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Signed By:
Approval Committee: Governing Body



GILLINGHAM SCHOOL

Hardings Lane, Gillingham

Dorset SP8 4QP

**SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD
PROTECTION**

Child Protection Policy 2023/24

Named Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Nominated Safeguarding Governor/Trustee	Chair of Governors/ Trustees	Mental Health Lead
Mr Colin Gordon	Mrs Danielle Gordge Mrs Zowie Crocker Mrs Rachael Wright Mrs Tara Whytnie Mrs Jo Stirk Mrs Jess Mash	Mr Patrick Andrews	Mr Guy Lowton	Mrs Sarah Turnbull

Personnel with designated responsibility in relation to allegations against staff

Designated Senior Manager (this would normally be the Head teacher)	Deputy Designated Senior Manager	Chair of Governors/Trustees	Nominated Governor/Trustee
Mr P Nicholson	Mr Mark Lavis Mrs Sarah Turnbull	Mr Guy Lowton	Mr Pat Andrews

Dates the Child protection Policy is reviewed

Review Date	Changes made/Details of action plan	Due Date	By Whom
30/09/22	Updated to meet KCSIE 22	09/2023	Mr C Gordon
27/09/23	Updated to meet KCSIE 23	09/2024	Mr C Gordon

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PART 1: Policy

1.1 Definitions

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

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development • ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

1.2 Introduction

At **Gillingham School**:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children, their families and carers, has a role to play.
- In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should always consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.
- We take an '**it can happen here**' approach where safeguarding is concerned.
- **Everyone** who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

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- Victims of harm should **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Gillingham School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- Acting on concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- Fulfilling our legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of:

- The Pan-Dorset Continuum of Need Guidance
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from Education
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The identity of Gillingham School's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies
- The additional vulnerabilities of children who are looked after/previously looked after, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and children who are young carers.

All action taken by **Gillingham School** will be in accordance with:

- **Current legislation** (these are summarised within [Working Together to Safeguard Children: statutory framework](#))
- **Statutory, national, and local guidance – this includes:**
 - [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- **Local Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Partnership:** around particular safeguarding topics are available on the [Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) website.

Government guidance in relation to:

- **COVID19:** The full collection is available on the [government website](#). This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
 - Accidents, RIDDOR and First Aid Policy
 - Educational Visits Policy
 - Recruitment and Selection
 - Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure
 - Code of Conduct for Staff/ Staff Behaviour Policy
 - Behaviour (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, and Exclusions Policy of a separate document)
 - E-Safety
 - Online Safety Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Self-Harm
 - Policy on Supporting Children in Care
 - Attendance (including the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education)
 - Health and Safety

Head Teachers/Principals should ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by governing bodies and proprietors, are accessible, understood and followed by all staff.

1.3 Equalities Statement

With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and our general and specific duties under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#). General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

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Details of our specific duties are published under Gillingham School's equality statement and measurable objectives. These are available on our website <https://www.gillingham-dorset.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Equality-Policy-002.pdf>

Staff are aware of the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy [SEN-Policy-2022.pdf \(gillingham-dorset.co.uk\)](#)

Gillingham School also adheres to the principles of and promotes anti-oppressive practice in line with the [United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

1.4 Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of children at Gillingham School by:

- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of the education setting's community, staff, governing body, children and their families.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture in the setting built on shared values; that children are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice and are listened to.
- Supporting contextual safeguarding approaches to practice recognising that the setting's site can be a location where harm can occur.
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within the setting's community (staff, children, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- Early identification of need for vulnerable children and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- Working in partnership with children, parents, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership.

Gillingham School is named as a relevant agency in the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership. This policy sets out its statutory duty to co-operate, follow and comply with published arrangements as set out by the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership.

1.5 Professional expectations, roles, and responsibilities

1.5.1 Role of all staff

All staff will read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education. Those working directly with children will also read Annex B. In addition to this all staff will be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

- Know who and how to contact the DSL and any deputies, the Chair of Governors, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.
- All staff will be able to identify vulnerable children and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about a child will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:
 - who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect;
 - requiring mental health support;
 - may benefit from early help;
 - where there is a radicalisation concern;
 - where a crime may have been committed.
- Be clear as to the setting's policy and procedures about [child on child abuse](#), children missing from education and [those requiring mental health support](#), and the [impact of technology in relation to online safety](#).
- Be involved where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable children and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using the setting's safeguarding systems.
- To be aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the school.
- **To provide a safe environment in which children can learn**

1.5.2 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex C)

Details of our DSL and Deputy DSL are available on the Gillingham School website, our newsletters, or the notice board in reception.

- The DSL is a senior member of staff who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the setting.
- The DSL works with the headteacher, and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on child's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.
- Activities include the management of work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs.
- Manages early identification of vulnerability of children and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Manages referrals to local safeguarding partners where children with additional needs have been identified. These can include those –
 - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect;
 - requiring mental health support;
 - who may benefit from early help;
 - where there is a radicalisation concern; **possible indicators of radicalisation should be taken into consideration alongside other factors or contexts.**
 - where a crime may have been committed.

