

Safeguarding Policy

Together for Short Lives is committed to protecting children, young people and adults ‘at risk’ from harm, promoting their health and welfare and minimising the adverse consequences of neglect or abuse. We believe everyone in the organisation has a responsibility to promote the welfare of the children and families that we come into contact with, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them. We will give equal priority to keeping all children, young people and adults ‘at risk’ safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Purpose

Safeguards are measures that an organisation should put in place to help reduce the risk of children, young people and adults ‘at risk’ from being harmed. This policy seeks to ensure that Together for Short Lives undertakes its responsibilities regarding the protection of children, young people and adults ‘at risk’ and will respond to concerns appropriately. It offers a framework to support staff and volunteers in their practices and clarifies the organisation’s expectations.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working with Together for Short Lives. They have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies/procedures, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

Together for Short Lives staff come into contact with children, young people and/or adults ‘at risk’ through the following activities:

- Helpline enquiries
- Social media
- Event participation
- Visits to services
- Engagement with families/community

Scope

The policy includes the definition of harm/abuse, process for escalating/reporting concerns, procedures for recruitment, training and information storage. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other Together for Short Lives policies:

- Whistleblowing (ability to inform on other staff/practices within the organisation)
- Data Protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Confidentiality (ensuring service users are aware of your duty to disclose)
- Social Media Policy
- Dignity at Work (Anti-bullying) policy

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In addition the following legislation and government guidance can offer further insight and guidance into the processes surrounding the protection of children, young people and adults 'at risk'.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education, 2018)
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014)
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017)
- Safeguarding guidance for children Wales (2019)
- The Children Act (1989, 2004)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- The Care Act (2014) and Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2018) for support and protection of adults

The UK's four nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – each have their own child protection system and laws to help protect children from abuse and neglect. Each nation has a framework of legislation, guidance and practice to identify children who are at risk of harm, take action to protect those children and prevent further abuse occurring. Further information can be found on the NSPCC website <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/>

For the purpose of this guidance a child/young person is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child) and an adult 'at risk' is a person aged 18 years or over who because of their needs for care and support are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Lead responsibility for safeguarding

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the governance of the charity, including safeguarding. Issues relating to safeguarding are a standing item at all Board meetings. The Board has identified a lead Trustee, (TBC), to have lead responsibility for ensuring Together for Short Lives meets its responsibilities and ensures good practice is shared and understood by all Trustees.

The organisation has designated the Director of Service Development and Improvement as the Designated Lead for Safeguarding for the charity. Their responsibilities include:-

- Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy and safeguarding processes across the organisation.
- To receive and act on staff concerns about safeguarding swiftly and appropriately and ensure data is captured and reported at ET/Board level as appropriate.
- To ensure staff have access to appropriate training and information.
- To keep up to date with relevant legislation and guidance, act as the lead contact for communication with local safeguarding partners.
- To work in liaison with appropriate Executive Team members to ensure appropriate governance measures are being taken in situations where children, young people and adults 'at risk' are concerned.

In the absence of the designated lead, concerns or reports related to safeguarding should be passed to the CEO or another member of the Executive team as soon as possible.

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Abuse/Harm

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children, young people and adults 'at risk' wherever possible. Harm or abuse is defined as the persistent failure to meet physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development.

Abuse can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Cyber Bullying
- Financial abuse
- Child sexual exploitation and/or human trafficking
- Radicalisation
- Domestic Violence
- Forced labour
- Female genital mutilation

Protecting children, young people and adults 'at risk' - escalating concerns

During any contact with children and families all staff/volunteers must be vigilant towards any form of abuse or harm. The procedure for escalating and reporting incidents/concerns is laid out in Appendix 1. All staff, volunteers and people working on behalf of Together for Short lives must follow the process outlined. All incidents/concerns should be documented in a record of concern form (Appendix 2) at the time of the event and discussed with the relevant line manager/designated lead for safeguarding as soon as possible. The record of concern form will be passed to the designated lead for safeguarding and will be stored electronically in a secure folder on the N drive password protected and accessed by the Designated Lead for Safeguarding, CEO and Director of Finance/Resources.

Staff must make it clear to those providing information that confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information could prejudice the welfare of the child/young person/adult at risk.

