



Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy 2024

LINKED POLICIES

- Safe Touch
- Health and Safety / Building Security

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Respect Statement
- Chaperone Guidance
- Volunteer Guidance
- Regulated Activity Overview
- KCSIE 2024
- Child Performance and activities licensing legislation
- Tutor Declaration

Safeguarding Policy (FINAL Version)
Reviewed September 2024



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Policy Statement

MAODS has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people who participate in its' projects. We are fully committed towards providing an open and safe environment where all participants are treated with respect and dignity at all times and can thrive to meet their full potential.

MAODS (of which NEXTGEN is a part of) believe that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All participants in our work, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (including Freelance Staff) and volunteers involved in our work have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Who does the Policy apply to?

This policy applies to anyone who engages with children and young people for or on behalf of MAODS and NEXTGEN. This includes:

All Employees

Freelance staff

Volunteers

We believe that everyone has a role to play in safeguarding at MAODS and expect everyone to adopt and implement good safeguarding practices and procedures as outlined in this policy. All employees, freelance staff and volunteers working directly with children and young people are asked to confirm they have read this policy and understood it, before commencing work. All employees, freelance staff and volunteers attend a Safeguarding briefing, delivered by the Safeguarding training, bi-annually (with updates provided sooner if required)

The policy seeks to ensure that everyone:

- Works safely and effectively with children and young people.
- Understands their responsibility to protect children in all areas of our activities.
- Knows what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of children or are concerned about the behaviour of others towards children.



1.0 - Introduction

MAODS is committed to providing a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. This commitment is displayed in summary in relevant areas of the building (Studio Reception / GLH) and also available online.

Their welfare is our main priority and is the responsibility of all MAODS Trustees, staff, volunteers and freelancers.

MAODS performs existing work three times per year, with rehearsals, workshops and additional showcases undertaken by both MAODS and Next Generation Youth Theatre (the same organisation). We are committed to the safeguarding of all our volunteers, freelance staff, participants, audience attendees and sub-contractors.

We constantly engage inside and outside of the building with people of all ages from Tameside and beyond and we have a particular focus working with young people that includes taking responsibility for children and young people in the absence of their parents or carers.

The Children Act 1989 states the legal definition of a child is “*a person under the age of 18*”. Definitions for ‘young people’ are more open to interpretation, but the broad age parameters are generally between the ages of 16-25. A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation

MAODS’s Designated Safeguarding Officer is Ian Goddard, iangoddard900@gmail.com 07740 170540 .

MAODS Safeguarding Officer is supported by MAODS’s Safeguarding trained Leads, comprising representatives from across the organisation.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of MAODS’s Safeguarding policy, guidelines and procedures rests with the full governing board.

The Disclosure and Concern forms can be found on page 15 in Appendix A of this policy.

Accredited, and in date training, undertaken by the Safeguarding Lead includes;

- Advanced certificate in safeguarding for safeguarding leads
- Online safety for schools
- Annual certificate in safeguarding
- Safer recruitment
- SEND code of practice
- Prevent duty
- County Lines
- Understanding of the single central record
- How to design and deliver effective mental health support
- Peer on peer sexual abuse



2.0 Safeguarding – Good Practice Guidelines

The definition of Safeguarding is to protect from harm or damage with an appropriate measure. Alternative words for safeguarding include: protect, afford protection to, shield, screen, defend, guard, keep safe, shelter.

Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in their work has a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.
Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults (2009).

Everyone should follow best practice guidelines when working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

DO:

- Treat children/young people/vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- Acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries
- Visually and mentally risk assess the situation/environment on an ongoing basis
- Always take suspicion, concern or allegations of abuse seriously
- Tell the person raising the suspicion, concern or allegation that you have a duty to report it to the Safeguarding Officer
- Be proactive about ensuring you do not put yourself in a vulnerable or difficult situation
- Tell the Safeguarding Officer if you suspect a child/young person/vulnerable adult is developing an infatuation
- Challenge inappropriate language/behaviour

NEVER

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children/young people/vulnerable adults or act as a role model
- Be alone with a child/young person/vulnerable adult in a private/behind-the-scenes area
- Become 'friends' with a child/young person/vulnerable adult. Including social media connections.
- Act in a way that can be misinterpreted
- Accept personal gifts or money from a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Give personal gifts or money to a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Contact a child/young person/vulnerable adult on a personal basis
- Give your email or social network details to a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Interact with children/young people/vulnerable adults via social networking unless on behalf of MAODS as part of an agreed activity
- Socialise with a child/young person/vulnerable adult outside of work



- Show favouritism in any way
- Undermine or criticise a colleague in front of a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Trivialise feelings, concerns or beliefs expressed by a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Allow, take part in, encourage or ignore abusive, discriminatory, offensive or violent behaviour
- Take a child/young person/vulnerable adult alone on car journeys
- Share changing and toilet facilities
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person/vulnerable adult, even in fun
- Enter an intimate relationship with a child/young person/vulnerable adult
- Reduce a child/young person/vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record suspicions, concerns, allegations made
- Do things of a personal nature for a child/young person/vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow a child/young person/vulnerable adult to visit your home
- Allow another person to bully or undermine others.

ALWAYS REPORT/RECORD

- If you accidentally hurt someone
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult seems distressed in any manner
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult misunderstands/misinterprets something you have done
- Any creative activity with children/young people/vulnerable adults at MAODS should take place in the presence of a registered chaperone and/or a DBS-checked member of MAODS Team.