The DSL will also:

- Work with others – acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.
- **Refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse to Dorset Council's Front Door Service and/or the local authority where the child resides and act as the focal point for staff to discuss concerns.**
- Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Coordinate safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding to the school community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable children with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
 - know who these children are,

- understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.
- Provide additional academic support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have **or have had** a social worker to reach their potential.
- Ensure the successful transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection File when a child moves on to a new setting within 5 days for in year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/ any out of hours/out of term activities managed by the school.

1.5.3 - Role of the Governing Body –

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 2)

There is a senior board level lead who takes responsibility for the setting's safeguarding responsibility to ensure that safeguarding and child protection practice, process, and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance, and Local Safeguarding Partnership arrangements (Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership).

- The appointed Safeguarding Governor will liaise with the Head Teacher/Principal and the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the S. 175 (annual safeguarding) audit;
- Ensure that the school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay;
- Ensure that this document is updated annually (or when there are significant updates)
- Ensure that the DSL is an appropriate senior member of setting's senior leadership team and ensure that they have adequate time, funding, training, resources, and support to carry out their role effectively.
- Ensure that the training and learning for the school community is robust and effective.
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding in the curriculum, including online safety in compliance with statutory guidance [Relationships education \(Primary\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) / [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Ensure they review the [Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards](#) and make sure the setting is compliant with the requirements to meet these duties through discussions with IT staff and service providers.
- To ensure that teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors have appropriate checks carried out in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 3).
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors who may not be suitable to work with or pose a risk to children, this includes having a process to manage low level concerns.
- Ensure that systems are in place for children to effectively share a concern about a safeguarding issue they are experiencing, express their views and give feedback.
- Ensure that the setting has systems in place to prevent, identify and respond to **abuse, neglect and exploitation**, child-on-child harm (including sexual abuse and sexual harassment), and mental health concerns, and review the effectiveness of the setting's online safety practices.
- Appoint a Designated Lead Teacher (DLT) to promote the educational achievement for children in care and other care arrangements. This should also include those students with a named social worker.
- To ensure that in line with the [May 2023 guidance](#) the school has an emergency plan in place that covers all aspects of safeguarding.

1.6 Safeguarding training for staff

1.6.1 - All staff:

- Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction.
- Will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection refresher training (including online safety incorporating staff responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at least annually (via formal training, email e-bulletins and staff meetings).
- All staff must complete FGM awareness training and will understand their legal duty under the Mandatory Reporting Duty.

- All staff must complete PREVENT awareness training. This is to ensure that they can comply with the legal expectations under the PREVENT duty.
- Staff training includes clear reference to internal whistleblowing policy, the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer and guidance for escalating concerns.

1.6.2 - Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies:

- Will undergo formal training to provide them with the knowledge and skills (including online safety, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) training required to carry out the role. The training will be updated at least every two years.
- Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- The DSL and any deputies will liaise with the Local Safeguarding Partnership to ensure that their knowledge and skills are updated via e-bulletins, attend DSL network meetings, and take time to read and digest safeguarding bulletins.

1.6.3 - Other training considerations:

- The governing body will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, in line with School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team will make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour, inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.
- The Designated Teacher for Children in Care will undergo appropriate training to fulfil their role to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are in care.
- The mental health lead has access to appropriate training.
- Training around safeguarding topics in Annex B (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) will be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of a whole school safeguarding approach.
- Appropriate colleagues have received appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling.

1.7 Safeguarding in the curriculum

Gillingham School is dedicated to ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

This includes:

- Working within statutory guidance in respect to [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education); and Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - and [Physical health and mental wellbeing \(Primary and secondary\) – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/physical-health-and-mental-wellbeing-primary-and-secondary)
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that ‘over-blocking’ does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding.
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the setting identified by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team (e.g., to respond to an increase in bullying incidents).
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum.
- Children can inform the curriculum via discussions with the school council /student and parent voice questionnaires and through the school’s regular meetings with students as part of the Pastoral and Curriculum Quality Assurance meetings.

1.8 Safer recruitment and safer working practice

1.8.1 - Safer recruitment

Gillingham School pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (202; Part 3)

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

- Also including undertaking online safety checks on shortlisted candidates. Undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the barred list checks and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to Gillingham School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children.
- **At least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years.**

1.8.2 - Use of reasonable force

'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed.' The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances and the vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be considered.

- The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and will follow government guidance ([Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013](#); [Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, 2019](#)).
- There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Further review of the incident is carried out to reflect on how the incident could be avoided, this will involve the child and their family.

The process around how the setting manages concerns where a professional may pose a risk to children and our response to low level concerns can be accessed in section [2.8 Allegations of abuse made against professionals](#).

1.8.3 - Whistleblowing procedures

Staff are aware of the following whistleblowing channels for situations where they feel unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed:

- General guidance can be found at: Advice on whistleblowing <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available [here](#) for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The above channels are clearly accessible to all staff (in the staff handbook, code of conduct and on staff notice boards).

