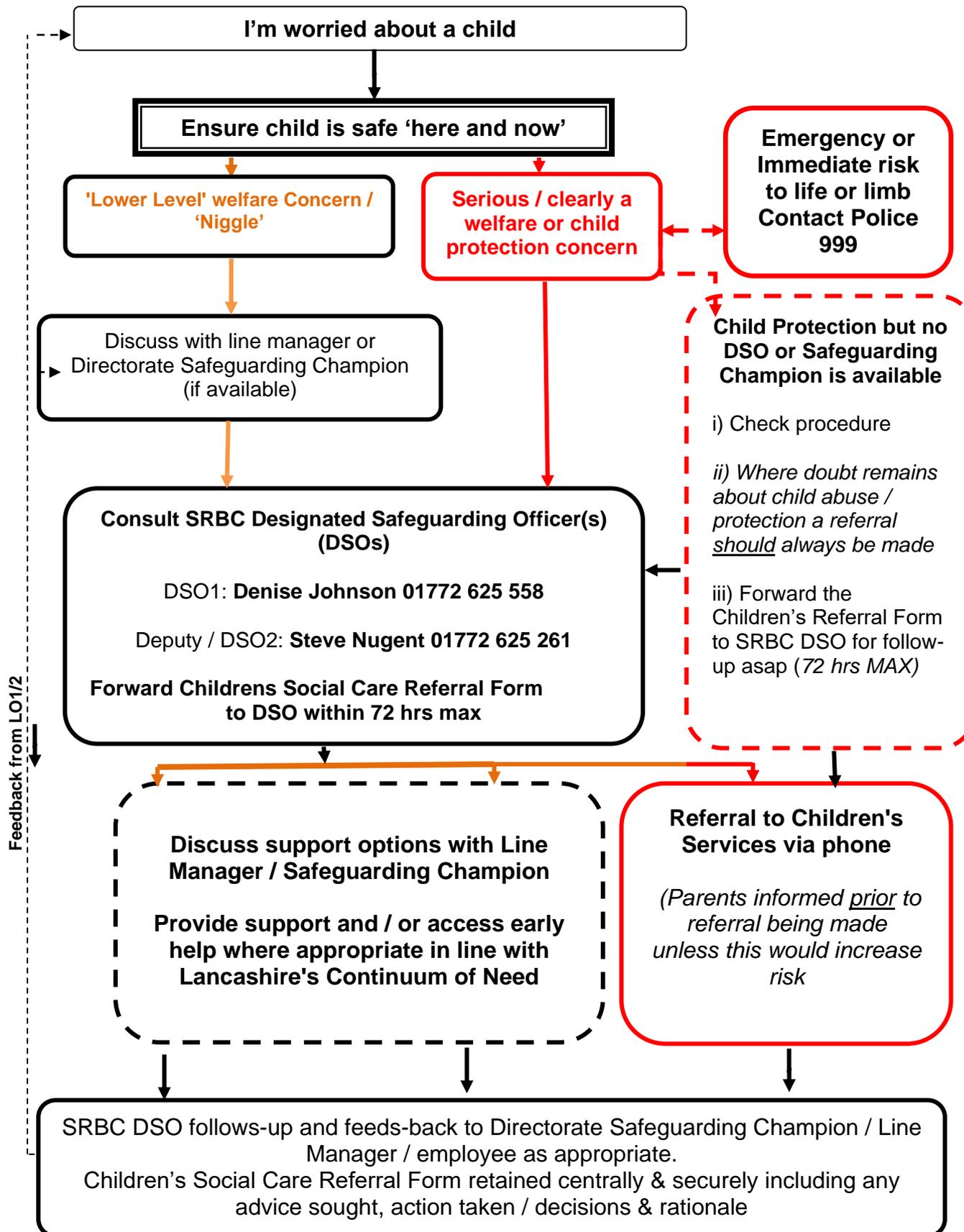
ChildLine 0800 11 11 0800 11 11

NSPCC Confidential Helpline 0808 800 5000

Domestic Abuse National Helpline 0808 2000 247

Lancashire County Council Confidential Helpline 01772 53 25 00

Taking Action Flowchart



****Unless to inform parents would increase risk of harm or might impede an investigation***

Please refer to the practice guidance.

Please complete this form as fully as possible.

However, do not delay the referral in a situation where this may place the child at further risk.

Please type this form or ensure it is written legibly i.e. printed.

Referral to : Lancashire Children's Social Care									
Date of Referral				Time of Referral					
Details of Child(ren)									
Child(ren) name				DOB		Age		Unborn Y/N	
Gender M/F				Disability [if known please specify]					
Ethnicity			Language			Is an interpreter needed? Y/N			
Address									
Postcode				Tel No					
Name of child(ren) primary carer/s				Relationship				Parental Responsibility Y/N	
School/Nursery/College attended:									
Child(ren)GP				Tel No					
Family Composition/Significant Others									

Name	DOB	Relationship	School	Parental Responsibility Y/N

Reason for referral

State the key areas of concern about risk of harm or neglect

List the actions taken or support provided so far e.g. Assessments

What are you requesting from children's services social care *[See guidance notes re services available]*

Child/Family View of the referral including professional discretion/reasons for refusal

Child/Young Persons Health and Developmental key points to note

Consider all aspects of child/young persons social, emotional, health and well being

Parenting capacity

Issues affecting parent/carers capacity to respond appropriately to child/young person's needs; consider basic care, ensuring safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, provision of guidance and boundaries and stability.

