

Family Support & Safeguarding Children Policy

Important!

If you're worried about a child please use the flowchart on page 3 to decide the correct course of action

Pendle's Family Support and Safeguarding Children Policy

Pendle Council, Liberata and Pendle Leisure Trust deliver a range of services and activities that impact on the lives of children both directly and indirectly. Safeguarding children and young people - ensuring their welfare, safety and health - is of paramount importance. We are committed to providing safe and supportive services that will give children the opportunities to achieve their full potential. This includes:

- Having commitment from senior managers and councillors to safeguarding
- Having a safe recruitment and selection process
- Ensuring that all relevant staff are DBS checked at the appropriate level
- Providing training at the appropriate levels for staff, volunteers and councillors
- Designated Safeguarding Contacts
- Having information about our safeguarding processes easily accessible on our internet for children, young people and their families
- Having all the relevant information for staff available on our intranet and from their line manager
- Having an easily understandable reporting and monitoring system
- Working co-operatively with partner organisations/services

We want to make sure that all children and young people have a safe, healthy and happy life and get encouragement for them to do their best. All children and young people have the right to be safe from harm and to be able to live and grow in confidence in their communities.

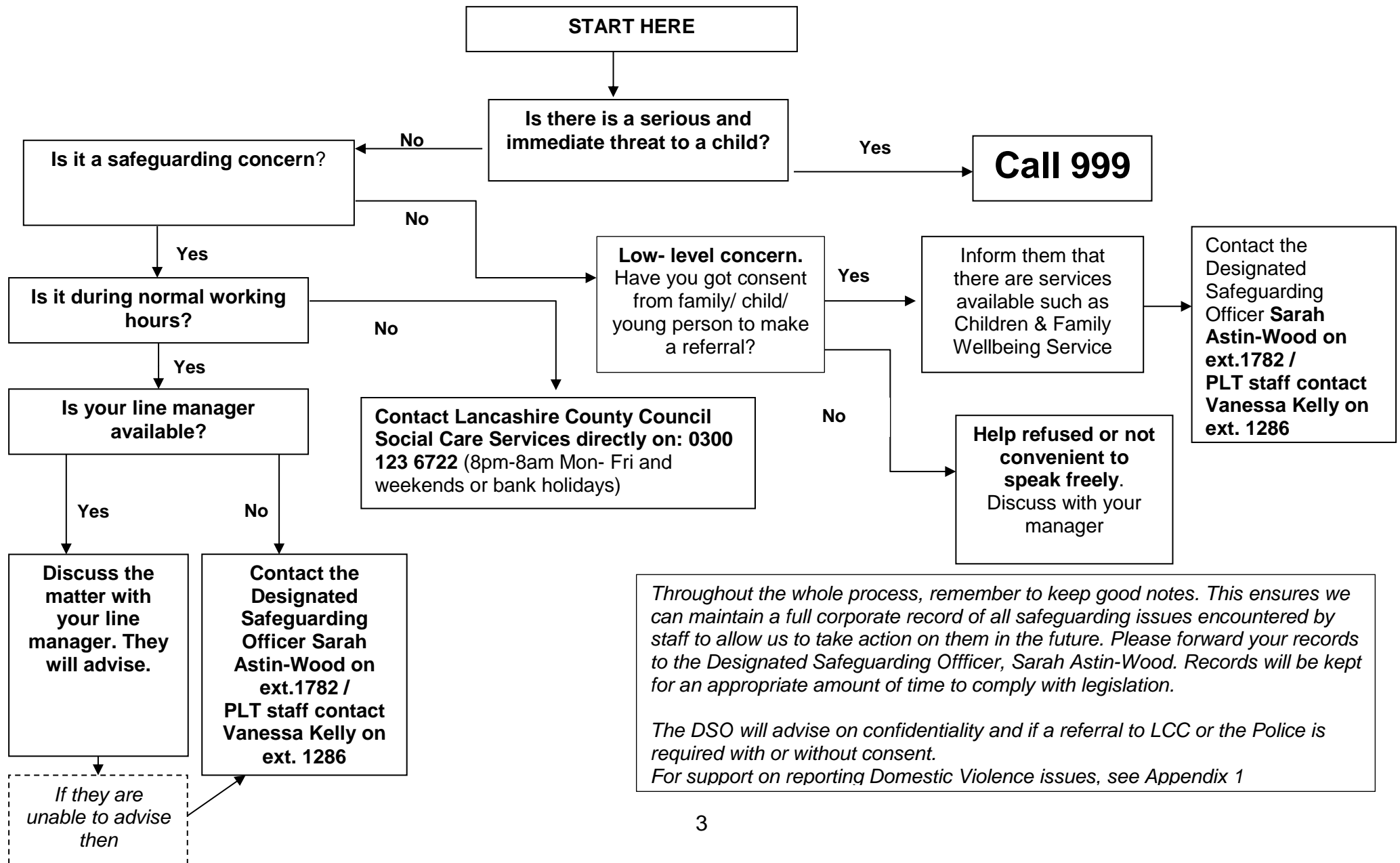
Some of our services will have direct contact with children, young people and families, with this work classed as 'regulated activity' (i.e. unsupervised coaching of young people).

Other services will have little or no direct contact with this group but as safeguarding is everyone's business, it's something all staff should know about. This includes knowing what to do outside of work as responsible citizens if you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person. All staff will receive training as appropriate, especially if they deliver regulated activity.

Safeguarding is everyone's business and everyone has a duty to ensure children are safe and that abuse and neglect is reported. All staff must receive the basic training on safeguarding to ensure they know what is meant by abuse and neglect and what they need to do if they have concerns.

As a council we will also apply robust safeguarding procedures when entering into contracts and service-level agreements. Officers managing the agreement will make sure that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, and that their staff have relevant training and are DBS checked where necessary.

Corporate procedures for supporting vulnerable children



Why do we have this Policy?

As a district council (including Liberata and Pendle Leisure Trust services) we have a duty and responsibility to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people (as per the Children Act 2004, Section 11):

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of their health and development
- Ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and undertaking that role, so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

What is this Policy about?

This policy tells you what you need to do if you are worried, concerned or just have a niggling feeling that something is not right with the welfare of a child. It aims to help protect Pendle's children and young people (defined as those under the age of 18).

This policy and guidance will provide all staff, volunteers and councillors with a clear understanding of the issues around safeguarding including their responsibilities, the processes and procedures, and what to do in an emergency.

It is not just about safeguarding but also covers early help and support for those families who have unmet lower level needs.

Although we have a separate Policy for adults, the safeguarding reporting process for both children and adults is the same.

What can I do to protect children and young people?

If you think a family may benefit from early support from another service (or services), suggest this to them and gain their consent to make contact, wherever possible.

In these circumstances, you could say that Pendle Council works closely with other services which may be able to offer them some additional support if wanted, and ask if they would like you to take this request forward.

Then report to the Safeguarding Officer who can make contact with the appropriate service (such as LCC Children and Family Wellbeing Service).

If you identify young people who are affected by domestic abuse in their home, support is available from Be Free (see Appendix 2).

Seek parental or guardian consent before taking photographs or videos of children and young people (for example, at events or on council property).

Always make sure all confidential information and electronic data that the council holds relating to children and young people is securely maintained.

Any recruitment and selection process for those who work with children, either as paid staff or volunteers, should account of safeguarding. Contact Human Resources (HR) for details. Similarly, HR will be able to advise on offering work experience positions to young people as part of their on-going education.

No staff should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to the safety and wellbeing of a child/ young person. If you have concerns about their welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer abuse or neglect, then you must share this with the Safeguarding Lead Officer and/or the police, if you believe or suspect that a crime has been committed.

How Should I respond if a child or young person discloses abuse?

Children and young people often don't disclose abuse, and when they do it's rarely directly to professionals. Partly this is due to lack of awareness of services, and partly to do with trust and a fear of losing control of a situation. It is very important that if a child or young person discloses abuse to you, you should:

- Listen carefully
- Respond sensitively and take the matter seriously
- Let the child know that you cannot 'keep a secret' and must disclose any evidence of abuse to the appropriate agency
- Make a note of everything that was discussed as soon as possible after the disclosure (see 'how to record your concerns' below).

Alternative confidential support is available from the NSPCC; their Helpline Number is 0800 800 5000.

If you are made aware of any instance of abuse, or have any concerns about it, it is important to note down the details in writing as soon as possible and forward this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Records will be kept for an appropriate amount of time to comply with legislation.

What if a child or young person makes an allegation against me?

Staff who work with children can experience malicious or misplaced allegations against them. Unfortunately, there are also occasions where some adults/professionals are perpetrators of child abuse or display unsuitable behaviours which would harm the children they work with.

Such allegations made against staff, either paid or unpaid, are serious and dealt with by the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, a professional independent of Pendle Council and appointed by the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

The LADO is **Tim Booth** (01772 536694, tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk)

If someone (a child, parent, service user, fellow colleague, etc) makes an allegation to you about another member of staff, do NOT investigate yourself; speak to your line manager. They will contact the Human Resources Manager who will then contact the LADO directly at the earliest available opportunity.

If you have concerns about your line manager, the DSCO, or anyone else that may make the above process inappropriate, refer to the council's Whistleblowing policy.

While following the correct procedure, we are also mindful of the welfare of that staff member and will provide appropriate help and support to them.

What if no-one is listening to me?

If you report a concern about a child's welfare and no one listens or is doing anything you should tell someone else. You could:

- Report the matter to another senior officer / manager immediately;
- Implement the Council's whistle-blowing procedure;

Remember, doing nothing is not an option and the welfare of a child must always be your

Who are our Designated Safeguarding Officers?