Remember: always take any and all concerns, allegations or suspicions about abuse seriously, and always be proactive about ensuring you do not put yourself in a vulnerable or difficult situation. **When in doubt, ask.**



Child Performance Licensing

Current legislation requires licences to be issued by each Local Authority (LA) for children who take part in one of the following categories:

- broadcast performances (films, TV, video) covers performances that will be broadcast;
- non-broadcast performances (theatre, modelling) covers performance that are not broadcast.

It is MAODS responsibility to establish contact with the relevant local authority in which a child resides and put arrangements in place for the relevant licence, depending on the nature of the performance.

A child performance licence is required for anyone aged 16 and under (up to and including the last Friday of their year 11) to take part in a performance or activity such as TV, dance and theatre.

MAODS is responsible for completing part 1 of the application and the parent/guardian is responsible for completing part 2. ID documentation with all applications along with a recent colour photograph.

If time out of school is required, it will be necessary to provide a school permission letter with official letter head along with the application.

Body of Persons Licence (BOPA) A BOPA is issued when non-professional or amateur performances that involve children under 16 who are not receiving payment or require time off school are performed.

On application, MAODS must provide:

- Names, addresses and dates of birth of all the children who will be performing.
- Venue and dates of performances.
- Names and addresses of the adults forming the Body of Persons.
- A copy of this safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Copies of our insurance documentation.

Chaperones

- All licensed children need to be chaperoned in law while taking part in a performance.
- Licenced chaperones are approved by Local Authorities and will be familiar with the law regarding children in entertainment.
- Chaperones acts in loco parentis and exercise the care which a parent might be expected to give a child.
- Ratio's can be found on the following page.
- A chaperone's first priority is always to the child and the chaperone must not take part in any activity that would prevent them from proper supervision and care of the children they are responsible for.
- Every chaperone is asked to read a copy of this safeguarding policy and sign a declaration in advance of their work.
- Chaperones undergo a safeguarding briefing, led by safeguarding officers.
- The chaperone will no longer have responsibility for a child once the child has been handed into the care of their responsible adult.
- Chaperones are required by law to keep a record for each child, per performance and these records will be kept and made available, together with each child's licence, for inspection by an officer of the Local Authority.
- Upon completion of the production, the daily record sheet/s will be stored for a period of not less than 6 months after the final performance date for which the Licence has been granted.



Ratios

When engaging with a group of children, MAODS always adheres to at least the following adult/child ratios:

For classes held at the Mill

Child's Age	Number of Adults	Number of Children (up to)
2 Yrs	1	6
3-5 Yrs	1	13
5 Years +	1	30

There is always an additional member of staff on site during all classes.

For shows performed at either the Mill or George Lawton Hall

Child's Age	Number of Adults	Number of Children (up to)
2 Yrs	2	4
3-5 Yrs	2	24
5 Years +	2	24
MAODS activities at external venues	1	12

- *The maximum number of children chaperones are allowed to have in their care at any one time is 12. But, in a lot of instances this will be too many (diverse mixture of ages requiring more concentrated supervision and so forth). We recommend 8 children to be the maximum in many cases.*

From the NSPCC - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children>

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors. We've put together some best practice guidance to help other organisations work out how many adults are needed to supervise children safely.

We recommend having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- **under 2 years** - one adult to three children
- **2 - 3 years** - one adult to four children
- **4 - 8 years** - one adult to six children
- **9 - 12 years** - one adult to eight children
- **13 - 18 years** - one adult to ten children

Depending on the needs and abilities of the children, and the nature of the activity, you may need to have more adults than the minimum. We recommend having at least two adults present, even with smaller groups.

If young people are helping to supervise younger children only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios.



3.0 - Roles and Responsibilities - MAODS Staff, Volunteers and Freelancers:

For the purposes of this policy, the term MAODS Staff will include all Volunteers, freelance staff and sub-contractors

Who	What
Governing Board	Overall legal responsibility for Safeguarding. Ensure MOADS has a culture of open debate around its Safeguarding policy, where everyone feels able to comment, criticise or recommend changes as appropriate.
Chair	Ensure MOADS has a robust Safeguarding policy, with appropriate guidelines and procedures, which are regularly reviewed and effectively communicated. To ensure legal compliance on behalf of board
Designated Officer	Ensure safeguarding is effectively co-ordinated across the organisation Ensure confidentiality is maintained for all parties as appropriate. Ensure appropriate DBS checks and systems are in place. Liaise with external agencies as appropriate . Investigate incidents and suspicions, and make referrals as appropriate. Maintain a confidential recording system as per data guidelines. Represent MAODS at appropriate inter-agency meetings. Review the policy, guidelines and procedures on an annual basis. Ensure MAODS's Safeguarding Policy, guidelines and procedures are communicated effectively across the organisation
Next Gen Lead And filtered to Next Gen tutors / staff.	To ensure all tutors have up to date DBS certificates that follow MOADS guidelines. Ensure that parents, carers or guardians provide signed / permission for photographs, videos or other images to be made or used by MAODS of their children. Ensure the delivery of the Next Generation strategy adheres to the Safeguarding policy at all times. Connect with external agencies where appropriate. Ensure safe transportation for children/young people/vulnerable adults when appropriate.
Production Team	Adhere to the Safeguarding Policy. A duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. To ensure that they are aware of and adhere to MAODS's Safeguarding policy and its accompanying procedures. To sign a declaration that they have received and read MAODS's Safeguarding Policy and its accompanying guidelines and procedures. To report any concerns, disclosures or allegations
All MAODS Volunteers	A duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. To ensure that they are aware of and adhere to MOADS Safeguarding policy and its accompanying procedures to sign a declaration that they have received and read MAODS Safeguarding Policy and its accompanying guidelines and procedures To report and concerns, disclosures or allegation



The Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team represents a cross section of the organisation.