1.9 Key safeguarding areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families, there are specific areas of safeguarding that the setting has statutory responsibilities to address which are hyperlinked:

- [Children in the court system: Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK](#)
[Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year olds - GOV.UK](#)
- [Children affected by parental offending/imprisonment.](#)
- [Children missing from education](#) – including persistent absence.
- [Child Exploitation](#) (including both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines, modern day slavery and trafficking)
- [Cybercrime](#)
- [Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Homelessness](#)
- [So-called Honour based Abuse](#) (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage),
- [Online Safety](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Child on child abuse:](#)
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse).
 - Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
 - Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;(this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
 - Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
 - Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- [Preventing Radicalisation \(The Prevent Duty\)](#)
- [Serious Youth Violence](#)
- [Substance Misuse](#)
- [Private Fostering](#)
- [Young Carers](#)

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex B); the [NSPCC website - Types of Abuse](#);

PART 2: Procedures

2.1 Reporting concerns

All staff are clear about recording and reporting concerns to the DSL/DSL deputies in a timely way. In the case a child is in immediate danger, staff should phone the police.

All staff are aware of and follow the procedures to respond to a concern about a child detailed in Appendix C. This includes responses to child-on-child harm and children who present with a mental health need.

At Gillingham School children can raise their concerns via any member of staff. In the first instance this may be the tutor or the year group's pastoral team but may also include pastoral hub staff or any class teachers and support staff. Students are also actively encouraged to report concerns about themselves and their peers through the safeguarding email address: safeguarding@gillingham-dorset.co.uk or anonymously through the itsnotbanter@gillingham-school.co.uk email address. Parents and carers are encouraged to communicate with their child's tutor and year team by phone or email should they have any concerns. All communications will be treated seriously.

2.2 Information Sharing

Gillingham School is committed to have due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and [UK General Data Protection Regulations](#). This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes,

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including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff at the setting are aware that:

- 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data.
- Practitioners will seek consent to share data where possible in line with [Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2018](#).

There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:

- To gain consent would place the child at risk,
- By doing so will compromise a criminal investigation,
- It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent,
- Or, if by sharing information it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

There are also times when Gillingham School will not provide pupil's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). When in doubt Gillingham School will seek legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

2.3 Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable children.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will regularly review and monitor those students who have been identified as vulnerable. This can include reviewing attendance data, behaviour data, attainment data and safeguarding records. This is to ensure that:

- Proportionate and early interventions can be taken to promote the safety and welfare of the child and prevent escalation of harm.
- Information about vulnerable children is shared with teachers and school and college leadership staff to promote educational outcomes.
- Children who currently have, or have had, a social worker will have their academic progress and attainment reviewed and additional academic support will be provided to help them reach their full potential.
- Reasonable adjustments are made in relation to school-based interventions – for example responding to behaviour.

2.4 Multi-agency working

Gillingham School is a relevant agency in the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and will work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This is in compliance with statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

Occasions that warrant a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989:

- If the child is in need under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 (including when a child is a young carer and or subject to a private fostering arrangement).
- Or if the child needs protection under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 where they are experiencing significant harm, or likely to experience significant harm.

Referrals in these cases should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSLs) to Children's Social Care in the local authority in which that child resides. Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager.

Gillingham School will co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes ensuring representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

2.4.1 Additional considerations:

- Where a child and/or their family is subject to a child protection plan or a high risk domestic abuse (HRDA) meeting, the setting will contribute to the preparation, implementation, and review of the plan as appropriate.
- In situations where a child in care may be put on to a reduced timetable, the school will consult with the Virtual School following local procedures.
- If a crime has been suspected or committed that involved the bringing of an offensive weapon on to the school site, the setting will liaise with the Local Authority Violence Reduction Unit (Safer Options) and police who will consider a proportionate response.
- If there is a risk of harm, the police should be called via 999. For other concerns of criminality, the non-statutory guidance ['When to Call the Police' from the NCPCC](#) can be helpful or contact the local PCSO/School Police Beat Officer/School Officer.

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- In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, Gillingham School will notify the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

2.5 Suspensions, permanent exclusions, and commissioning of Alternative Provisions - (To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy)

When the setting is considering suspending or permanently excluding a child where additional vulnerability is identified it is important that the child's welfare is a paramount consideration. The Head Teacher will consider their legal duty of care when sending a child home. **Staff should be alert to the potential need for Early Help for pupils who have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of being permanently excluded from the school.**

Gillingham School will exercise their legal duties in relation to their interventions. This includes:

- whether a statutory assessment should be considered in line with the principles of [Children Act 1989](#),
- that decisions are made in an anti-discriminatory manner in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#) (including having regard to the [SEND Code of Practice](#))
- and takes into consideration the child's rights under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).
- Interventions will be consistent with statutory guidance [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

2.5.2 - Commissioning Alternative Provisions

In the event where Gillingham School commissions an alternative provision, the local alternative Learning Provision process will apply and guidance followed to ensure clear agreement of roles and responsibilities to maintain safeguarding arrangements for children who are not taught on site.

Gillingham School will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child and will make necessary checks on the provider to meet the needs of the child. Written confirmation from the alternative provider will be obtained of the checks on staff that we would otherwise perform for our own staff. As part of the school's ongoing safeguarding responsibilities, the school will undertake a visit to the child attending an Alternative Provision at least every half term.

Before one of our pupils attends an alternative provision, we will obtain written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those check that we would otherwise perform in respect of our own staff.