Reporting concerns against staff and volunteers

Together for Short Lives recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff or volunteers within the organisation. All staff must be aware of the organisation's whistle blowing policy and feel confident to raise concerns about attitudes or actions of staff/volunteers.

The procedure for escalating and reporting incidents/concerns related to a member of staff or volunteer is laid out in Appendix 3. Any member of staff or volunteer is required to report any concerns in the first instance to the Designated Lead for Safeguarding, and, if absent, to the CEO or another member of the Executive team. A written record of the Concern (Appendix 2) will be completed. A referral will be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

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Any allegation of abuse/neglect made against a member of staff/volunteer will be dealt with fairly, quickly and without prejudice in a way that ensures protection for the child/young person/adult at risk and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The welfare of the child/young person/adult at risk is the priority and will take precedence over any disciplinary investigation by Together for Short Lives. The person who is subject to the allegation will be kept informed of the progress of any investigation by the Director of Finances/Resources and staff records will be maintained in accordance with current legislative guidance. Together for Short Lives will continue to work in collaboration with external organisations i.e. local authority, police in investigating the allegation if required.

Support and Supervision

The organisation recognises that dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues is demanding and stressful and can cause significant additional pressure to staff. Processes will be in place to ensure regular supervision and peer observation is in place for those staff involved in the Helpline.

Staff will be further supported by their line manager and the designated lead for safeguarding as required.

Any incidents/concerns raised will be presented at team meetings as an opportunity for reflection and discussion.

Staff recruitment

All staff and volunteers will be required to have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) basic check prior to recruitment. Staff recruitment will conform to the organisational policy and the safer recruitment policy. All appointments will be subject to a satisfactory probationary period.

Staff Training

As part of a thorough induction package all staff will receive in house training in safeguarding to include the role of their line manager, designated lead for safeguarding, lead trustees and signposting to the relevant policies and procedures. Training for all staff/volunteers will be formally updated annually.

Staff who, through their role, are in regular contact with children, young people and/or adults 'at risk' (e.g. Helpline) will have access to further safeguarding training at an appropriate level, this will be reviewed and provided annually.

Regular updates received from the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership including legislation, policy and guidance will form part of whole staff team meetings as necessary.

Safeguarding Helpline Staff

Callers to the helpline are often in crisis and can disclose information that causes the advisor to believe that the caller, or the individual the caller is discussing, could be suffering from, or at risk of significant harm.

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In these cases, helpline staff will refer to the Helpline script provided to them during their induction to help them to gauge the risk of harm and act appropriately. At all times staff will stay within the boundaries of the Together for Short Lives Helpline Service. Staff will adhere to the guidance for escalating and reporting concerns, and maintaining accurate and detailed records.

Managing risks when running events

A risk assessment will be undertaken prior to staff/volunteers attending/running any events where children/young people or adults at risk are present.

Documentation, Record Keeping and Sharing Information

Keeping essential information and contact details of parents and carers is vital and is part of keeping children/young people/adults 'at risk', safe and promoting their welfare. All staff/volunteers will be made aware during their induction period that information they are given by children/families should, under most circumstances, remain confidential within the organisation.

All information relating to safeguarding children, young people and/or adults 'at risk' will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the organisation's data protection and confidentiality policy. Further advice is available from Department for Education Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners.

Support and training on record keeping, documentation, recording and storage of data will be included in the training given to all staff and volunteers across the organisation. Ensuring records are clear and accurate is vital and must clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. All records must be signed, dated and timed. Records of concerns and the response will be filed on the child/young person/adult at risk's file on the CMS system.

Staff working with children, young people and their families must make it clear to those providing information that confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information could prejudice the welfare of the child/young person and/or adult 'at risk'. Instances where confidentiality cannot be kept are listed below:

- If the caller or third party is at high or immediate risk of harm or death including self-harm and suicide. Staff will seek immediate attention from emergency services if appropriate.
- If we receive information that a child/young person or adult 'at risk' is currently being abused or neglected.
- If we receive a court order or if we are instructed by the police.
- If we receive information where an act of terrorist grooming or radicalisation has taken place.
- If someone threatens the safety of a member of staff at Together for Short Lives, a professional involved in their care, or a member of the public.