MAODS's Safeguarding Officer is supported by the Trained Safeguarding Leads, consisting:

Name	Role	Email	Contact number
Laura Meredith-Hoyle	Chair	laurameredithhoyle@gmail.com	07872 939188
Ian Goddard	SG Lead	langoddard900@gmail.com	07740 170540
Kathryn Farrow	Deputy SG Lead / Next Gen	nextgenmossley@gmail.com	



4.0 – Safeguarding Issues affecting children.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children [5-11-year olds](#) and [12-17 year olds](#)

They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children who are absent from education or missing from education

All staff should be aware that children being absent, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, risk of forced marriage or honour-based abuse.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

NEXT GEN monitor the attendance of all children and if children who are old enough to make their way to and from classes do not attend without any prior notification parents / guardians will be contacted to check that there is a genuine reason for absence. An attendance register is also kept, and whilst attendance is not statutory, any patterns of absence will be discussed with the safeguarding lead.

If a pupils leave site, parents and carers will be contacted to inform them their child has left site. If staff are unable to contact parents/carers they will contact the either the safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead to decide whether to report them missing with the police. If parents/carers cannot locate their child they should also be advised to report as missing.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.



The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties:

Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation:

Children with special educational needs and disabilities or health issues

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Trustees should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.



5.0 - Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse – physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Included within the appendix are also other forms of abuse that may occur. The list of symptoms given is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed symptoms. It is important to remember that most abuse involves more than one main type, for example, sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. These symptoms, for example cuts and grazes, may also be accidental and not a sign of abuse.

Physical Abuse

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

Symptoms:

Behaviour changes/wet bed/withdrawal/regression, Finger marks
Frequent unexplained injuries, Broken bones
Afraid of physical contact, Cuts and grazes
Violent behaviour during role play, burns
Unwillingness to change clothes, Cowering
Aggressive language and use of threats
Bruising in unusual areas
Changing explanation of injuries
Not wanting to go home with parent or carer

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Symptoms:

Lack of appropriate clothing, unkempt
Cold – complaining of body sores
Complaining of hunger
Urine smells
Lack of parental engagement
Concerns with social interactions
Behaviour presentation / Disrespectful behaviour
Concerns with exploitation and anti-social behaviour
Bullying and harassment
Lack of confidence – low self-esteem



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) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Symptoms:

Inappropriate behaviour and language
Changes in demeanor and presentation
Rejecting physical contact or demanding attention, Rocking
Physical evidence – marks, bruising,
Over frequent toileting, soiling, excessive visits to medical
Drawings – inappropriate knowledge
Relationships with other adults or children for example, being overfamiliar
Female Genital Mutilation

At MAODS we believe that all our pupils should be kept safe from harm. Female Genital Mutilation affects girls particularly from North African countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Sierra Leone.

Post-FGM Symptoms include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- unusual behaviour after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Longer Term problems include:

- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- menstrual problems
- kidney damage and possible failure
- cysts and abscesses
- pain when having sex
- infertility
- complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- emotional and mental health problems

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.



These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it alone.

Domestic violence can have a significant impact on a child's social, emotional and mental health.

Symptoms:

Visibly upset

Withdrawn - not wanting to socialise

Out of character behaviour

Aggression

Self harm

Lack of confidence and low self-esteem

Isolation from peers

Fear of authority

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Other safeguarding issues all trustees and staff should be aware of include:

- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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

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



Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) – CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include noncontact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- Child criminal exploitation: lines - County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten



serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of [local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation](#).

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

- Cyberbullying – this can be done via text messages or the internet (social media sites) and is usually prejudged against particular groups. It can result in the intimidation of a person through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or on-line.
- Domestic Abuse & Violence – any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviours, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence 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. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse#domestic-abuse-and-young-people>

<https://safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>

[https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/signs-](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/)

[symptoms-effects/ http://www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/support-for-women/what-about-my-children/](http://www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/support-for-women/what-about-my-children/)



- Drugs - this could relate to alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (legal highs) and volatile substances. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>
- Educational neglect – This is where a parent's actions could be viewed as neglectful i.e. likely to seriously impair the learning and educational development of the child. This could be perceived as (but not exhaustive to):
 1. Lack of engagement in most college or school/ Local Authority/ trust meetings -even where support is offered - that leads to a disengagement of a child in their schooling with a detrimental impact on their learning and development.
 2. Lack of engagement with agencies beyond school, for example health services that leads to a delay/ deterioration, that impacts negatively on their child's learning and development.
 3. Lack of responsibility to ensure attendance at school and provide valid reasons for absences.
 4. At least one court intervention which fails to improve attendance.
- Fabricated or induced illness is a spectrum of presentations rather than a single entity. At one end of the spectrum less severe presentations may include a genuine belief that the child is ill, or exaggeration by carers of the child's existing symptoms. At the other end of the spectrum, the behaviour of carers includes them deliberately inducing symptoms in the child.