Lead: **Sarah Astin-Wood** 01282 661782

Deputy: **Wayne Forrest** 01282 661044

Senior Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding: **Rose Rouse** 01282 661603

Liberata Lead: **Jane McDonnell** 07817499894

PLT Lead: **Vanessa Kelly** 01282 661286

In the absence of any of the above, speak with your manager and use your professional judgement as to the nature, significance and immediacy of any risk to the child.

Understanding Abuse

The council has a duty to ensure children and young people are protected from abuse whilst in our care, and staff members are also encouraged to report abuse should they suspect it is occurring outside of the council's area of responsibility.

Abuse comes in many forms with examples listed below but it is important to understand that it does not matter if the person intended harm or not but rather on whether harm or risk of harm occurs.

Physical Abuse: May involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions). Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

Neglect and acts of omission: 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

Sexual Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): 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, 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). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 children 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 the 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 cyberbullying), 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 may occur alone.

Other examples of abuse:

- Sexually exploited children
- Child victim of trafficking
- Child affected by gang activities
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage and honour based violence
- Child abuse linked to 'spirit possession'
- Radicalisation
- Grooming for sexual/ criminal activities

Source: Working Together 2018

Training: All staff will receive the appropriate level of training to be confident and competent when working with children and being able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns. This will include recognising the impact of trauma on children and young people, how we can promote welfare and where to go to get help and advice.

All staff will be required to undertake Safeguarding Children and Adults Awareness learning every 3 years to ensure an understanding of abuse, how we can promote welfare and where to go to get help and advice. It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure this training happens. Basic Safeguarding Training will be offered on the 'Member Training Programme' for all councillors.

New Starters will have an introduction to the safeguarding policy and procedures through their induction process. Those staff who are more likely to come into contact with children will be required to undertake more in-depth Safeguarding Children training every 3 years.

Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers and councillors

It is important for all staff, paid or unpaid, and councillors to behave correctly and to be positive role models for the children who they come into contact with. In particular, any staff in regular, unsupervised contact with children and young people, or any other 'regulated activity' (as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) must adhere to appropriate guidelines.

The following are common sense points for anyone to take into account which will help to create a positive culture and also safeguard staff against false allegations:

- Treat all children and young people fairly and with respect. Maintain professional boundaries and don't have favourites
- Respect a child/young person's right to privacy
- Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Don't give lifts to children/young people outside agreed activities. Where it is necessary to take a young person in your car ensure that there is another staff member with you, that your manager is aware of this and how long you will be. Take a mobile phone to communicate reasons for any delays
- Don't take children/young people to your home
- If you have to visit a child/young person in their home always make sure that your manager is aware of this and you record the home visit
- Don't develop social relationships with young people who are service users (including via social media)
- Don't accept money or gifts from service users – don't give money or gifts to service users
- Be aware of physical contact with a child/young person – any support or assistance should be provided openly and appropriately – see the guidelines of the sport's/activity's National Governing Body
- If working with mixed gender groups of young people off site (on trips, at different venues) ensure there are always male and female staff with them unless previously agreed with the Designated Safeguarding Children Officer
- Don't smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of young people in any work related environment.
- Ensure that any child or young person accessing the internet whilst being employed by or under the care of Council staff, whether on Council premises or not, know their access rights and responsibilities and are kept safe.
- Don't do things of a personal nature for children/ young people that they can do for themselves.

Contacts and Communications

Internal

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Sarah Astin-Wood, Localities & Policy Manager
(Sarah.Astin-Wood@pendle.gov.uk / ext.1782)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer

Wayne Forrest, Housing Needs Manager
(Wayne.Forrest@pendle.gov.uk / ext.1044)

Liberata Lead / Human Resources and Staff Issues

Jane McDonnell – Human Resources Manager
(Jane.McDonnell@liberata.com / tel. 07817499894)

Senior Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding

Rose Rouse, Chief Executive
(Rose.Rouse@pendle.gov.uk / ext.1603)

Pendle Leisure Trust Lead

Vanessa Kelly – Human Resources Executive Manager
(Vanessa.Kelly@pendleleisuretrust.co.uk / ext. 1286)

External

Lancashire County Council Social Care Services

[Requesting support from Children's Services - Lancashire County Council](#)

For any child protection queries, the appropriate team can be accessed via the Lancashire Contact Centre:

- 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday: local number 0300 123 6720
- 8pm – 8am Monday to Friday and anytime weekends and bank holidays: 0300 123 6722

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP): for info on the countywide approach & resources available
www.safeguardingpartnership.org.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): for allegations against adults working with children

[Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\) - Lancashire County Council](#)

- Tim Booth (tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk / 01772 536694)

Young People Domestic Abuse Service (Be Free): for young people affected by abuse

[BE FREE – The Lookout – PAC \(p-a-c.org.uk\)](http://BE FREE – The Lookout – PAC (p-a-c.org.uk))

- Jen Gore (jen.gore@p-a-c.org.uk / 07543 646 959)

NSPCC: For anonymous nationwide advice and support, 24 hours a day

[Safeguarding children and child protection | NSPCC Learning](#) / Helpline: 0800 800 5000

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