Taking, storing and sharing photographs/images/case studies of children - All staff will follow Together for Short Lives processes for consent and recording of new case studies. Consent to use information are for a three-year period and recorded for specific use only. If additional usage of images or stories are required, consent will be obtained and stored on secure files.

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If there are changes in family circumstances, for example the death of a child, Together for Short Lives will amend/remove images and stories from its channels.

Any requests from other agencies for further information related to a safeguarding incident/concern should be discussed with the relevant line manager and the designated lead for safeguarding. Together for Short Lives will ensure that procedures for sharing information are compatible with local safeguarding agency expectations. A written record of any information shared will be added to the Concerns form, and kept within the CMS record.

Review

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding will monitor all aspects of safeguarding across the organisation annually and provide a detailed summary of their findings to both the Executive Team and Lead Trustee.

Final statement

The welfare of child, young person and/or adult 'at risk' is paramount at all times and if a member of staff is in doubt about the need to raise concerns/disclose information they should discuss this with their line manager immediately. Further advice can be sought from the Designated lead for Safeguarding, CEO or any member of the Executive Council. If you are worried about a child, even if you're unsure, you can get further advice from the NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends or online or by email 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/report/>

Further reading and advice

Home Office (2016) [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information \(PDF\)](#). London: HM Government.

Department for Education (DfE) (2018) [Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children \(PDF\)](#). London: HM Government.

Department for Education (DfE) (2018) Information sharing Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and careers. London HM Government
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

Department of Health & Social Care Chapter 14 Adult Safeguarding
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

Guide on Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (updated Dec 2020) at https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/guide_art_8_eng.pdf

Keeping Bristol safe partnership website available at <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/children/>

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National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014

- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland/>

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017 at

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland>

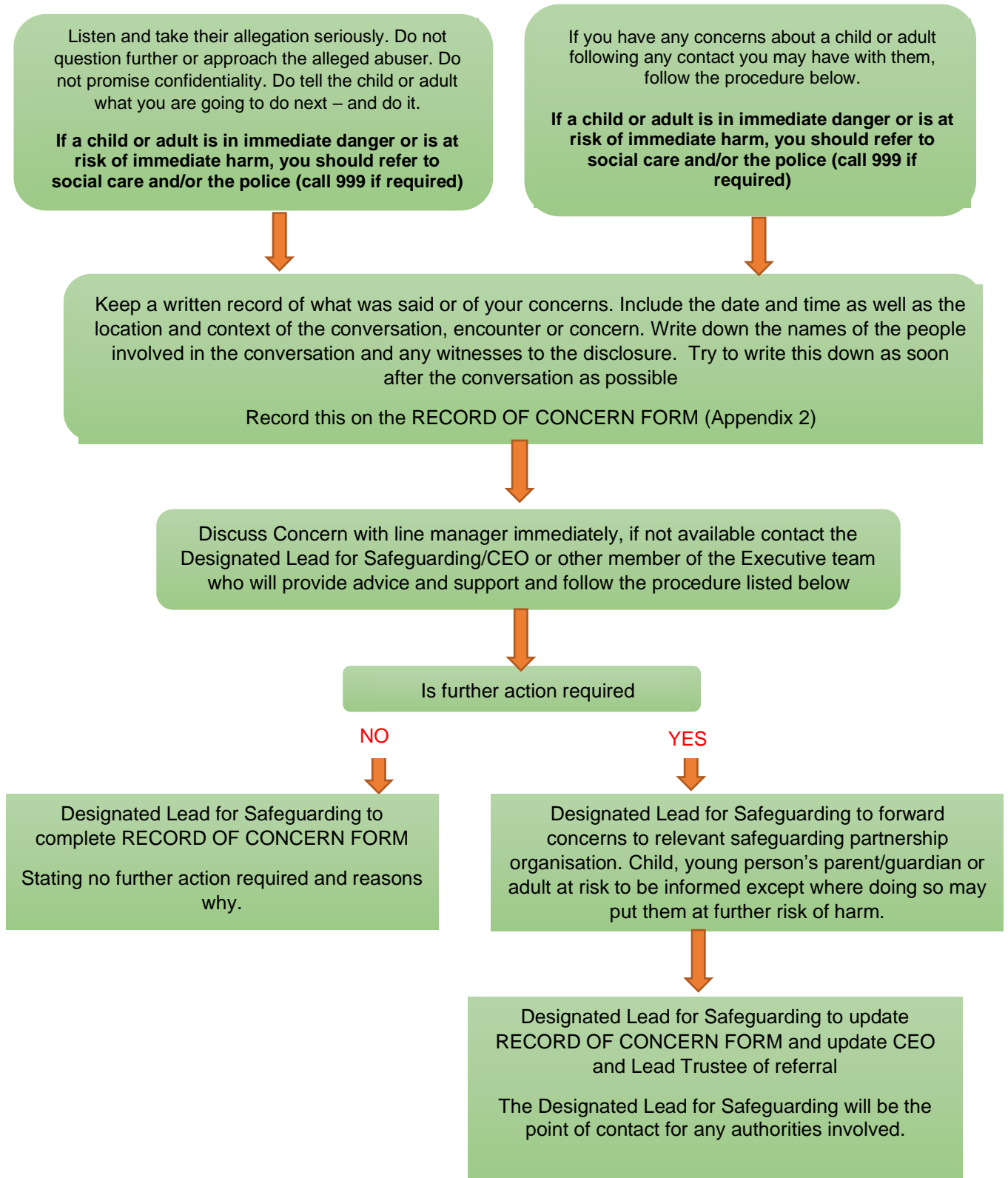
Safeguarding guidance for children and adults -Welsh Government at

<https://gov.wales/safeguarding-guidance>

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Appendix 1 Procedure for escalating concerns

The process below details the stages involved if a direct disclosure of abuse is made to a member of staff or volunteer or if a member of staff or volunteer has immediate concerns about the safety of a child/young person or adult 'at risk' :

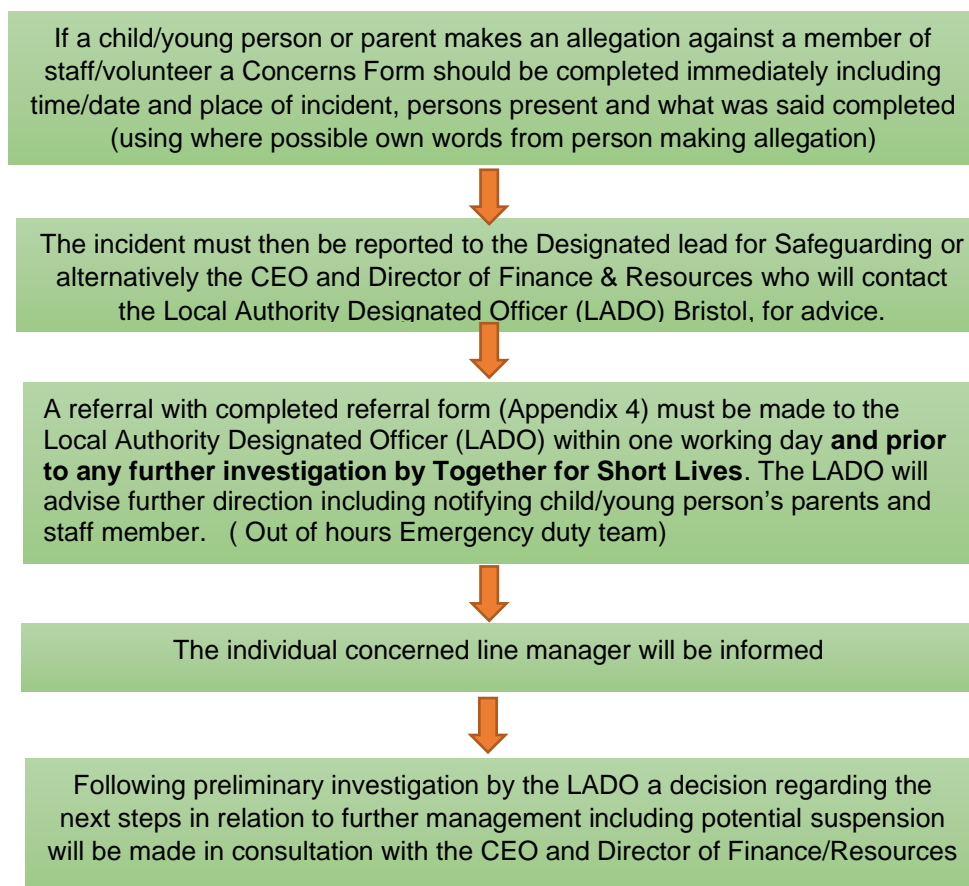


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Appendix 2 Safeguarding Incident/Concerns Form

Date of contact		Time of contact	
Nature of contact Phone/email/other		Name of Caller	
Name of Advisor			
Details of Incident/What were you told/see/who was present/where did it happen?			
Actions taken by Advisor/what did you do and what did you say?			
Is there an immediate risk of harm ? Yes/No If Yes – detail action taken to address immediate risk including any referral (record name, position and address)			
Who has the incident/concern been discussed with ?			
Action taken by above			
Signature Time/Date			
Date/Time reported to Designated lead for Safeguarding lead or CEO/ET in their absence			
Action taken by Designated lead for Safeguarding			
Signature Time/Date			

Appendix 3 Procedure for escalating concerns where member of staff/volunteer is involved



Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk) up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes. All investigations will be carried out in accordance with **Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership** (<https://bristolsafeguarding.org>) **processes**, with advice from the LADO and following internal disciplinary procedures. Any investigation by the police or local authorities will take precedence over an internal disciplinary investigation.

The individual who is subject to the allegation will be kept informed of the progress of any investigation by the Director of Finance & Resources and all appropriate health and welfare support provided.

On conclusion of a case if the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's service or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his/her services, Together for Short Lives will seek further advice from the LADO as to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). If a referral is to be made; it should be submitted within 1 month of the allegation being substantiated.

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If the allegation is not substantiated and the individual staff member/volunteer wants to return to work Together for Short lives will discuss with them how to facilitate this. HR staff records will be maintained.

Bristol LADO Nicola Baird childprotection@bristol.gov.uk or 0117 90 37795

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Appendix 4 Referral / Request for LADO Consultation

This form is to be completed on all occasions when an allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer or foster carer

Form to be sent to LADO within 1 working day of allegation being reported

CHILDREN

PLEASE EMAIL SECURELY TO: childprotection@bristol.gov.uk PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM RECEIPT ON 0117 903 7795

Details of the adult involved			
Full Name:		D.O.B:	
Home Address:			
Role:		Length of employment:	
Employer/ Organisation:			
Does the person work/volunteer in any other setting with children?			
Details of child(ren) involved			
Full Name:		D.O.B:	
Home Address:			
Name of Parent and contact details:			
Lead professional contact details i.e. social worker:			
Any children with whom the adult has contact outside of their employment (e.g. their own children, partner's children, family members etc.)			
Name(s):	DOB (or approx. age)	Address(es):	Relationship to adult

Details of alleged incident/concern			
Date and time of incident:		Location of incident:	
Which of the following criteria do you consider the allegation(s) meets?			
The allegation of inappropriate behaviour:			
Has harmed or may have harmed a child?	Choose an item.		
Is possibly a criminal offence against or related to a child?	Choose an item.		
Indicates the individual poses a risk of harm to children?	Choose an item.		
Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children	Choose an item.		
OR:			
I am unsure and I am seeking advice and guidance	Choose an item.		
<u>Summary of the incident</u>			
(Please provide as much information as possible including what led up to the incident, any witnesses, evidence of harm, any actions taken?)			
<u>Previous concerns or allegations regarding the adult</u>			
<u>Information about the child/ young person</u>			
(How was the child behaving, have they made previous allegations, do they have a disability/SEN)?			

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Details of person completing this form			
Name		Date	
Organisation		Job title	
Email address		Telephone	

DO NOT USE – LADO RECORDING ONLY

(ALT+N for new recording box)

Recording Details	
Date	Click here to enter a date.
Action/ Communication	
Recorded By	Choose an item.

Threshold Decision	
LADO Threshold	Choose an item.
Rationale	
Date	Click here to enter a date.
Record by	Choose an item.