There are 3 ways in which the carer of a child will fabricate or induce an illness in a child:-

1. Fabrication of signs and symptoms – fabricating a past medical history;
 2. Fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsifying hospital charts and records, including letters and documents;
 3. Induction of illness by a variety of means.
- Modern Slavery and National referral mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK

- Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the 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 key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)) 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 immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.



Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

- Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-in-whom-illness-is-fabricated-or-induced>

- Faith Abuse – this includes belief in concepts such as witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil, acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eyes or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or multi murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children making them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

[Child abuse linked to faith or belief: national action plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Forced Marriage – a forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Gangs and Youth Violence – “Street gangs” for whom crime and violence are a core part of their identity, although “delinquent peer groups” can also lead to increased antisocial behaviour and youth offending.

Although some group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour, it should not be confused with the serious violence of a gang culture/activity. [Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Private Fostering – a private fostering arrangement is essentially one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

[Children Act 1989: private fostering - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. This can range from a symbolic prick to the vagina to a fairly extensive removal and narrowing of the vagina opening and in the UK all forms are prevalent. It can be known as “female genital cutting” or “female circumcision” and some communities tend to use local names for referring to this practice including “sunna”.



FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers - Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

[Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, “teacher” means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Tutors / trustees and chaperones must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless they have good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#).

- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG) – refers to violence, physical, sexual or otherwise, stalking and harassment and female genital mutilation.

[Violence against women and girls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Serious Violence - Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office’s Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

- Sexting – “Sexting” is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. Young people may also call it cybersex or send a “nudie” picture or selfie of themselves partially clothed.

[UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- Teenage Relationship Abuse – can be emotional, physical, sexual or financial abuse, where teenagers are isolated from their friends, being controlled with what they wear, checking up on them all the time, being forced to have sex, being forced to watch pornography against their will, forcing others to buy them things.
- Trafficking – “Trafficking of persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion or abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. This could be the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.



[Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)

- Mental Health – good or positive mental health is more than the absence or management of mental health problems; it is the foundation for wellbeing and effective functioning for wellbeing and effective functioning both for individuals and for their communities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

All staff should also be aware that 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.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

- Honour Based Abuse - So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see FGM Section).

- Breast Ironing - refers to the practice of massaging or pounding young girls’ breasts with heated objects to suppress or reverse the growth of breasts. Breast ironing is often performed by mothers or female relatives of victims misguidedly wishing to protect their young relatives from rape, unwanted sexual advances, early



sex, and pregnancies, all of which they fear would result from the appearance that a girl has reached the age of puberty.

- Preventing Radicalisation - Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology.

Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media and the internet) and settings (such as the home).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Prevent referral. The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

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), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76 which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers 29 childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: Risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

[Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101311/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-2023.pdf)

- Child on child Abuse (specific policy in place)

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child on child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence, and sexual



harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

The Governing bodies ensure that there are:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse;
- how allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child on child abuse will be supported;
- a clear statement that abuse is abuse, there is a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”;
- recognition of the gendered nature of child on child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms child on child abuse can take, such as:
 - sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault and sexual harassment.
 - upskirting – The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. ‘Upskirting’ is where someone takes a picture under a persons clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
 - [Upskirting: know your rights - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery):
 - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.



6.0 – The Use of Technology

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

Education Resources that could support establishments;

- Be Internet Legends developed by Parent Zone and Google is a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils
- Disrespectnobody is Home Office advice and includes resources on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography
- Education for a connected world framework from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.
- Thinkuknow is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources
- UK Safer Internet Centre developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum.



Communicating with children and young people.

Telephone

Staff are not permitted to use their own personal mobile phones for contacting children or young people, or parents and carers. Contact must always be made with a child's responsible adult and never directly with the child. If it is necessary to use a personal mobile device, it must be with the explicit consent of the designated person for safeguarding/child protection.

Email

Staff will always in the first instance email a child/young person's named responsible adult as the first point of contact. Where an individual young person has contacted a staff member via email (e.g. a work experience request) and it has been agreed that a reply would be appropriate from that staff member's work email address, contact details must initially be obtained for their parent/carer who will be carbon copied into all future correspondence, including the designated safeguarding lead. In all cases staff should use formal language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient. Staff members who have concerns regarding content of an email that they receive should consult the Designated Safeguarding lead for guidance.

Social Media

MAODS and NEXTGEN regularly use social networking sites including Facebook, X, TikTok, You tube, Instagram to promote and celebrate productions and to share activities with participants. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that all online platforms are monitored effectively and that the content on such platforms is safe and appropriate for its users.

Any contact with children and young people through online platforms and forums should **only** take place through carefully monitored organisational accounts.

MAODS is not responsible for systems, applications or tools that are designed by the social network in use and cannot take responsibility for the way in which participants engage with such platforms outside of the guidance offered during Theatre Royal Wakefield activities.

All MAODS and NEXTGEN staff, including voluntary and freelance, must not do any of the following on their personal social media accounts:

- Send or accept any friend requests on any social media platform from children or young people involved in MAODS projects.
- Send or respond to any private messages from a child/young person or participant on social media.
-

If a staff member becomes aware that they are already connected on social media to a child or young person (e.g. through being related) who is now taking part in a participation project, they should contact the Designated safeguarding officers who will offer advice and guidance as to next steps.

Communication with children and young people must stay within the confines of a managed public forum or group set up and controlled by MAODS and must at no time be exclusive, except in the



case of responding to direct e-mails which relate to MAODS activities, at all times following the procedures outlined in this policy (cc'ing parents/carers and safeguarding officer into all correspondence)

Group chats / WHATSAPP

This section outlines guidelines for safely using WhatsApp to communicate with groups of pupils, ensuring their safety and privacy while promoting effective communication.