2.6 Children Missing from Education

All staff understand that a child who is persistently missing from school may be at risk of a range of safeguarding issues, criminal exploitation, including neglect, child sexual abuse, child sexual and criminal exploitation.

School staff will follow the local guidance available on the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership website and where reasonably possible, the school will hold three emergency contact numbers for each pupil. This goes beyond the legal minimum and is good practice as it provides additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child is missing from care, home or Education.

(https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_miss_care_home_ed.html).

Gillingham School will follow the guidance detailed in [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#) and the [Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Children Missing Education](#).

This will include notifying the local authority in which the child lives:

- of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly,
- or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

2.6.1 - Elective Home Education

Gillingham School will notify the Local Authority of every child where a parent has exercised their right to educate their child at home. Safeguarding files should be shared with the Inclusion Lead within the relevant locality and consideration of whether additional support from children's social care should be made in line with the Children Act 1989.

2.7 Respond to incidents of child-on-child harm

All staff should recognise that children can abuse other children (including online). It is important that incidents of abuse and harm are treated under the safeguarding policy in conjunction with the behaviour policy. However, concerns regarding the

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welfare of children requires process and records to be kept on the child's safeguarding/child protection file.

Further examples of child-on-child harm can be found under section [1.9 Key Safeguarding Areas](#). It is recognised that child on child abuse can happen inside and outside of school/college or online.

At Gillingham School

- We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to abuse. Incidents are taken seriously. These will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter,' just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up.' Banter and teasing can and should be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour and may require proportionate intervention.
- Even with a zero-tolerance approach, we take steps to educate and take action ensure to mitigate the risk of contributing to a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse.
- It is understood that child on child harm may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.
- Early identification of vulnerability to child on child harm is made by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.

There are clear systems in place (which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse knowing their concerns will be treated seriously as reflected in section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy.

Gillingham School will handle initial reports of harm by:

- Securing the immediate safety of children involved in an incident and sourcing support for other young people affected.
- Listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc;
- ensuring that victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Ensuring the child's wishes are taken into consideration in any intervention and any action is taken to ensure safety of the target and other members of the wider setting cohort.
- All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

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- Not promising confidentiality as it is highly likely that information will need to be shared with others.

2.7.1 Actions to take in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment

Gillingham School will take the following actions when responding to incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL/ Deputy DSL who will undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified. [The Brook - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Assessment Tool](#) should be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what actions to subsequently take.
- DSLs/Deputies will take proportionate action and consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with the section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working section](#).
- When an incident involves an act of **sexual violence** (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault) the starting point is that this should be passed on to police immediately **regardless** of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old). This must be reported directly via 101 for recording purposes and accountability. This is on the understanding that the police will take a welfarist approach rather than a criminal justice one. A concurrent referral to social care must also be made. A strategy discussion can be requested where education can voice explicitly concerns of criminalisation in a multi-agency context.
- When the children involved require a statutory assessment either under s.17 or s.47 of the Children Act 1989 a referral to social care should be undertaken.
- Where the report includes an online element, the setting will follow [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- Risk assessments and or safety plans will be developed for individual children who have been involved in an incident including any bystanders. This should be reviewed at least every 3 months or every time there is an occurrence of an incident. These should involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.

2.7.2 - Contextual safeguarding approach to child-on-child harm:

Gillingham School will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts of which harm can occur – this can include the school environment itself, peer groups and the neighbourhood.

Following any incidents of child-on-child harm, the DSL/Deputies will review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any lessons learned. This can include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics on the curriculum.

2.8 Responding to allegations of abuse made against professionals.

Staff must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) where they may have:

- 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.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

2.8.1 - Immediate action must be taken:

- Do not speak to the individual it concerns.
- Allegations or concerns about colleagues visitors, volunteers and contractors must be reported directly to the Head Teacher/Principal who will follow guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part four: Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors).
- If the concern relates to Head Teacher/Principal it should be reported to the Chair of Governors, who will liaise with the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) and they will decide on any action required.
- If there is a conflict of interest which inhibits this process of reporting, staff can report directly to the LADO.
- If allegations are regarding a member of supply staff, the school will take the lead and progress enquiries with the LADO, whilst continuing to engage and work with the employment agency.
- Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported. The allocated social worker should also be informed on

the day. The school should not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this.

2.8.2 - Low level concerns

This should be read in conjunction with the staff code of conduct and Keeping children Safe in Education (Part 4). A low-level concern is not insignificant. This process should be used in events where a concern about professional conduct does not meet the threshold set out at the beginning of this section.

- Reports should be made in accordance with the settings own processes <SCHOOL> (gillingham-dorset.co.uk) Gillingham School creates an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation.
- The DSL will address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage providing a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Review and correct any deficits in the setting's safeguarding system.

2.9 Mental health and wellbeing. (A flow diagram is available in appendix F to illustrate this section)

Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, and or may require early help support.

Gillingham School will commit to undertake the following.

- The appointment of a senior mental health lead who can support the development of knowledge and act as a point of expertise to promote the wellbeing and mental health of children. This colleague will have sufficient training in mental health **and** safeguarding for them to carry out their role effectively.
- Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- Ensure that children can report and share concerns in line with section [2.1 Reporting a concern](#) of this policy.
- Staff will follow a safeguarding process in terms of reporting concerns outlined in appendix C so the DSL/Deputy DSLs (and wider members of the safeguarding team such as the SENDCo) can assess whether there are any other vulnerabilities can be identified and proportionate support considered.