Family and Environmental Factors

Consider the extended family, housing, employment, the family's social integration and the availability of community resources to provide support.

Is the child aware of the referral?	Yes		No	
Are the parents/ carers aware of the referrals?	Yes		No (State reason why	
Have they given permission for the referral?	Yes		No	

Has a CAF or any other assessment been completed on this child/young person?

Yes [By your agency]	
Yes [by another agency give name of lead professional]	
No [Give reasons why not]	
Not known	

Attach CAF/CAF pre assessment checklist or any other assessment if available

Other agencies/provision involved e.g. EY&P, YOS, Adult Services if known

Name of Organisation and Profession	Contact Details: Address/ Telephone No/ Email Address	Brief description of work undertaken to support child/young person

Referral from:

Name	
Job title	
Agency	
Address	
Tel	
Email	
Feedback to referrer	Undertaken Y / N

Part 3: Concerns About an Adult's Conduct

/ Managing Allegations

Introduction

- 12.1 Adherence to this policy and procedures will serve to safeguard employees and children they come into contact with alike.
- 12.2. The Council recognizes that it has a duty of care to its employees. Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any behaviour which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions; they should conduct themselves - and be seen to conduct themselves - in a way which is professional, consistent and transparent at all times.
- 12.3 These same principles and professional standards should always underpin practice with children and families, 'regardless' of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity i.e. all employees and representatives are responsible for their conduct and practice. All children and families have a right to receive services that are delivered courteously, sensitively and professionally at all times.

Safer Working Practices

- 13.1 In order to protect children and young people, themselves and the reputation and good name of the Council, *all* employees should have regard to the following overarching guidance *at all times*:
- 13.2 **All** employees must **always**:
- Be professional, consistent and transparent - and be seen to be - when working with children i.e. avoid 1-1 situations and lone working wherever possible²⁹;
 - Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity at all times;
 - Be an excellent role model i.e. always remember that you are an *adult* and a *professional* and conduct yourself accordingly;
 - Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children e.g. by affording them opportunities to learn and develop in ways that are as safe as possible, fair and inclusive;
 - Give constructive and enthusiastic as opposed to negative feedback or criticism.
 - Always respect people's right to personal space and not to be touched³⁰.
 - Record and report any accident or incident that occurs which results in misinterpretation, a worrying response or in a child being

²⁹ In any Council work situation where children and young people are present there should be at least two members of Council staff. However, you should consult with / report to, a line manager in emergencies i.e. where this occurs in an emergency due to unforeseen circumstances

³⁰ However, an absolute 'no touch' approach is unrealistic and fails, potentially, to safeguard children and adults alike.

hurt or becoming distressed to parents (*unless* the parents are implicated and this gives rise to child protection concerns) and their line manager; this must happen as soon as possible. (The line manager will discuss the matter and provide the relevant information to SRBC Designated Safeguarding Officer).

13.3 **Physical Contact with children** - will / may be necessary under certain circumstances e.g. consoling, assisting, sports coaching etc. The basic rules of thumb where physical contact is concerned are:

- Be transparent i.e. if you must touch do it openly, in public
- Physical contact should be a last resort and as brief as possible
- It should always be a response to the [expressed] needs of a child / children, not yours, and tailored to meet them in terms of age, gender, culture
- It should always be with the individual's permission

13.4 **Help with Intimate Care** - there may be circumstances under which children need assistance with intimate care and related matters e.g. when working with very young and/or disabled children. There are some basic ground-rules which must be adhered to:

- Always help and encourage children to do what they can for themselves (as opposed to 'automatically' doing it for them. This avoids unnecessary touch and also promotes independence)
- Risk assessments must be undertaken and parental agreement and consent obtained prior to the commencement of an activity or session where this is likely or known to be an issue

Two members of staff must be present at all times when help with intimate care is required

13.5 **Guidelines for Use of Photographic Equipment at Organised Events - including Mobile Phone technology³¹** - There is evidence that some people have used public events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film-footage of children. All employees organising events where children will be participating must remain vigilant and ensure that the following guidelines are adhered to. The guidelines apply to all forms of technology that can be used to record images - including mobile phones, many of which now include digital cameras.

13.6 When using an external venue, SRBC employees / facilitators should check the venue's policy on the use of photographic equipment e.g. a leisure centre may not allow the use of filming equipment in the changing rooms or swimming pool areas.

13.7 If a professional photographer is engaged / present - the media representatives are often invited to cover services, events and other activities - the event organiser must:

³¹ See Appendix 5 - exemplar consent and conditions of use form

- Inform participants and parents that a photographer will be in attendance
- Ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs by asking them to complete a consent form;
- Ensure that the photographer is provided with / has and clearly displays their identification at the event
- Ensure that the photographer has no unsupervised access to children;
- Ensure that the last names of children are not used in photographs or film; footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

13.8 It is impossible to regulate the use of photographic equipment at open public events but the following additional procedures should be considered by the event organiser and adopted where practical:

- **Professional photographers** wishing to record the event should seek accreditation with the event organiser by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. Ideally they should request this at least five working days before the event
- **Students or amateur photographers** wishing to record the event should seek accreditation³² with the event organiser by producing their student club or registration card and a letter from their club / educational establishment outlining their motive for attending the event
- **All other spectators** wishing to use photographic equipment should register their intent with the promoter of the event

Public Information

13.9 Specific details concerning photographic equipment should, where possible, be published prominently in event programmes and must be announced over the public address system prior to the start of the event. The recommended wording is:

“In the interests of safeguarding children and in line with the South Ribble Borough Council Child and Young Person Protection Policy, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any photography should register their details with the event staff at the entry desk before carrying out any such photography. The promoters of this event reserve the right of entry to this event and reserves the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the promoter’s conditions.”

13.10 If you are concerned about any photography taking place at an event, contact the promoter or event organiser and discuss it with them. If appropriate, the person about whom there are concerns should be asked to leave and the facility manager informed. **(See Taking Action Flow Chart on page 21 of this document)**

13.11 The Council will take all incidents of poor practice and allegations or suspicions of abuse seriously and these will be responded to swiftly

³² **Accreditation procedure:** a record should be made of the individual's name and address and club. Professionals should register prior to the event and their identification details should be checked with the issuing authority prior to the event. On registering, promoters of events should consider issuing an identification label on the day, which can serve to highlight those who have accreditation but must ensure that where regular events occur, the identifying label is changed to prevent unofficial replication.

and appropriately in line with relevant policies and procedures i.e. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), Lancashire's Safeguarding Children Procedures and the Council's Disciplinary procedures.

Conduct Concerns and Whistle-Blowing

- 14.1 Employees who have a genuine concern should normally raise this with their Director/Head of Service, without fear of victimisation.

Employees who raise concerns or who are the subject of an investigation can assess confidential counseling via Human Resources.

- 14.2 Externally, Lancashire County Council operates a confidential helpline - see page 18 for details

Managing Allegations (See Flowchart on page 30)

- 14.3 For the purposes of this policy and procedure, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and the LSCB Procedures, an allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- 14.4 Every Local Authority has in place a LADO whose role involves³³:
- The management and oversight of individual [allegations] cases in circumstances where allegations arise, at their outset and throughout management and investigative processes;
 - Providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations;
 - Liaising with the police and other agencies;
 - Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process

Action in the Event of an Allegation

- 14.5 In the event of an allegation being made against a Council employee the matter will be reported to the Lead Officer or Deputy Lead Officer without delay. The Lead / Deputy Officer(s) will inform and liaise with the relevant Director in order to make them aware of the allegation and to notify them of next steps
- 14.6 If the Lead Officer / Deputy Lead Officer are both unavailable, the matter should be reported to Human Resources
- 14.7 Liaise with the LADO in order to establish and clarify :
- Whether the allegations threshold is met;
 - Any immediate risk management issues

³³ <http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/lado.pdf>

- What next steps need to be taken by the Council, including the need to make and process for making any onward referrals e.g. to Police and Children's Services
- What information can be shared with the subject / employee and other relevant parties;
- Any added dimensions e.g. potential media interest.

14.8 Procedures need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to children's social care and the police for investigation. Others may be much less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by children's social care. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up, and that they are examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned. Consequently, the LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to the attention of managers. The LADO should also be informed of any allegations that are made directly to the police or to Children's Services.

Suspension

- 14.9 The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person needs to be effectively evaluated and managed – in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations, and any other children in the individual's home, work or community life. In some cases, that will require the employer to consider suspending the person.
- 14.10 Suspension should be considered in any case where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.
- 14.11 Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction and should never be an automatic response to an allegation; alternatives to it must be carefully considered prior to a decision to suspend being taken. Consideration will be given as to whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children until the allegation is resolved. The power to suspend is vested in the employer alone and will be decided following discussions with the person's manager and Human Resources, in-line with Council procedures. Suspension is not, in any way, an indication that a conclusion has already been reached.
- 14.12 In keeping with national and County procedures, any Council disciplinary procedures will be held in abeyance pending the outcome of child protection and / or criminal justice enquiries by Police and Children's Services

Flowchart for the Management of Allegations

What is an allegation?
Information which indicates that an adult has or may have:

Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed A child

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are 'unsuitable' to work with children

Allegation Against an Adult which meets or may meet the criteria (left)
Recipient does not investigate but passes basic information to Line Manager / Senior Manager as appropriate

Allegation Reported to Denise Johnson (Lead SG Officer)
Senior Manager collates basic information but does not investigate
Liaises with relevant Director and consults LADO

Senior Manager makes recommendation re any further action and notifies LADO using electronic notification form within 1 working day
OfSTED or other Notification?

Initial consideration by LADO
Discussion with / feedback to Senior Manager within 1 working day
(Including information to be provided to alleged perpetrator)

LADO decides on and takes appropriate next course of action ie:
- strategy discussion
- formal strategy meeting (within 5 working days)
- Passes back to referrer / employer for action and logs

Police investigation

S47
Child Protection enquiries

Employer's Action
(Held in abeyance pending outcome of any 'external' enquiries)

LADO tracks, monitors progress & outcomes

Contact Information

Lancashire's LADO is: Tim Booth:
Tel: 01772 536694 or 07826902522

In Tim Booth's absence the contact person is: LCC MASH
Tel: 01772 536694

Our Organisation's Senior Manager is: Denise Johnson
Tel: 01772 625 558)

In their absence the contact person is: Steve Nugent
Tel: 01772 625 261

Part 4: Related & Supplementary Guidance

Recruitment, Employment & Deployment

- 15.1 South Ribble Borough Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people in the services it provides.

Advertising Posts

- 15.2 In line with the South Ribble Borough Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy, each vacancy must be evaluated and the job description reviewed before advertising to identify whether the post will involve access to children and young people.
- 15.3 Where it is identified that such access is likely an enhanced DBS disclosure will be required. It will be stated in advertisements and Job Descriptions that DBS disclosure is a requirement of the post. Any offer of employment will be subject to satisfactory DBS clearance
- 15.4 The Disclosure and Barring provides a copy of the DBS certificate to the subject. [Prospective] employees and, in some cases Elected Members and volunteers, will need to furnish SRBC with the relevant DBS information prior to undertaking any unsupervised activity with children.
- 15.5 Prospective employees whose post requires a DBS check, will not be allowed to commence employment until a satisfactory DBS certificate is received. Should the DBS disclose any information relevant to the suitability of the applicant for the appointed post, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the offer of employment

Job Descriptions

- 15.6 If a member of staff's job description changes a decision should be made by their manager as to whether their duties will involve access to children and if so that a DBS disclosure is applied for at the enhanced level.

Criminal Charges, Convictions and Cautions

- 15.7 If an employee is charged with, or convicted of, a criminal offence (including accepting a caution) whether or not it is work related, the employee must notify the Council in writing. The Council will establish the facts of the case and consider whether the matter is serious enough to warrant disciplinary action. An employee must notify the Council on the next working day if charged or convicted of any offence, or cautions. Failure to notify the Council in either case will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Existing Employees

- 15.8 If a member of staff's job description changes a decision should be made by

their manager as to whether their duties will involve access to children and if so that a DBS disclosure is applied for at the enhanced level

Elected Members

- 15.9 Roles of Elected Members will be assessed and, as appropriate, the Member may be subject to a DBS Disclosure. (See paras. 6.2-6.6)

Induction and Training

- 16.1 As previously stated training will be available to all employees who come or who may come into contact with children and families during the course of their work; this will be refreshed (See paras.1.3, 4.9, 5.1, 6.5-6 and 6.8-6.14 regarding training).

Confidentiality, Data Storage and Information Sharing

- 17.1 Personal information about service users held by professionals is confidential and should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the person involved. However, the law does however permit disclosure of confidential information without permission if it is necessary to safeguard a child or children e.g. in cases of suspected or alleged child protection.
- 17.2 Where the Council holds children's data in relation to services, especially where there is sensitive personal data collected such as medical conditions this information should be held in line with requirements for the Data Protection Act.
- 17.3 In implementing this policy, the Council will ensure that any personal data relating to the application of this policy will be obtained, processed and destroyed in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Safeguarding Children and Information Sharing

- 18.1 Sharing information is crucial to safeguarding children and poor or non-existent information sharing is a factor which is repeatedly flagged-up by Serious Case Reviews which are carried out following the death of or serious injury to a child. All employees must comply with the guidance issued by HM Govt. in 2015³⁴
- 18.2 Fears about information sharing cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse and neglect. No practitioner should assume that someone else will pass on information which may be critical to keeping a child safe.

Partnership Working - Community & Voluntary Organisations receiving funding from SRBC and Contractors

³⁴https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

Safeguarding Assurances from other Bodies

- 19.1 The Council will seek assurance that such bodies either:
- (i) have their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place and that their staff are briefed appropriately trained; and / or
 - (ii) have accepted those of the Council.
- 19.2 In the case of organisations receiving significant funding provision from the Council to deliver services for children the receipt of such assurances will be a prerequisite for funding and form part of the application process if appropriate.
- 19.3 Any contractor or sub-contractor, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into contact with children or young people should have their own safeguarding policy or, failing this, must comply with the terms of South Ribble Borough Council's i.e. this document. Contractors will be responsible for ensuring that workers with substantial access to children or young people are subject to the necessary DBS and related checks; this includes sub-contracted workers employed through agencies.
- 19.4 Where contracts go out to tender, the above stipulations should form part of any tender document. Production of the contractor's safeguarding policy and procedure and assurances regarding relevant checks and training form part of any tender submission and must be received and considered satisfactory by the Council prior to any formal engagement. Should the Council be dissatisfied with any of the above the Contractor shall adopt the Council's policy and be required to sign a self-declaration to this effect.

Equality Impact Assessment & Monitoring

- 19.5 The operation of this policy will be monitored for its impact on different staff groups, and particularly in relation to race (in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), gender, age and disability. This annual review will enable the Council to assess whether any differences have an adverse impact on a particular group, such that further action would be required.

Appendix 1:

Safeguarding Children & Young People - A Quick Guide

About this Leaflet

The Council takes its safeguarding responsibilities **very** seriously. This leaflet explains what they are and what we will do if we are worried about someone's welfare or safety. It also tells you where you can get more information or help.

Your Right to be Safe

Children) and young people (under 18s) have a right to be protected from harm, including child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is any action by another person – it can be an adult or child, a stranger or someone you know – that causes significant harm to a child. Abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention - this is called neglect. Children who are abused often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. Abuse sometimes happens online.

Why it's Important and What We Do

Like lots of other organisations, the Council has a duty to do what the law, national and local guidelines say when it comes to keeping children and young people safe, including from abuse and neglect. To do this, we have to work with other organisations such as children's services (part of Lancashire County Council) and the police.

The Council has up-to-date policies and procedures that are designed to help keep children and young people safe. Everyone who works for us has to read them and do what they say if they are worried about a young person. Everyone, including volunteers, who works or comes into contact with children and young people has also had training so that they know what to look out for and what to do if they are worried.

Your Voice Matters!

Wherever someone is worried about a child's safety or welfare - whether it's their own or someone else's - if they talk to us

THEY WILL ALWAYS:

- ☺ Be treated with dignity and respect
- ☺ Be listened to, believed and taken seriously
- ☺ Be told what, if anything, needs to happen next to keep you (or someone else) safe

THEY WILL NEVER:

- ☹ Be ignored or told to go away and speak to someone else about it
- ☹ Be made to feel like they have done something wrong, are bad, telling lies or making things up
- ☹ Be left at risk or in immediate danger

Consent, Confidentiality & Information Sharing

We understand that some things are private and difficult to talk about, for lots of reasons. We will always listen and be really careful about how we deal information if you decide to share it with us - there are laws and rules about this and we have to abide by them.

Wherever possible, we will seek your permission, or the permission of your parent(s) or carer(s) if you are too young or unable to give it yourself, before we share sensitive information with other people. However, when we are told that someone is being abused or in real danger we have to pass this on to other organisations so that they can help and keep someone who can't protect themselves safe.

Wherever possible and **as long as it is safe to do so**, we will inform you and / or your parents / carers :

- Why we have to pass it on
- What we need to pass on, who to and what will happen next.

More Useful Contacts & Info About Keeping Safe and Well

Lancashire Children's Services

0300 123 6720

NSPCC website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>

Childline <http://www.childline.org.uk> **Free phone:** 0800 11 11

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

The Hideout - website for young people living with domestic violence or abuse

<http://www.thehideout.org.uk/young-people/home/>

Online Safety

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>

www.childnet-int.org

www.saferinternet.org.uk/

<https://www.ceop.police.uk>

Drugs and Alcohol

<http://www.talktofrank.com/>

Helpline 24/7: 0300 123 6600 or Text your questions to 82111

Mental Health and Wellbeing

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Parent Helpline: 0808 802 5544

Sex & Relationships

<http://www.brook.org.uk>

<http://www.thesite.org/sex-and-relationships/safer-sex>

Keeping Safe from Child Sexual Exploitation

<http://www.consentiseverything.com/>

<https://about.me/acse>

[Alright Charlie Workbook](#)

Appendix 2: Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

Sexual abuse involves:

- Forcing or enticing, a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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);
- 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;
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional abuse is :

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. 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;
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children (These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over-protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction);
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- serious bullying (including cyber-bullying),
- Causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- The exploitation or corruption of children.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Physical abuse may involve:

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

Fabricated Illness

- The carer does not physically harm the child but reports a clinical story which is fabricated. This is frequently 'supported' by false specimens e.g. use of menstrual or animal blood;

Induced Illness

- The carer inflicts harm on the child e.g. poisoning, suffocation, tearing etc

Neglect is :

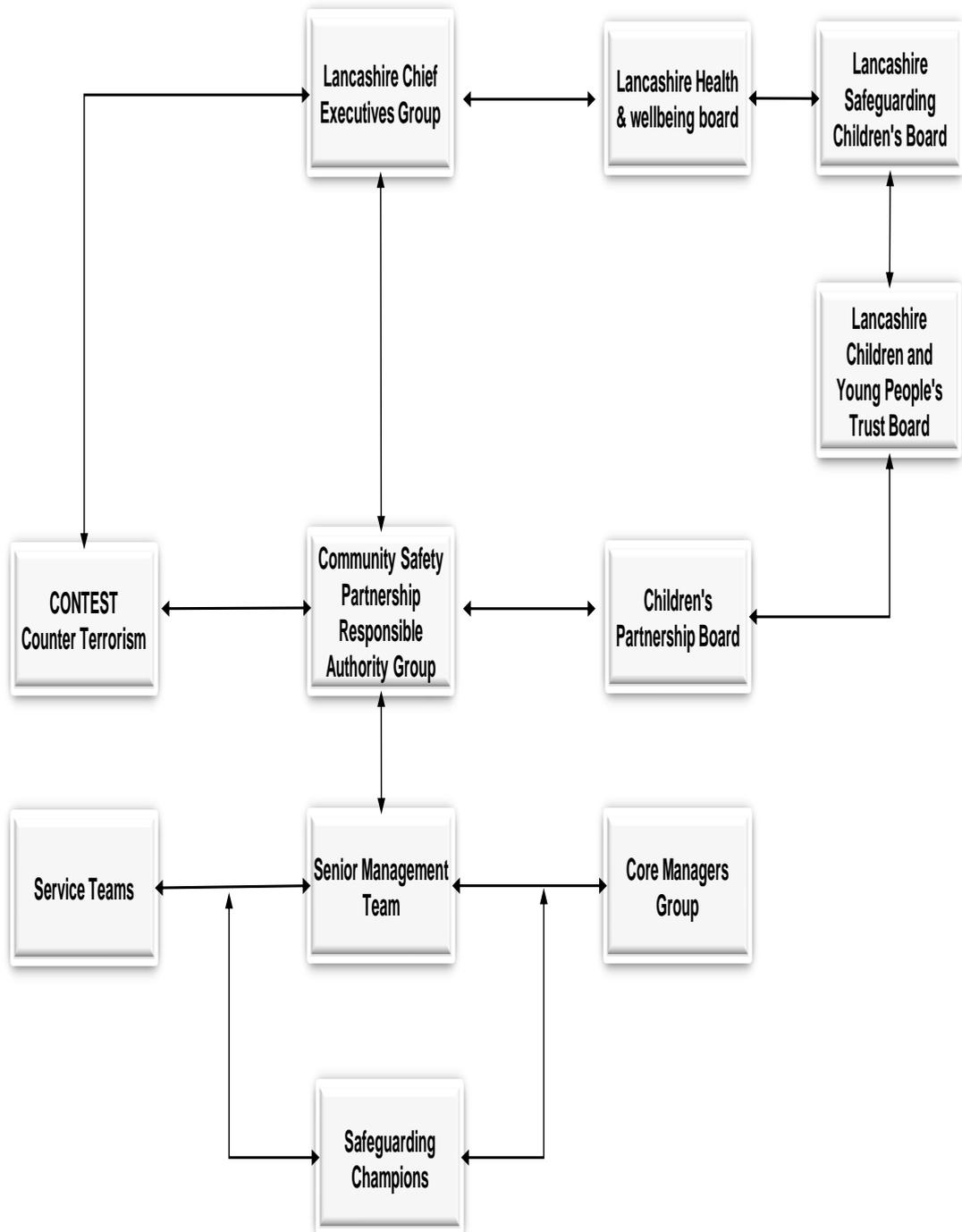
The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs:

- Likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development;
- Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse;
- Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Source: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

Appendix 3: SRBC'S Safeguarding Structure and Links -

Strategic and Operational



Appendix 4: Safeguarding Jargon Explained & Links

Term	What it refers to
RMFHC	Runaway or Missing from Home or Care - national, statutory guidance informs local protocols which make procedures clear in each geographical area Lancashire Protocol: http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/joint_proto.pdf
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - Agencies within MASH - including Police, Education, Probation, Fire and rescue, YOT, Prevention and Early Health, qualified Social Workers from Children's and Adult Social Care - who share information and make referrals into pathways across the safeguarding partnership.
CART	Contact And Referral Team (LCC Children's services) - Manages all non-Police referrals and assesses the contact received against the Lancashire Continuum of Need and Thresholds Guidance. Once the contact has been assessed the Social Workers within the team will recommended either closure, no further action, step down to Early Help or step-up and forward to a district team for a statutory Child and Families single assessment. This recommendation is always ratified by a Social Work Manager
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation - can happen to <i>any</i> child and it should not be mistaken for a lifestyle choice; consent is irrelevant where abuse is concerned! However, many young people don't see themselves as victims because they are led to believe they are making choices.529 CSE-related crimes were recorded by Lancashire Police in 2014-15 and 1,515 children were referred to specialist CSE teams across the county, Lancashire's CSE Standard Operating Protocol: http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/cse_proto.pdf#search=cse
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead (in schools and colleges) - all education settings must have a DSL and someone who covers in their absence. This person is the key safeguarding contact in a school or setting.
PPU / FPU	Police Public / Family Protection Unit - specialist safeguarding team(s) within the Police. In Lancashire these cover geographical areas. Deal primarily with intra-familial and / or professional abuse
DV	Domestic Violence / Abuse- 'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members ¹ regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: • psychological • physical • sexual • financial • emotional. 'Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or

	<p>frighten their victim.' The Government definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.</p> <p>Safe Lives: http://www.safelives.org.uk/</p>
FGM	<p>Female Genital Mutilation - all procedures involving partial or total removal of female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM has no health benefits, it is a cultural as opposed to religious issue and affects women and girls from many countries including Africa. FGM is a criminal offence (FGM Act 2003) and reporting it is mandatory for regulated professionals in education, health and social care.</p> <p>National guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380125/MultiAgencyPracticeGuidelinesNov14.pdf</p> <p>Lancashire Procedures: http://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_female_mutilation.html</p> <p>FGM Resources: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/femalegenital-mutilation-resource-pack https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fgmsupport-materials</p>
HBV	<p>Honour Based Violence – is important in safeguarding people of all ages from South East Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, LGBT and Gypsy/ Romany/ Traveller communities. Any professional can come across a victim of HBV and so everyone needs to be aware of the 'one chance rule'. That is, you may only have one chance to recognise someone's cry for help, however subtle and then have that one chance to save a life.</p> <p>Discussing FGM, forced marriage or 'honour' -related concerns with parents or other family members can increase risk significantly e.g. expedition of any travel arrangements, hasten plans to carry out a procedure etc. Consideration should also be given by agencies to safeguarding other vulnerable young people within the family.</p> <p>Forced Marriage Guidance (HM Govt. Jun 2014): https://www.gov.uk</p>
CLA / LAC	<p>Children Looked After / Looked After Children - in the care of the local authority</p>
E-safety	<p>Online Safety - towards the safer use of technology www.saferinternet.org.uk www.childnet-int.org www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/</p>

Appendix 5: Exemplar Parental Consent & Conditions of Use Form

To: **Name of the child's parent(s) or guardian:** _____

Name of Child: _____

[Project / Activity]: _____

Occasionally, we may take photographs of the children at These images may be used in our brochure or other printed publications, on our website, or on project display boards. Occasionally, we may be visited by the media who will take photographs or film footage of children e.g. at a high profile event, to celebrate a particular achievement etc.) Such images may appear in local or national newspapers, or on televised news programmes.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child for promotional purposes. Equally, we are committed to work closely with parents in an attempt to take all reasonable steps to keep children as safe as possible.

Please answer questions 1-4 below before returning the completed form (one for each child) to as soon as possible.

(Please tick)

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. May we use your child's photograph in our brochure and other printed publications that we produce for promotional purposes, or on project display boards? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. May we use your child's image on our website? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. May we record your child's image on video? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Are you happy for your child to appear in the media as part of his her involvement in [event]? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

I have read and understand the conditions of use attached to this form.

Parent's or Guardian's signature: _____

Name (block capitals please) _____

Conditions of Use

1. This form is valid for from the date upon which you sign it, or for the period of time your child attends this project. Your consent will automatically expire after this time
2. We will / will not re-use any photographs or recordings after the project is completed
3. We will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name **and** surname) of any child or adult in a photographic image, on video, on our website, in any of our brochures or other printed publications
4. We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses or telephone or fax numbers on video, on our website, in any of our brochures or other printed publications.
5. If we use photographs of individual children we will not use the name of that child in any accompanying text or caption
6. If we name a child in the text, we will not use a photograph of that child to accompany the article
7. We may include pictures that have been drawn by children
8. We may use group or photographs or footage with very general labels
9. We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed
10. Parents who are invited to attend events where photography/video recording is permitted by them should undertake to ensure that any images or materials produced are for family/private use only.
11. Parents should note that websites can be viewed throughout the world
12. We undertake to take all reasonable steps to ensure that any images maintained by us are stored securely and are accessed only by authorised persons

*Please delete the option which does not apply

Signed _____

Print _____

Appendix 6: Visiting Officer's Code of Conduct

Introduction

- 1.1 South Ribble Borough Council expects all Visiting Officers to comply with the Council's Employee Code of Conduct. However, **All** Visiting Officers must also follow this Code of Conduct **at all times**
- 1.2 Visiting Officers must carry out their duties in a professional, calm and dignified manner and will act responsibly and shall do nothing to prejudice the reputation and integrity of the Council
- 1.3 Visiting Officers must act within the law at all times, including all defined legislation, and observe all health and safety requirements in carrying out inspections
- 1.4 Visiting Officers will treat all persons with respect and courtesy at all times, in line with the Council's policies on equal opportunities and race relation. Moreover, they must be professional, consistent and transparent - and be seen to be all of these things - especially when working or coming into contact with children and vulnerable people.

General

- 2.1 Visiting Officers will declare all cases where the visiting officer has an interest. 'An interest' is defined as ownership of property involved in an investigation, or a personal relationship with any person or property being visited.
- 2.3 Visiting Officers will ensure that information held by the Council is only disclosed in line with Data Protection and the procedures concerning confidentiality
- 2.4 Visiting Officers should always carry their ID badge and present it to the customer for inspection at the start of the visit.
- 2.5 The Visiting Officer should consider and observe the rights of any individual they are interviewing or visiting. It is the duty of the Visiting Officer to establish and report the facts of the case, not to draw conclusions based on intuition, supposition or assumption(s).
- 2.6 Visiting Officers are not authorised to receive any monies on behalf of the Council, for any purpose

Visiting Officers: Safeguarding Children and Young People

- 3.1 All Visiting Officers will adhere to the Council's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure(s) (June 2016)
- 3.2 **Safeguarding Training** - All Visiting Officers will undertake and update Safeguarding Children Training in line with the Council's Policy and Procedure

- 3.3 **The need for Vigilance** - Visiting Officers are sometimes in a unique position in that they have access, potentially, to environments within which children and young people live and / or are present. Consequently, it is imperative that they are vigilant at all times and that they are familiar with potential signs of symptoms of child abuse and neglect³⁵
- 3.4 **Safeguarding Roles & Responsibilities** - Visiting Officers, like all Officers of SRBC, have no investigative role where [alleged or suspected] child abuse and neglect are concerned; that is a matter for the Police and / or Lancashire County Council's Children's Services. Officers must be mindful, therefore, of avoiding any actions which might impede a criminal or child protection investigation
- 3.4 **Taking action where you are concerned about a child's welfare -** in the event that a Visiting officer is concerned about the welfare or safety of any child they must follow the procedures laid down in the Council's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure(s) (June 2016)³⁶
- 3.5 **Safeguarding and Information Sharing** - Sharing information is crucial to safeguarding children and poor or non-existent information sharing is a factor which is repeatedly flagged-up by Serious Case Reviews which are carried out following the death of or serious injury to a child. All Visiting Officers comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure(s) (June 2016) and guidance issued by HM Govt. in 2015³⁷
- 3.6 Fears about information sharing cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse and neglect. No practitioner should assume that someone else will pass on information which may be critical to keeping a child safe.
- 3.7 **Unaccompanied Visits** - Visiting Officers must always be mindful of the possibility of compromising their integrity, or that of the Council, by carrying out unaccompanied visits. They will seek advice from a senior officer **prior to** carrying out an unaccompanied visit in the following circumstances:
- Visits to accommodation providing **Supported Accommodation, where we are aware that a person may be classed as vulnerable (if known by the Officer to be Supported Accommodation)**
 - Visits to children and young people e.g. under the age of 18

³⁵ http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_recog_significant_harm.html
www.nspcc.org.uk/core-info

³⁶ Part 2 of the Policy, **pages 14-22**, make clear what action is to be taken in these circumstances, including listening to children and dealing with 'disclosures', record-keeping, reporting and making referrals

³⁷https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_haring_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

Risks Assessment & Keeping Safe

- 4.1 The Council takes the safety and well-being of its staff seriously and every effort must be made to ensure Officer safety at all times, especially during interviews and visits which might, potentially, lead to heightened tension, threats of violence, complaints or allegations³⁸
- 4.2 Visiting officers must be aware of the potential for violence and should not place themselves in any situation where there is a risk of attack. In particular, they must check the confrontation register in order to establish whether a person is known to pose a particular risk; this information is held on the Intranet.
- 4.3 Where lone working does occur, the Council's Policy on Lone Working, or where available 'Work Safe' must be implemented and risk assessments should be ongoing and dynamic during such visits. Unaccompanied visits to potentially violent persons must not be undertaken.

Attendance at Premises

- 5.1 When attending a property, the Visiting Officer shall take reasonable steps to ensure they are speaking directly to a relevant person, before identifying the purpose of the visit
- 5.2 **Children who appear to be 'home alone'**³⁹ - in the event that a Visiting Officer attends an address and finds a child or children 'home alone' they will need to exercise their professional judgement in order to decide whether to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. While we do not want officers to interview children, the following matters should be considered:
- How old is the child?
 - Are there very young or disabled children present⁴⁰?
 - Is the physical environment unsafe and / or a cause for concern?
 - Where are the parents / carers and how long are they likely to be?
- 5.3 **It is not appropriate or safe to enter premises in these circumstances.** Advice should be sought by telephone from a Line Manager, a Directorate Safeguarding Champion or one of the Council's two Designated Safeguarding Officers in these circumstances. Where there are immediate concerns about a child's welfare police must be contacted and a referral made to Children's Services.
- 5.4 Every effort should be made not to discuss the nature or purpose of the visit with anyone other than a relevant person, and the Visiting Officer shall take care to ensure that the owner's circumstances are not given to or discussed with a third party. This provision may be relaxed when speaking with a spouse/partner or close relative of the relevant person, as considered necessary to resolve the matter

³⁸ See para.7.1

³⁹ See also paras. 3.1- 3.7 of this Code of Conduct

⁴⁰ Where uncertainty remains in these circumstances, it is better to err on the side of caution and act as you would if the young person was under 18; act in order to secure their safety and wellbeing.

- 5.5 The Visiting Officer shall clearly state to the relevant person the purpose of the visit, and inform them that they are acting on behalf of the Council
- 5.6 It is a fundamental principle of this code that all Visiting Officers must properly identify themselves to any person when asked to do so and must not attempt to misrepresent their status or powers
- 5.7 The Visiting Officer must avoid responding unreasonably to provocation, and must withdraw from the premises if conflict cannot be resolved through reasoned discussion
- 5.8 The name of the Visiting Officer attending the premises must be made clear on any documents left at the premises with all relevant contacts and telephone numbers clearly displayed
- 5.9 Where the relevant person is not present, any documents left at the address should be addressed to them, and left in a sealed envelope

Entry onto Premises

- 6.1 Before seeking access to any premises the Visiting Officer should enquire, wherever possible, if the relevant person is present. Entry onto the premises may only be achieved by invitation or negotiation. However, please note this does not apply to staff carrying out enforcement work. If the relevant person is not present to give consent, the Visiting Officer may enter premises by turning a handle, lifting a latch, or drawing a bolt, in so far as this allows the purpose of the inspection to be better carried out from within the property curtilage. This provision does not extend to a domestic property where the relevant person is not present. Any form of forced entry will be treated as an act of trespass.
- 6.2 The Visiting Officer must leave the premises in the state and manner in which he finds them. This provision applies not only to any building, but also to any yard, garage, garden, outhouse etc.
- 6.3 It is acceptable for the Visiting Officer to look through a window or letterbox, if this is considered a viable means of gaining relevant evidence, in so far as all actions comply with the requirements set out above
- 6.4 If at any time the Visiting Officer is asked to leave the premises by the owner or occupier, they must withdraw immediately and record the reason using the relevant paperwork.
- 6.5 If the Visiting Officer is asked to leave the premises by any other person, they must assess the benefit derived from continuing with their duties against any potential conflict and proceed or withdraw at his discretion. If they cannot expedite the matter by conflict resolution, they should withdraw. Where the owner or occupier has previously requested the Visiting Officer to leave the premises, future inspections should only be undertaken by prior appointment, or with the consent of that person

6.6 Any Visiting Officer breaching the above rules could be subject to the Council's disciplinary procedures

Allegations Against Visiting Officers

7.1 In the event of an allegation being made against a Visiting Officer the procedure laid down at Part 3 of the Council's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure (June 2016, pages 23-8) will be followed.

June 2016