Guidelines for Safe Use

1. Group Creation

- Only authorized staff members should create and manage WhatsApp groups for pupil communication.
- Groups should be limited to educational purposes and relevant to the specific context (e.g., class projects, extracurricular activities).
- Only students who are 13 yrs of age and older can be added to groups. For children who are under this age their parents must be added.

2. Privacy Settings

- Ensure that group settings restrict members from adding others without permission.
- Use the "admin only" feature for messaging to prevent unsolicited communication among pupils.

3. Content Sharing

- Share only appropriate and relevant information. Avoid sharing personal data or sensitive information regarding pupils. It is not a 'chat' group.

4. Monitoring and Oversight

- Regularly monitor group activity to ensure compliance with safeguarding policies.
- Encourage pupils to report any inappropriate messages or behavior within the group.

5. Communication Protocols

- Establish clear guidelines for communication, including respectful language and behavior.
- Remind pupils that group chats are not a substitute for direct communication with teachers or safeguarding leads.

6. Parental Involvement

- Inform parents about the use of WhatsApp for group communication and provide students and parents them with the opportunity to opt-out if desired. As best practice all parents should be invited into these groups.
- Encourage parents to discuss online safety with their children.

7. *Training for Staff*



- Provide training for staff on the safe use of WhatsApp, covering issues related to safeguarding, data protection, and digital communication protocols.

8. *Emergency Protocols*

- Outline procedures for reporting any concerns or incidents that arise within WhatsApp groups to the safeguarding lead immediately.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can foster a safe environment for communication and ensure the well-being of all pupils while utilizing WhatsApp as an educational tool.



7.0 -Reporting a Concern or Allegation

All MAODS and NXG staff should report any concerns or allegations to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as is practically possible – and immediately if there are serious concerns that need immediate intervention. Everyone should note that if an immediate Police presence is required, contact should be made in the first Instance directly to 999. If MAODS Safeguarding Officer is not available, concerns should be reported to any member of the Safeguarding Team (names and contact details above). All concerns will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Concerns may arise in the following ways:

- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult says they are being abused
- If someone reports that a child/young person/vulnerable adult has told them that they are being abused.
- If someone strongly suspects a child/young person/vulnerable adult has been or is being abused.
- If there are concerns about a child/young person/vulnerable adult's welfare where there are no specific disclosures or allegations of abuse.
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult tells you that they are being abused you should:
 - Listen carefully - do not directly question them
 - Give them time and attention
 - Allow them to give a spontaneous account; do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, the setting, any other witnesses, the child/young person/vulnerable adult's presentation, as well as what was said. Keep these records as they may be needed as evidence later. There is a Safeguarding disclosures and a concerns form available (see Appendix A)
- Use their own words where possible
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to relevant others about the information they have shared
- Reassure them that you are glad that they have told you
- Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong
- Describe what you are going to do next
- Explain that you may need to get help to keep them safe
- Ask them not to repeat their account of events to anyone
- Pass the information on immediately to MAODS's Safeguarding Officer. If the concern relates to MAODS's Safeguarding Officer then you should contact the Society Secretary or any other member of the Governing Board
- Do not make any external referral unless you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger.
- Make a written, dated record of the concern or allegation as soon as practicable (and certainly within 24 hours)

In order to ensure there is a clear trail for any incident or concern a 'Google Form has been created that needs to be completed. When this form is completed there is an automatic notification to the safeguarding lead.

<https://forms.gle/XTPkwqGaxwW9nzqy7>



Immediately a concern or allegation is highlighted MAODS Safeguarding Officer will discuss the matter in confidence with appropriate colleagues. They will ensure a written record is completed, signed and dated by the person reporting the concern or allegation. This will include any information about times, dates, locations and names of potential witnesses. This information will be made available to the appropriate authorities and a copy will be kept securely at MAODS. Subsequent investigation will be carried out in conjunction with the appropriate agencies. MAODS staff have a duty to listen to and record a concern or allegation, and to inform MAODS Safeguarding Officer, but not to investigate - this is the role of the Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

A flowchart of the reporting procedure is attached in Appendix F



Allegations of misconduct against staff, tutors, trustees & volunteers.

Any suspicion that a child or young person has been abused, or is at risk of being abused, by either a member of staff, a volunteer or any other adult involved in the child's life (such as a parent) should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

Incidents that MUST be reported / recorded

For protection against false allegations and / or misconstrued behaviour, if any of the following occur staff should report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record the incident.

- If staff accidentally hurt a participant.
- If participants seem distressed in any manner.
- If a participant seems to have developed an attraction towards a staff member.
- If a participant misunderstands or misinterprets something a staff member has done or said.

Action if there are concerns.

Concerns about Good Practice (i.e. if someone is *not* following the Good Practice Guidelines): Please report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and this may be dealt with it as a disciplinary issue. Any suspicion that a child has suffered abuse or is at risk of being abused should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the participant in question and any other person who may be at risk.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring service regarding concerns about an individual may have harmed a child or adult at risk, or put a child or adult at risk of harm

The Designated Safeguarding Officer has a duty to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- 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 may pose a risk of harm to children.