- Staff will ensure the immediate health and safety of a child who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the learner is at risk of immediate harm.
- DSLs/Deputies will consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with section [2.4 - Multi-Agency Working](#).
- The setting will communicate and work with the child and parents/carers to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the child.
- DSLs will liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes.
- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem – DSLs and the senior leadership team should be able to access specialist advice through targeted services.

2.9.1 - Contextual safeguarding approach to mental health

Gillingham School will ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding on the curriculum will provide opportunities for children to identify when they may need help, and to develop resilience.

The setting will take a 'whole school approach' to:

- deliver high quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing on the curriculum
- having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing;
- making sure pupils and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services;
- supporting staff wellbeing;
- And being committed to pupil and parent participation.

2.10 Online Safety

Online safety is an integrated and interwoven theme with other safeguarding considerations. It is essential that the DSL takes a lead on ensuring that interventions are effective. This means coordinating support and engaging with other colleagues in the setting who may have more technological expertise such as the IT manager.

Gillingham School is committed to addressing online safety issues around content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes:

- Ensuring that online safety is concerned in relevant policies and procedures.

- Online safety is interwoven in safeguarding training for staff and safeguarding on the curriculum for children.
- Acknowledging that child on child abuse can happen via mobile and smart technology between individuals and groups. This should be approached in the same process outlined in section [2.7 Responding to incidents of child on child harm](#) and read in conjunction with Gillingham School's policy on the use of mobile smart technology which is available via [Child Protection Procedures \(gillingham-dorset.co.uk\)](#)
- Provision of education via remote learning will comply with current governmental advice [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and [Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- The effectiveness of the setting's ability to safeguard children in respect to filtering and monitoring, information security and access management alongside the above will be reviewed annually in line with the digital and technology standards in schools and colleges [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- The vast majority of people who take or view images or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place, to protect pupils, we will seek their consent and parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

Appendix A

Useful Information

Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

When a child tells me about abuse they have suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell them you are pleased that they are speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure them that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.

- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use 'Tell Me, Explain to me, Describe to me' (TED) questioning.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that they have a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged perpetrator.
- Be aware that the child may retract what they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

- The 5 'R's are helpful in understanding what professional's duties are in relation to responding to an incident.

Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer - Record

Types of abuse and neglect

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/>

The Department for Education's Tackle Child Abuse campaign has accessible videos to watch <https://tacklechildabuse.campaign.gov.uk/>

[Child Exploitation](#)

[Child Criminal Exploitation](#)

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- economic
- emotional
- controlling or coercive behaviour

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs. Gillingham School recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Gillingham School acknowledges that domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. Gillingham School has signed up to the police initiative Operation Encompass that helps the school to provide support to children. The system seeks to ensure that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the DSL in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up-to-date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable silent support to be given to the child according to their needs.

Female Genital Mutilation

Mandatory reporting duty: [Click here for government guidance](#)

Serious Youth Violence

To be read in conjunction with the above section around Child Criminal Exploitation. There has been local guidance issued on the issue of ['Offensive Weapons in Education Settings'](#).

It is important to note that should a weapon be used or there is threat of use, the police should be called immediately.

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Preventing Radicalisation - The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015).

Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the [The Prevent Duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities](#) and also the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#), especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare).

Children with family members in prison

Gillingham School recognises that children who have a family member in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The school will work with agencies and resources such as NICCO to help mitigate negative consequences for those children

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered. Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age. Gillingham School recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. If Gillingham School becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care themselves in the first instance, but also alert them to our mandatory duty as a school to inform the local authority of children in such arrangements.

Schools' Alternative Provision Toolkit

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This toolkit follows a typical pathway for the commissioning, monitoring and evaluation of Alternative Provision. It

includes guidance, documents and templates for reference or for schools to use.

<https://www.dorsetnexus.org.uk/Page/27385>

SEND Dorset Local Offer

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/sen-and-disability-local-offer/local-offer-strategies-and-plans>

Appendix B.

Useful contacts

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Martha Sharpe (full-time), Lynne Bowman (full-time) and Laura Tulk (part-time)

Telephone: 01305 221122

Email: lado@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Safeguarding and Standards Advisors for Schools

Laura Tulk (part-time) and Jack Corrigan (full-time)

Telephone: 01305 221122

Email: safeguardingandstandardsadvisors@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Children's Advice and Duty service (ChaD)

Telephone: 01305 228558 (same number used out of hours)

Email: childrensadvicemandduty@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Locality Teams

Dorchester: 01305 224220, dorchesterlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

East: 01202 868224, eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

North: 01258 474036, northlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Purbeck: 01929 557000, purbecklocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

