



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Reviewed 1st September 2026
by Tara Foster

November 2024 – Updated Safeguarding Reporting Form Link & QR code – Pages 5, 7, 9.

March 2025 – Updated DSL rota and Google Form link Pages 7, 9

Sep 2025 – Updated Staff to Receive Safeguarding Training Refresh every 2 years

May 2026 – Updated with signature by organisation director page 6

Sept 2026 –
i. Updated Coventry Responsive Services referral process replaces MASH form.
ii. Reviewed with reference to KCSIE 2026

Aptitude Organisation CIC Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Aptitude Organisation CIC.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive Aptitude Organisation CIC's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection;

Aptitude Organisation CIC believes that a child or a young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have the responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioner providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015.
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 guidance Department for Education ('the Department') issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Anti-bullying
- Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- Complaints
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- GDPR – Privacy Policy
- Health & Safety
- ICT & Mobile Phones
- Lone working policy and procedure
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Mobile Phones
- Quality Assurance
- Recruitment, induction and training
- Role of the designated safeguarding officer
- Safer recruitment
- Training, Supervision and support
- Whistleblowing

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined by the Children Act 1989.
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, a deputy and a lead board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related to procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- using safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with and bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistle blowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

Training

- Designated Safeguarding Leads – every 2 years to attend role specific training.
- Staff and Volunteers – Upon induction into the organisation and every 1 year thereafter to attend Safeguarding refresher.

Safeguarding children

We all have a responsibility to make sure children and young people are safe from harm or abuse. If you have any suspicion, or information, suggesting a child is being harmed, don't ignore it.

What should I do if I think a child or young person is being harmed?

You can always ask for advice from Children's Social Care if you are not sure about a situation.

The information below may help if you think a child or young person is being harmed.

Signs which may suggest physical abuse

- Any bruising to a baby - pre-walking stage
- Multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- Bruising of different colours, showing repeated injuries
- Fingertip-shaped bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- Burns of any shape or size
- An injury for which there is no proper explanation

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Something a child has told you
- Something a child has told someone else
- A child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children
- A child who seems to have unsuitable sexual knowledge for their age
- A child who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sexual offender

Signs which may suggest emotional harm

The following signs may be present in children whose parents are over-critical and emotionally distant, or who are unable to meet their child's emotional needs:

- Children whose behaviour is excessive. For example, excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, headbanging.
- Children who self harm. For example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose.
- Children who attempt suicide
- Children who persistently run away from home
- Children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection.

Signs which may suggest neglect

- Squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions
- Parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
- Children who appear persistently undersized or underweight
- Children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
- Children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.

If a child discloses abuse

If you're in a situation where a child discloses abuse to you, there are a number of steps you can take.

- **Listen carefully to the child.** Avoid expressing your own views on the matter. A reaction of shock or disbelief could cause the child to 'shut down', retract or stop talking
- **Let them know they've done the right thing.** Reassurance can make a big impact to the child who may have been keeping the abuse secret
- **Tell them it's not their fault.** Abuse is never the child's fault and they need to know this
- **Say you believe them.** A child could keep abuse secret in fear they won't be believed. They've told you because they want help and trust you'll be the person to believe them and help them
- **Don't talk to the alleged abuser.** Confronting the alleged abuser about what the child's told you could make the situation a lot worse for the child
- **Explain what you'll do next.** If age appropriate, explain to the child you'll need to report the abuse to someone who will be able to help
- **Don't delay reporting the abuse.** The sooner the abuse is reported after the child discloses the better. Report as soon as possible so details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly.

How do I contact someone if I am concerned about a child or young person?

Emergency – child at risk of physical harm or needs medical attention:

If a child is in immediate danger or left alone, you should contact the police call 999 in an emergency.

Non-emergency Police 24 hours number: 101

Social worker (out of office hours): 024 7683 2222.

Non emergency - If there is no immediate danger:

1. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or Deputy Safeguarding lead (DSL), to seek advice. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
2. See appendix 1 (page 7), Flow chart for actions to take
3. See appendix 3 (page 9) for contact details for Safeguarding leads.
4. Complete the Safeguarding report form, including action you have taken using this Google Form New Safeguarding Report form link: <https://forms.gle/rSCBcKrc7EGDNiGz8>
5. If further action is required because a safeguarding concern has been raised the DSL must report to the **Coventry Children & Family Initial Response Service** (previously known as Multi Agency Service Hub MASH) 024 7678 8555.

Submit a **Request for Support form** (MASH Referral): <https://www.childrensresponsiveservices.co.uk/>

Social Care out of hours, Emergency Duty Team (EDT) 024 7683 2222.

Email: InitialResponseService@coventry.gov.uk – See Appendix 2 (page 8) for Safeguarding Leads.

What to do if the concern is about a member of staff or volunteer?

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Board of Directors Safeguarding Lead if necessary.