The LADO is responsible for:

- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers.
- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.
- Ensuring the child's voice is heard and that they are safeguarded.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom an allegation is made.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.
-

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO is available to discuss any concerns and to assist in deciding whether you need to make a referral and/or take any immediate management action to protect a child. The LADO for Tameside is contactable on 0161 342 4343 (option 3) or email ladoreferrals@tameside.gov.uk



The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible, dependant on advice from the social services department and LADO. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will also notify the Chair of MAODS.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chair of MAODS who will refer the allegation to LADO Social Services.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

If there is an allegation of poor or mal practice, then this will initially be dealt with as a misconduct issue through our Disciplinary Procedure and Rules, which may include a decision to suspend.

If a member of staff or volunteer has been suspended as the result of alleged misconduct in relation to a child protection/safeguarding issue, it is imperative that they cannot access the building or other locations where activities take place. Any log ins will be disabled with immediate effect, they will be disconnected from all remote access and have no access to folders on the system. Depending on the nature of the misconduct issue, designated members of the committee may be required by the Police to undertake additional searches to determine that person's search history in the workplace and check their personal online work folders. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will review and update the existing policy to ensure it is in line with what has occurred and make any relevant changes to procedures.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, MAODS Chair will seek the advice of the Local Safeguarding Children Board to assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the MAODS Chair, with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board, must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout



8.0 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

MAODS is committed to ensuring best practice in terms of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. All MAODS staff (that are not currently registered as a chaperone) will be subject to an enhanced DBS check who:

- a) make decisions regarding the engagement of children/young people/vulnerable adults with MAODS and its work
- b) work directly with or have 1-2-1 work related contact with children/young people/vulnerable adults
- c) are responsible for data or media relating to children/young people/vulnerable adults

For tutors who do not have their own DBS, MAODS use an accredited Umbrella Company for processing all DBS checks and these will be carried out electronically to reduce the need for paperwork to be posted out and reduce the time for the check taking place. All committee members (as volunteers) are expected to have an enhanced DBS check and MOADS will pay for the processing fee (the DBS itself is free of charge).

If any committee member is paid as a tutor then they will have to follow the guidance for this as stated below.

The Safeguarding Lead will have access to the online portal to check the status of applications and receive the DBS details once processed.

The disclosure check and the annual fee will be paid for by MAODS for MAODS staff (including Next Gen) and rechecked every 3 years (as best practice).

All tutors must undertake a disclosure check, facilitated by MAODS but at their own expense / expense of Next Gen, as a requirement. This will also be done through the agreed Umbrella Company.

Prior to these DBS checks being returning , they can provide their DBS reference number if they have a check that has been undertaken elsewhere in the past two years. If this DBS reflects the role within MAODS / Next Gen then this can be used



Appendix A

FORM 1

Safeguarding Disclosure Form

This form is to be used if you have received an open disclosure from a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Appendix H is a paper copy that can be used if the online link / system is not available.

Please fill in as much of this form as you can. If you are in discussion with a child, young person or vulnerable adult who is making a disclosure to you, explain that you need to record details of the information that is being shared but be sensitive about the level of questioning that is appropriate. Listen carefully and give them time and attention.

Allow the individual to give a spontaneous account; do not stop anyone who is freely recalling significant events.

<https://forms.gle/XTPkwqGaxwW9nzqy7>

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will acknowledge receipt of this form and may request a further confidential discussion with you. You do not need to do anything else once you have submitted this but you are requested not to discuss the content of the form with anyone else as this may compromise further investigation of the incident.

The image shows a digital form template for reporting safeguarding concerns. At the top, it features the slogan 'me, you, us' in a large, green, handwritten-style font, with the tagline 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility' below it. The main title of the form is 'Safeguarding Reporting / Concerns'. Below the title, there is a paragraph of instructions: 'This form must be completed where there are any concerns linked to Safeguarding. It is better to fill it in if you are unsure, than not to fill it in at all. The Designated Safeguarding Lead for MAODS will review all reported incidents and take action accordingly.' The form contains two input fields. The first is labeled 'Date of incident / concern *' and includes a text input area with the placeholder 'Day, month, year' and a calendar icon. The second is labeled 'Name of child / children involved *' and includes a text input area with the placeholder 'Short-answer text'.



Appendix B

Code of Conduct for Production Teams and Next Generation Tutors

The following is a guide of good practice for all practitioners, artists and workshop leaders delivering sessions at MAODS to work with children, young people and adults. This is for the protection of both the practitioner and the participants at all times. Please read the following and sign below to state that you acknowledge what is being asked of you and that you agree to work under these terms.

You must:

Arrive 15 minutes in advance of any activity to, greet and welcome the participants and escort them to their workshop space

Arrive with your session fully planned and with all resources required

Ensure the workshop space is clear of obstruction, safe and suitable for the activity you intend to deliver

Ensure that the workshop space is left clean and tidy and sign out when exiting the building. Represent and be an advocate of MAODS at all times; providing an example of good conduct for others to follow.

Use appropriate and accessible language throughout the duration of the workshop and speak to all participants with respect at all times.

Treat all staff, volunteers, children, young people and adults you are working with respect.

Report any suspicions or concerns regarding a child, young person or vulnerable adult to MAODS's Designated Safeguarding officer; who will deal with this further. Ensure that you follow MAODS's guidance in responding to a disclosure or concern, as explained in MAODS's Safeguarding policy.

Always record any conversations or events related to a Safeguarding disclosure.

Ensure that you understand and adhere to MAODS's Health & Safety & Evacuation policies.



You must not:

Engage in any inappropriate touching, physical or verbal contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Engage in any online, digital or computerised contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult; including social media, phone, text or email.