West: 01308 425241, westlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

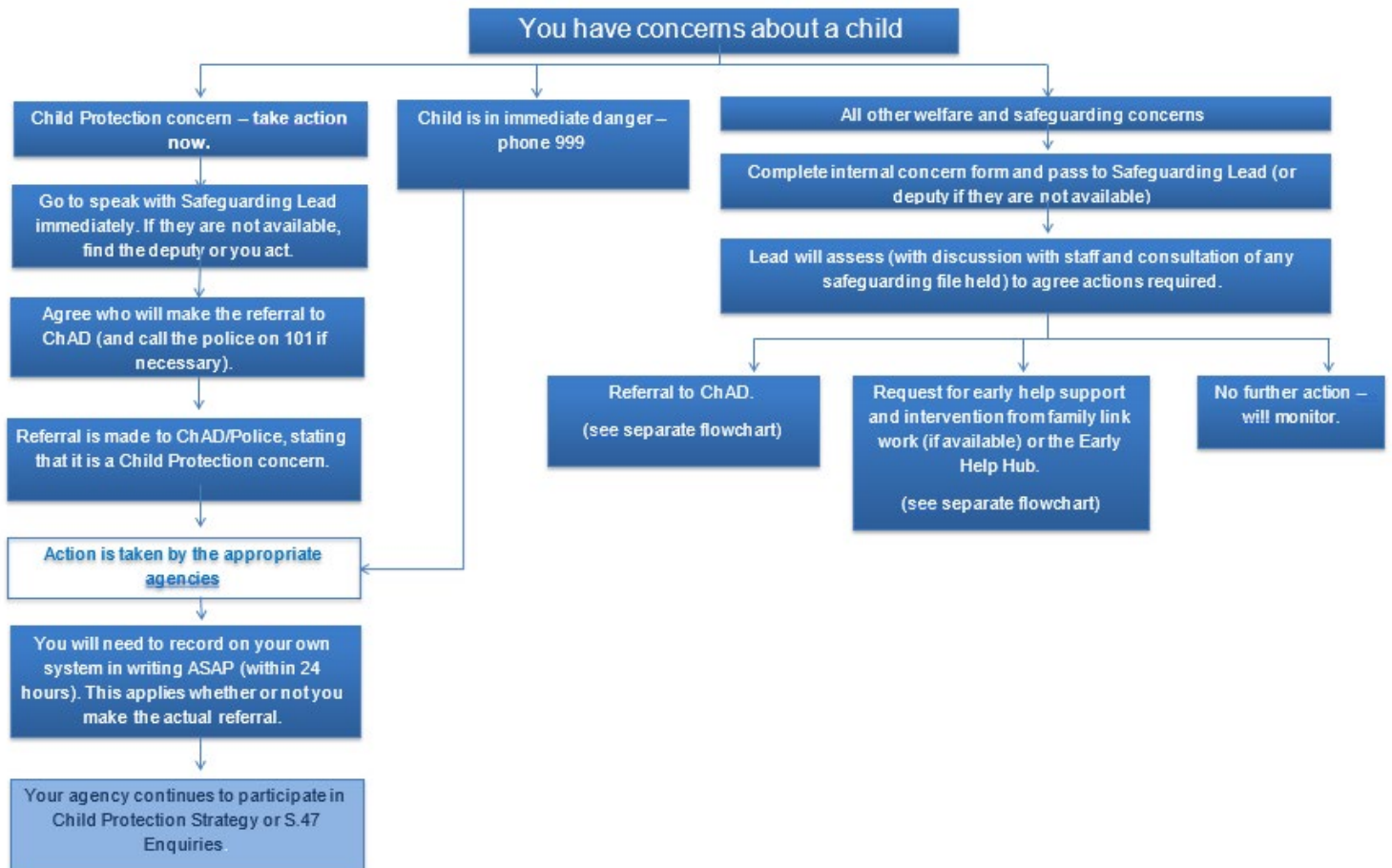
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Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

[Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Continuum of Need Guidance](#)

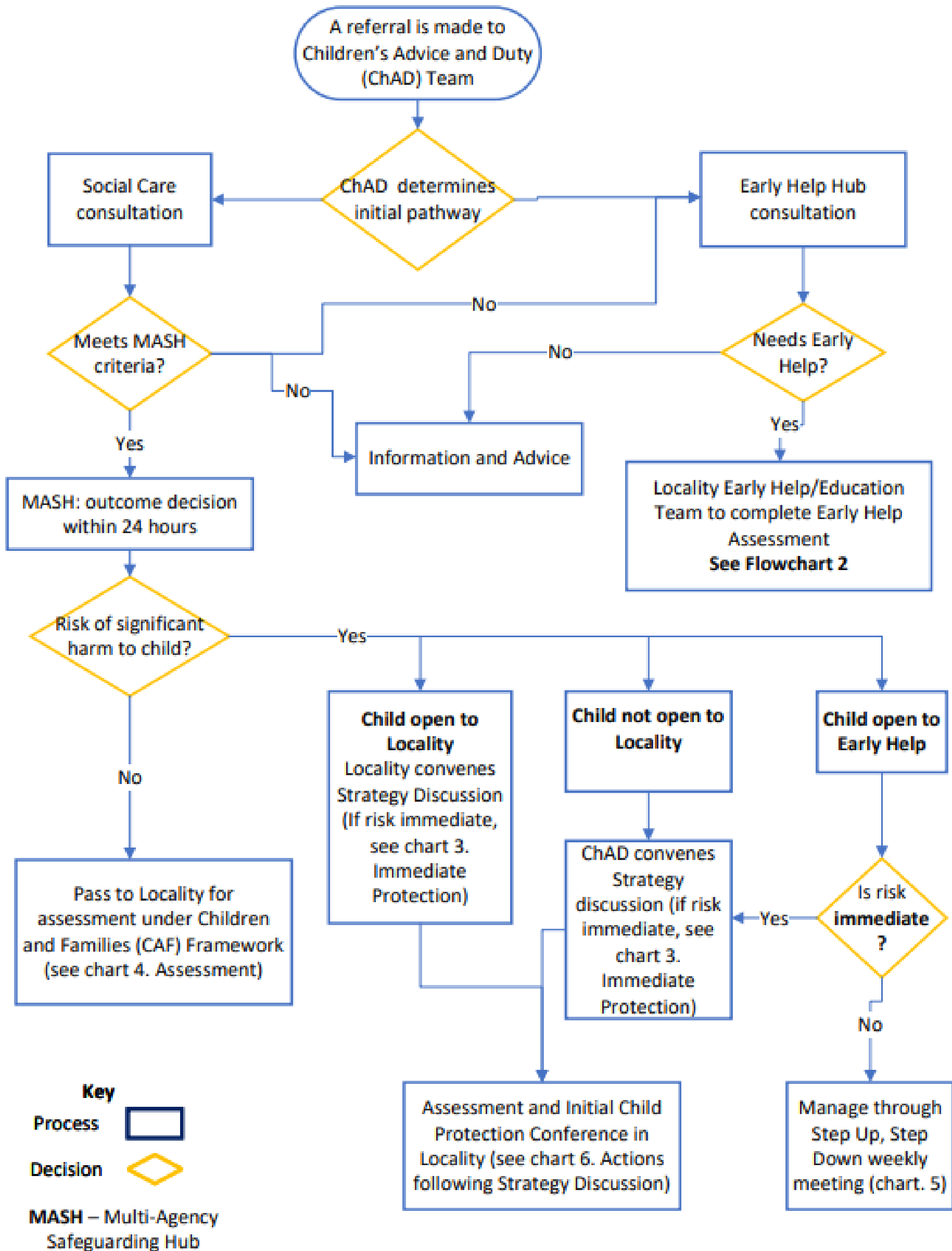
Appendix C.



No matter what the outcome, keep monitoring, re-refer or escalate as appropriate. Participate in all assessments and plans. Chase referrals if not kept informed – this is our responsibility.

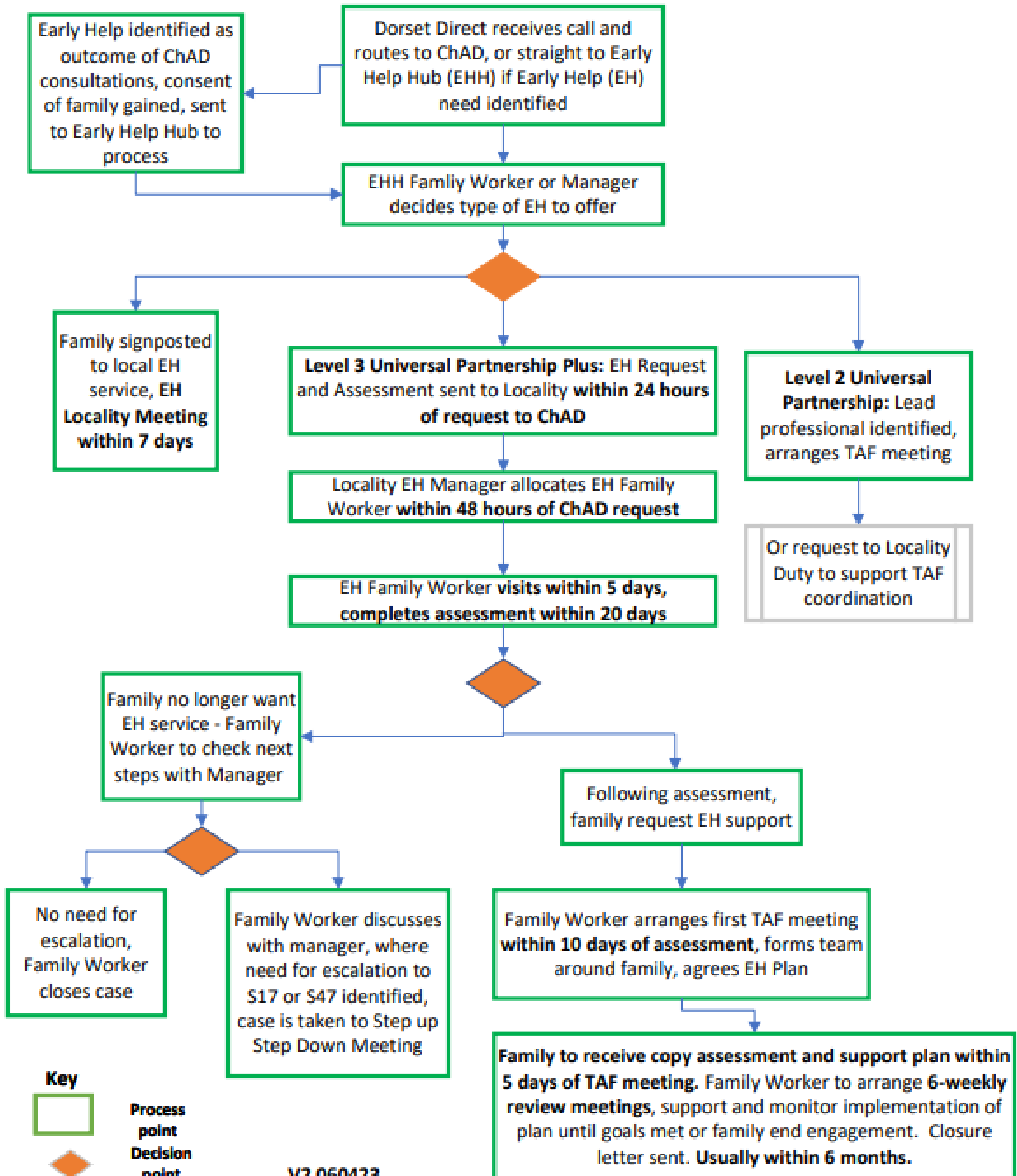
Appendix D.

Action taken when a child is referred to Dorset Children's Services

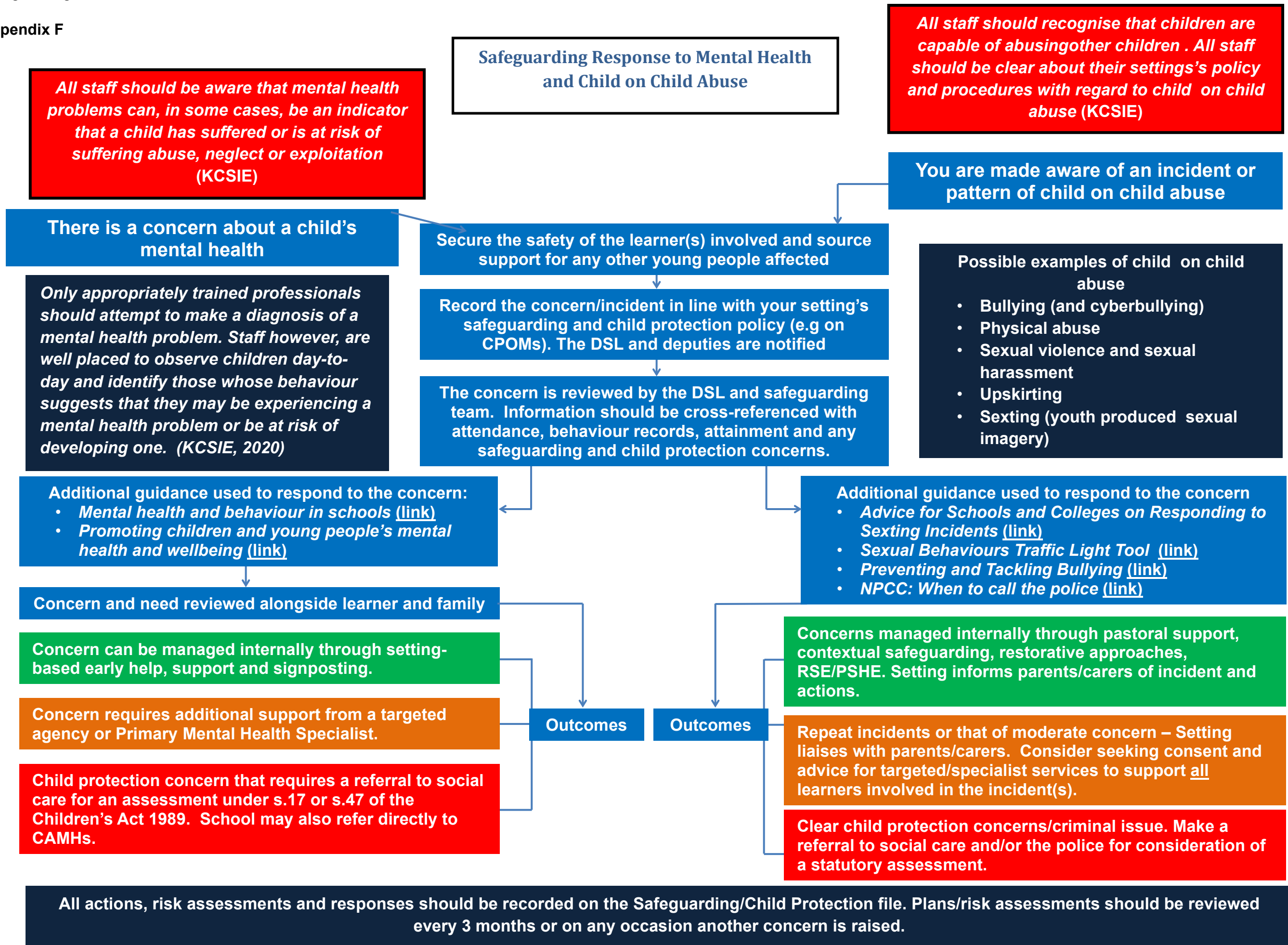


Appendix E.

Early Help Pathway



Appendix F



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