Advice and information

If you want to discuss your concerns or need advice e.g. if you are not sure whether your concerns are justified, you would like more information about issues like confidentiality or you would like to know what happens next (after you have reported your concerns), do one of the following:

Call Childline on 0800 1111

Call the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000

[Check Coventry LSCB procedures](#)

Prevent referrals for children and young people

The Prevent Duty requires that if there are concerns that an individual may be vulnerable to radicalisation around violent extremism then these concerns need to be shared so that appropriate support is provided in order to safeguard those individuals. A partnership referral form has been prepared to make sure that it is easier to outline and submit the referrals.

To make a Prevent referral for a child or young person [a referral form](#) can be found on this link <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/prevent-3/prevent-referrals-1> which needs to be emailed to both of the following email addresses: ctu_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk and prevent@coventry.gov.uk

Request for Support from Coventry Children's Responsive Services

To make a referral, please complete the <https://www.childrensresponsiveservices.co.uk>

Appendix 1: Aptitude Youth Work Safeguarding Process Flow Chart - Page 7

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Process for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Leads - Page 8

Appendix 3: Contact details for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Leads – Page 9

Safeguarding Policy Approved by Director

Name: Tara Foster

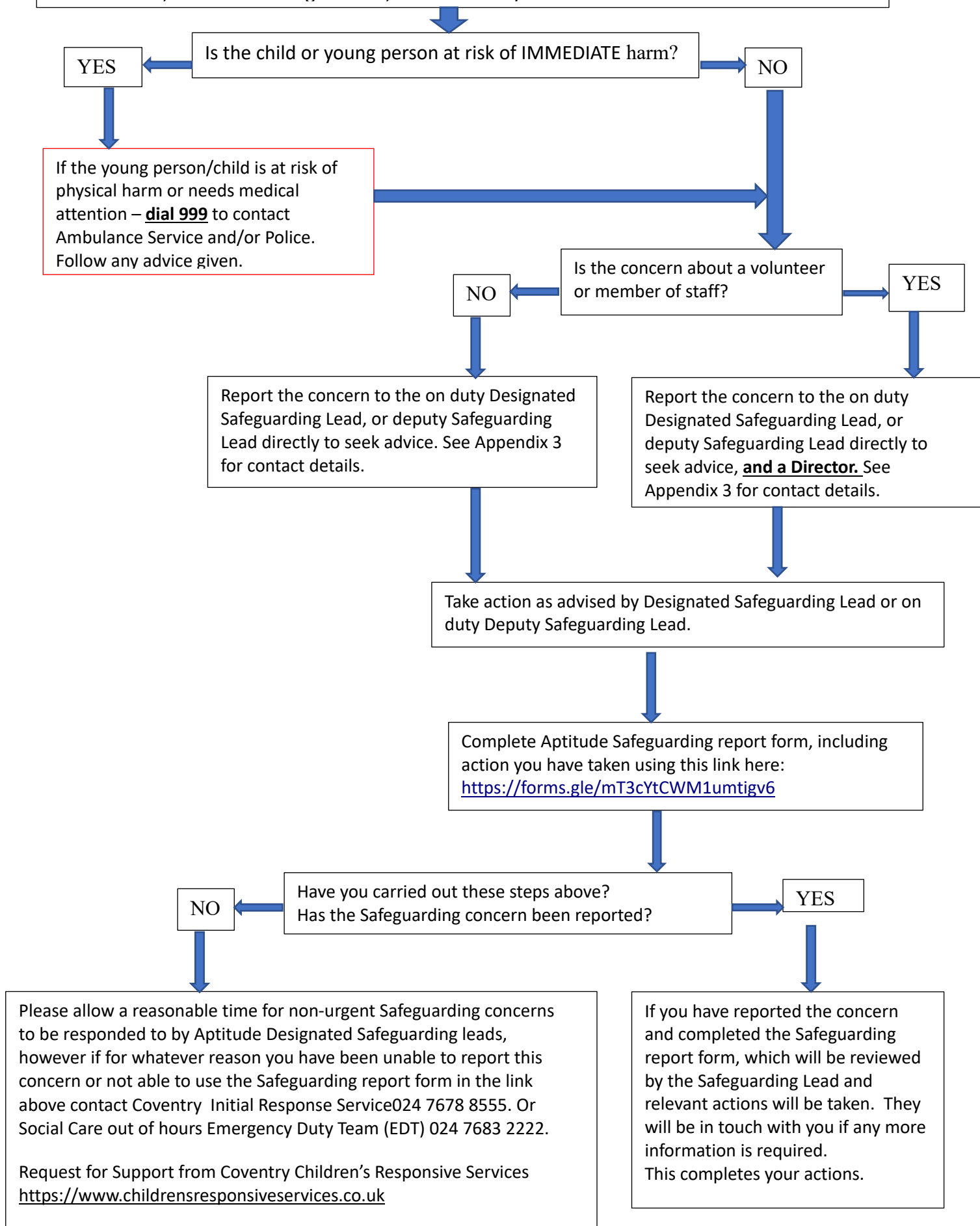
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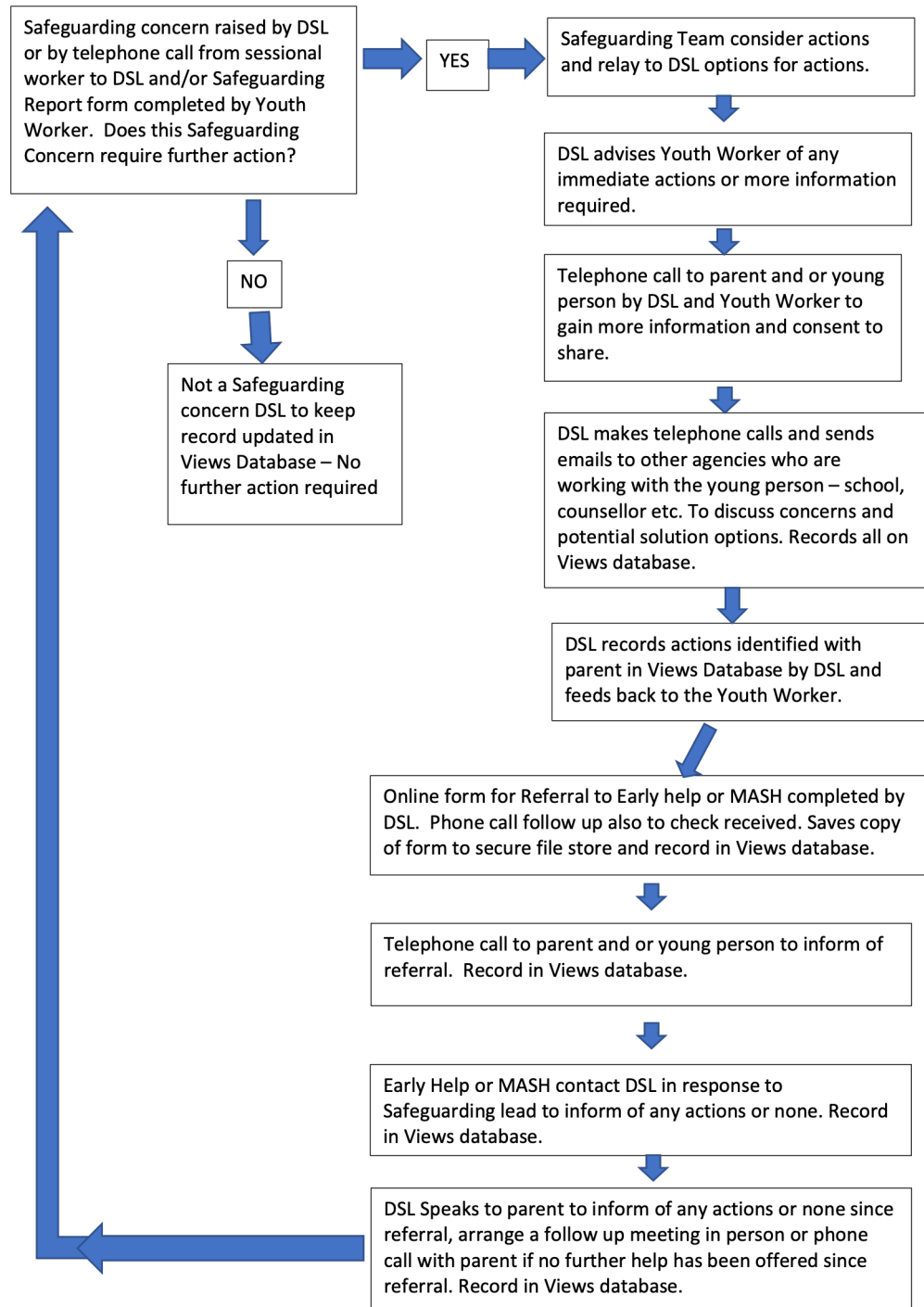
Date: 01/09/2026

Appendix 1: APTITUDE YOUTH WORK SAFEGUARDING PROCESS FLOW CHART

A safeguarding concern arises regarding a young person that suggests a young person/child has been harmed, is at risk of being harmed, or a crime may be committed.



Aptitude Youth Work Safeguarding Concern Actions Process Chart



Appendix 3: CONTACT DETAILS FOR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) OR DEPUTY DSL

SAFEGUARDING LEAD CONTACTS	1st Contact Safeguarding lead	2nd Contact Director
MONDAY	Sandie Morris - 07594010419	Laura Evans - 07845 608703
TUESDAY	Sandie Morris - 07594010419	Laura Evans - 07845 608703
WEDNESDAY	Sandie Morris - 07594010419	Laura Evans - 07845 608703
THURSDAY	Sandie Morris - 07594010419	Laura Evans - 07845 608703
FRIDAY	Sandie Morris - 07594010419	Laura Evans - 07845 608703

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD – Sandie Morris

Mobile: 07594010419

Sandie@aptitude.org.uk

DIRECTOR SAFEGUARDING LEAD – Laura Evans

Mobile: 07845 608703

laura@aptitude.org.uk



Safeguarding Report form QR Code & link:

<https://forms.gle/FmvS8jUC6w91oaY77>