Show favouritism to any participant.

Be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol.

Smoke on the workshop premises or in sight of the venue

Be left alone/unsupervised with any child, young person or vulnerable adult at any time; including before, during or after the workshop

Exchange personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media contact with any child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Arrange to meet up with a child, young person or vulnerable adult outside of the building, workshop setting or outside of activity contracted by MAODS

Store or share the data of any child, young person or vulnerable adult

Name.....Signed.....

Project/Programme title.....Date

Signature states that you have read, acknowledged and understood the above code of conduct agree to work under these terms at all times.



Appendix C

Handling and Storing Children/Young People/Vulnerable Adults Data Disclosures:

The Safeguarding Log Book is managed by the Safeguarding Officer with password protected access. All electronic communication/notes regarding a disclosure/allegation/concern is kept within this Log Book.

Disclosure information is kept separately in a secure non-portable container. Access is strictly restricted to Chairman / Secretary / Treasurer / Artistic Director.

Anyone reporting a disclosure/allegation or concern should pass all written documentation over to the Safeguarding Officer. Copies of documents should not be kept by the individual. In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Personal Data:

All children/young people/vulnerable adults' personal contact data must be uploaded to Access upon receipt.

Only designated staff will have access to this data which is password protected.

Designated staff will have DBS checks and will be trained in how to access and collate this data for the purpose of programme delivery.

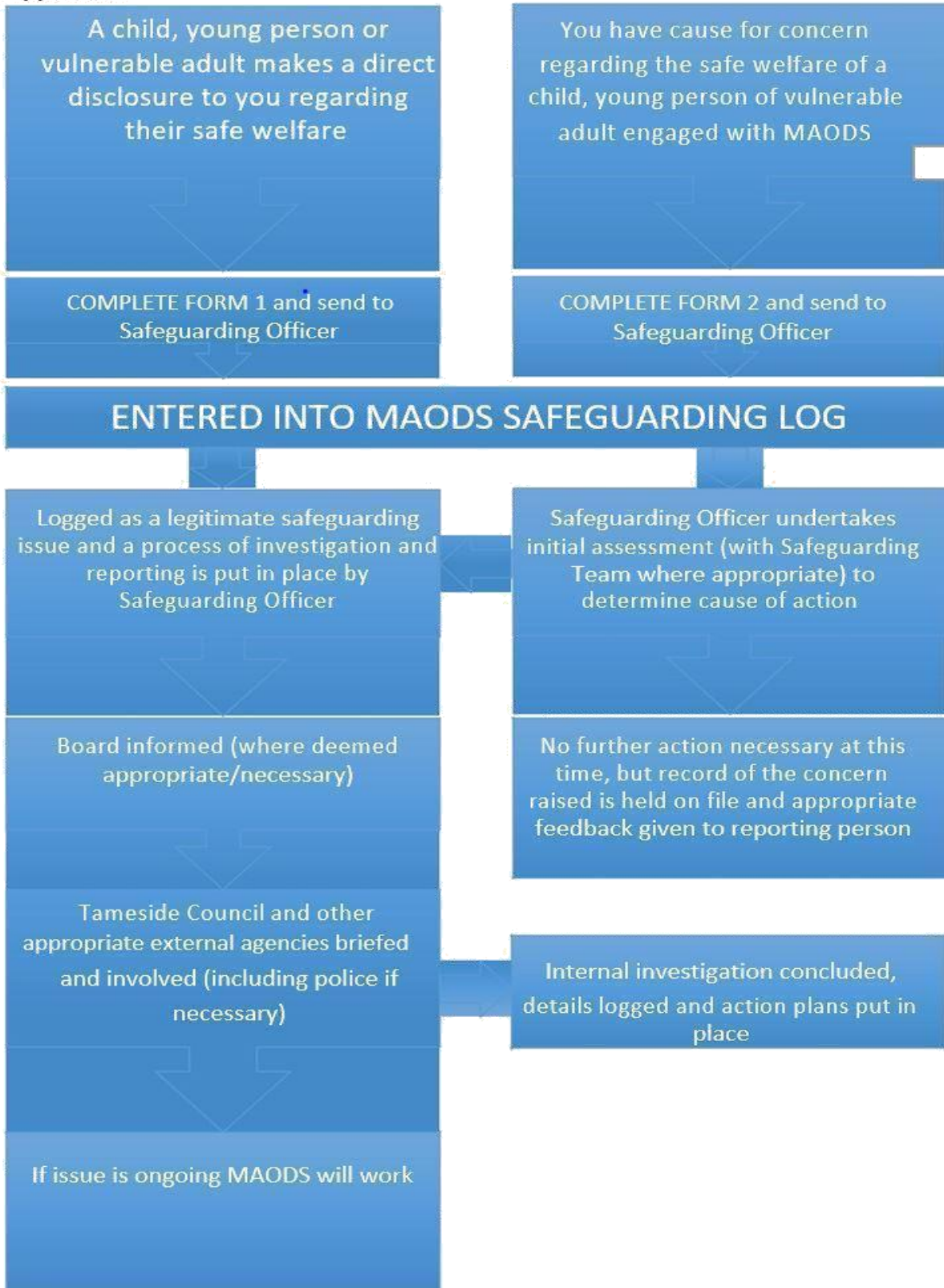
No children/young people/vulnerable adults' personal data will be kept anywhere else including in spreadsheet format/hard copy.

Promotion and Publicity:

Signed Photo/Filming consent is required for all images/film of children/young people / vulnerable adults. Consent must be in writing and given by the relevant parent/carer/group leader for anyone aged under 18 years and for vulnerable adults. Consent forms should be scanned and kept password protected with access restricted to designated staff.

Disposal of Information and Personal Data:

Disclosure information, Individual Development Plans, Consent Forms will be destroyed by secure means (e.g. shredding)





Appendix E

Commitment to Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

MAODS are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of each child/young person/vulnerable adult. MAODS works within the framework of the Children act 1989 and Every Child Matters which states that the welfare of all children is paramount.

MAODS has a nominated Safeguarding officer who is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed. This person is Ian Goddard and can be contacted on **07740 170540** or iangoddard900@gmail.com with any safeguarding concerns.

What if a child or young person tells me that they're being abused?

- Show that you are listening and that you are taking the matter seriously
- Write down what you have heard using the exact words where possible
- Explain that you will need to share what you have been told with someone who knows about protecting children

What should I do if I am worried about someone's behaviour towards a child or young person?

- Don't dismiss your concerns or leave it to someone else to take action - safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Tell the Safeguarding officer or your line manager immediately
- You should not try to confront an alleged abuser or deal with the situation yourself
- Write down all relevant information you can including times and dates

If you suspect that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being or is at risk of being physically, emotionally or sexually abused please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

In case of an 'out of hours' Safeguarding Emergency:

Tameside Safeguarding Children's Board This is the contact for Tameside Council, to report a concern or enquire about the welfare or safety of a child contact:. Call them on **0161 342 2222** or visit <https://www.tamesidesafeguardingchildren.org.uk>

If a child is in immediate danger of being harmed, or if a child is at home alone, the police should be called on 999.



Appendix F

Online safety policy

MAODS understands that some staff may wish to maintain an online presence and respects everyone's right to take part in online social networking and personal internet use. However, everyone must be aware that by association, their online presence can affect MAODS. All volunteers should be mindful to use electronic media, even in their own personal time, responsibly and respectfully to others.

General guidelines

The online activities of staff can impact MAODS therefore the following guidelines must be observed when participating in social networking sites and/or engaging in other forms of internet use. It shall be considered a breach of acceptable conduct to post on any public or private website or other forum (including but not limited to discussion lists, newsgroups, list serves, blogs, information sharing sites, social media sites, social or business networking sites, chat rooms, telephone based group communications or any other electronic or print communication forms) any of the following:

- Anything that may harm the goodwill or reputation of MAODS or any disparaging information about MAODS
- Any disparaging, discriminatory or harassing information concerning any partner, agency, funder, employee, participant or other person associated with MAODS
- Any confidential information, or intellectual property of MAODS, including information relating to finances, research, development, marketing, customers, operational methods, plans and policies
- Any private information relating to a participant, funder or employee of MAODS

This policy applies regardless of where or when you post or communicate information online. It applies to posting and online activity at home or other locations and whilst a member of the society. MAODS reserves the right to monitor and access any information or data that is created or stored using MAODS's technology, equipment, or electronic systems, including, without limitation, emails, internet usage, hard drives and other stored, transmitted or received information.

Everyone should have no expectation of privacy in any information or data placed on any MAODS computer or computer related system or viewed, created, sent, received or stored on any MAODS computer or computer-related system, including, without limitation, electronic communications or internet usage. Anyone who violate MAODS's Online safety policy may be subject to disciplinary action.



Any communications made in a professional or personal capacity must not:

- Breach confidentiality
- Be made with any child, young person or vulnerable adult directly in any capacity
- Be content which could be considered discriminatory against, bullying or harassment of any kind
- Bring MAODS into disrepute
- Breach copyright
- Identify individual children, young person or project participants or colleagues by using their:
 - Names
 - Posting images of children, young people or project participants -Posting images of project staff without permission.

Designated staff, with relevant permissions and DBS clearance, are able to share the following via online MAODS channels:

- Images of participants including children, young people and vulnerable adults with written permission from a parent/carer or guardian
- First names of participants, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, with written permission from a parent/carer or guardian



Appendix G

Lost Child Record

If a child is reported lost or missing inform the designated person immediately with the following information, giving as full details as possible:

- Name of child _____
- Age of child _____
- Address/name of school _____
- Physical description of child (height, colour of hair, clothing)

- Where the child was last seen _____
- The time the child was last seen _____

Record next steps below (whether police were contacted and if so what the outcome was, or if the child was handed over to a parent / guardian or teacher then what their name and their number is)



Appendix H

Incident Report Form (Cause for concern or disclosure made by child/young person) – TO BE COMPLETED IF THE ONLINE SYSTEM IS NOT AVAILABLE.

Name of young person: _____

Young person's age/ date of birth: _____

Young person's home address: _____

Young person's phone number _____

Name of worker/s who has been involved: _____

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Venue and context in which the incident took place:

Details of anyone else present:

Name:	Young person / adult:	Relationship to young person:

Who did you report the incident to: _____



The Incident

(Please write as much as you can remember of the incident, including any conversations you had with the young person. It is important that you use the same words the young person used to describe the incident, their feelings or body parts. Refer to page 13/14/15/16 to help in recording essential details.)

Print Name: _____ Sign: _____ Date: _____

Use more sheets if necessary. Please ensure you number, sign and date the bottom of each sheet as necessary. Make sure that the record is kept in a safe and confidential place until such time as you contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer