

Safeguarding Children Policy

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Introduction

Community Playcentre @ Walberton is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse and harm. Safeguarding children applies to all children under the age of 18.

Definitions

Safeguarding covers the promotion of welfare of children and to protect them from harm.

Policy Overview

We will constantly strive to ensure that we are providing an environment for the children to feel safe, secure and confident. We make sure that all of the children who use the Playcentre know that they can talk to a member of staff should they have any worries or concerns.

The Playcentre will respond promptly and appropriately to all safeguarding incidents or concerns that may occur. The Playcentre's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Safeguarding is at the heart of what we do at the Playcentre. All adults within the Playcentre, whether that be staff, volunteers or trustees, all have a duty of care towards the children and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone will play a part in the children's welfare and protecting them from harm.

Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Duties

Accountability

The Playcentre's designated Safeguarding leads are the manager and deputy managers. The safeguarding leads within the setting coordinates safeguarding issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g. the Local Safeguarding, children's board (LSCB), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted.

Responsibility

The designated persons will have undergone relevant training and additional safeguarding training. In line with Ofsted requirements, the Deputy Manager, and Senior Early Years Practitioners will also undergo additional safeguarding training, in order that there will always be a member of staff present who has undertaken the designated Safeguarding Training.

Maintaining Competency

ALL staff undertake Safeguarding Training, and we ensure that all staff know how to contact MASH should they need too. Here at the Playcentre, we encourage all staff to be vigilant and recognise that it 'could happen here,' and to 'never say never.'

As a setting, we assure that we regularly monitor safeguarding within the setting in the following ways:

- All members of staff undergo termly supervisions with a member of the senior management team,

- quarterly meetings where they have the opportunity to discuss all children within their care and any concerns that they may have and
- annual safeguarding refresher training.

Our designated SENCO within the setting is responsible for following the CLAWBA (Children's Learning and Well Being Audit). This is a guideline which allows the SENCO to liaise with members of staff within the setting about any indicators which is stated on the CLAWBA which may be indicators for children to be at risk. The audit is very vast and is used across many agencies such as NHS professionals, early years professionals, the LSCB, and the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum, in order to provide support for children who may be deemed vulnerable, and to be able to offer early intervention and support.

In the latest version of the Statutory Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' document, there is section outlining what children have identified they need in order to be kept safe. The 'Voice of the Child' states;

- **Vigilance** – to have adults notice when something may be troubling them.
- **Stability** – for children to be able to build a stable relationship with adults built on trust.
- **Respect** – for children to be treated as though they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement** – to be informed of the steps and involved within procedures, decisions, plans and concerns.
- **Explanation** – to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and to a reason as to why, if their views have not been met with a positive response.
- **Support** – to be offered support as an individual, as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy** – to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
- **Protection** – to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination, and the right to protection and help if a refugee.

Statutory Framework

At the Playcentre, we will adhere to the following government legislation and guidance;

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2002
- Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

As a setting we ensure that we are continuously ensuring that we are aware of any new legislation, and any local policies and procedures within relation to safeguarding. This is then cascaded down to staff so that we are following up to date legislation.

At the Playcentre, we will;

- Ensure that all matters relating to safeguarding are strictly confidential and are only shared on a 'need to know basis'
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will only disclose any information relating to safeguarding issues to other staff members on need to know basis only.
- All staff, volunteers and trustees are aware that they have a duty of care and a responsibility to share information with relevant outside agencies in order to safeguard children.

Responsibilities for staff

All adults have a large role in the support of children and being able to recognise concerns at the earliest time possible, and what they can do to provide help and safeguard children effectively.

We will ensure that everyone;

- Knows the steps to take if a child is to disclose information to them if they are being abused or neglected.
- Know the correct way to log any concerns, and who to report their concerns too, as soon as possible.
- Knows how to refer to MASH/ Police immediately if a member of staff believes that a child is in immediate danger.
- Know that should staff have concerns regarding a child's welfare, and a referral to MASH is made, that the child's parents are made aware unless we feel doing so would be the child at the risk of significant harm.
- Is aware of all signs of abuse or neglect, and how/who to report them too.
- Participate in safeguarding training upon induction.
- Participates in annual safeguarding training and is made aware of any changes to relevant legislation.
- Knows who the Designated Leads are within the setting.
- Has quarterly meetings with management to discuss the children within the setting, and their development. The staff will discuss children's attendance, diet etc.

Signs and Types of child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical Abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include;

- Significant changes in a child's behaviour
- Deterioration in a child's general well-being
- Unexplained bruising or marks

- Comments made by a child which give a cause for concern
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out
- Listen to the child and to remain calm, but **do not ask any leading questions**. If more information is needed, staff will only use open ended questions.
- Listen to the child and what they are saying. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been for the child to disclose this information to you.
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action.
- Not to promise the child anything – you should let the child know that you will need to tell someone else what they have disclosed to you, and you must tell the children who you will have to tell. You must not make any promises to the child as you cannot control what will happen next.
- Record the incident as soon as possible (See **Logging an Incident** below)
- Record on a **Body Map** form any injuries that are visible, or any that the child has spoken about/shown to the staff member.

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the incident straight away. If a third-party express's concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact MASH directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that the Playcentre is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

The Playcentre staff are vigilant in recognising possible suspected injuries to non-mobile babies. If a member of staff notices any injuries on a child, this will be logged on a **Body Map**. This is then discussed with the parent, and their explanation is written on the body map and the parent is too then sign this.

If a parent was to inform a member of staff about any injuries the child has, and that they are aware of how this happened, this will also be logged on a **Body Map**, with the parent's explanation, and signed.

Process

Logging an Incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure will be recorded on the **Logging a Concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record will include;

- Date of the disclosure or of the incident causing concern
- Date and time at which the record was made
- Name and date of birth of the child involved
- A factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words and exactly what was said.
- Name, signature and job title of the person making the record.
- If there were any witnesses, they will co-sign it also.
- Use a '**Body Map**' if necessary. –

All forms are kept with this policy.

- The record will be given to the Playcentre's designated lead and they will decide whether they need to contact MASH or make a referral. If other members of staff think that the incident has not be adequately followed up, they may call MASH themselves.

All of the forms that staff will need to correctly log any concerns or disclosures, are kept in the **'Safeguarding File'**, which is accessible to staff at all times and is kept within the office.

Allegations against staff

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident Record** form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it. This should include; time, date and place where the alleged incident took place. It should include a brief, but factual description of what was witnessed, what was said, and who was present at the time. It should be signed and dated immediately and given to the Designated Lead.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and the Playcentre will act upon their advice.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation. If this was to happen, we would follow the **Disciplinary and Staff Grievance** procedures.
- All staff will be observant of other staff members and any changes in their behaviour.
- Any records that are relevant to these matters should be stored away separately from personnel records and should only be accessible by those who need to for investigational matters.
- All staff and volunteers within the Playcentre should feel able to raise any concerns about a member of staff where poor or unsafe practice and potential failures within the safeguarding policy.

If a member of staff has any concerns about another member of staff, they will follow the **Whistleblowing Policy**. All staff are aware of the Whistleblowing policy, and the steps within this policy, how it will be followed, and the relevant action that will be taken. This may lead to **Staff Grievance** and **Disciplinary Policy**.

If a member of staff feels as though the incident has not be adequately followed up, they can call LADO themselves.

Promoting awareness among staff

The Playcentre promotes awareness of child abuse through staff training. The Playcentre ensures that:

- It's designated safeguarding lead has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff undertake a DBS check upon recruitment
- All staff have a copy of this Safeguarding Children policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to all signs of abuse or neglect.
- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept in the office, in the Playcentre.
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

- Staff are familiar with the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' document.
- Staff undergo annual refresher safeguarding training.

Relevant Reporting Forms

All forms that will be needed for reporting any type of concern, whether it being a concern about a child's safety, a concern of abuse, or an allegation against staff, will be readily available to all staff and adults upon request. There will always be a number of copies of the forms available for staff. These are stored within the Safeguarding Folder which is kept within the office.

Concerns with members of the public

Should there be a concern relating to a member of the public, then staff will take the following steps:

- Report the concerns to the designated safeguarding lead
- Ensure all concerns are logged using the logging a concern form, with the relevant details as indicated in the logging a concern section of this policy.
- The designated safeguarding lead will undertake an initial investigation into the concerns.
- The DSL may meet and request additional information from the members of public, and with all other relevant parties to ascertain events and concerns.
- The DSL will report any concerns to MASH or the police if needed. Should there be an immediate concern, the police will be contacted immediately.
- The DSL will follow the advice given by MASH and/or the police.
- All investigations will be recorded in line with this safeguarding policy and may be pursued further by any other procedure as might be required.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parent's permission. Photograph permission forms are given to parents during their child's settling in process at the Playcentre and parent's **MUST** sign to consent for this. Only the Playcentre camera, or tablets will be used to take photographs of children at the Playcentre, except with the express permission of the manager. Neither staff nor children may use their mobile phones to take photographs at the Playcentre without the managers consent. Consent will be obtained for photographs to be published in newspapers. All photographs will be stored on a secure computer system which is only accessible to staff.

Contact Numbers

Single point contact: **01403 229900 (Will be referred to MASH if applicable)**

Email: WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) **0330 222 3339**

Names: Miriam Williams, Donna Tomlinson **Asst:** Sally Arbuckle

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) West Sussex **0330 222 6450**

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Police **084506070999**

NSPCC **0808 800 500**

Links to Legislation

[Working together to keep children safe 2018](#)

[The children Act 1989](#)

[The Children Act 2002](#)

[Education Act 2002](#)

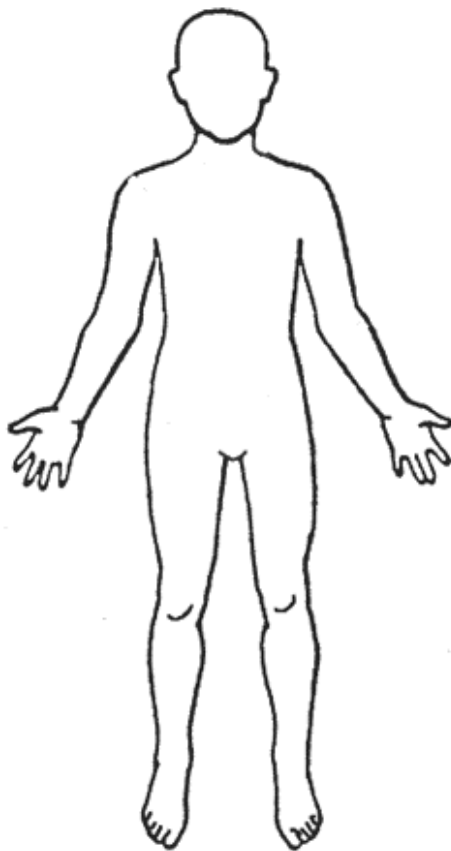
Appendix 1 - Body Map

Tick appropriate box relating to form;

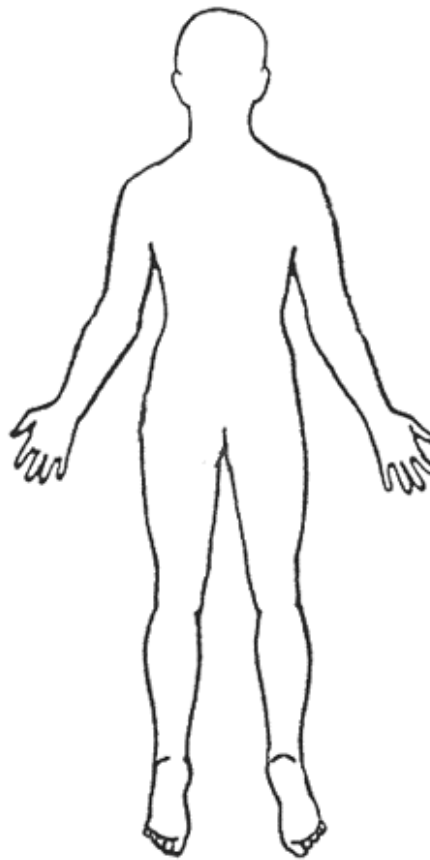
Pre Existing Injury/Body Map

Today's date.....

Pre-existing injury ☐



FRONT



BACK

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Description of injury:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Parent:

Signed:.....

Dated:

Staff:

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

What forms to use when reporting a concern

Concerns about a
child's safety and well-
being

A 'Logging a concern' form will be filled out.

This will include a factual report of the nature of the disclosure or the reason for concern. If a disclosure was made, the child's own words will be used. It will be timed, dated, location of the disclosure, and signed.

A body map may also be filled out if necessary.

Concerns about a member
of staff

An 'Incident Log' will be filled out of a factual report of the concerns.

This will include a time, date, location of where the incident took place and signed.

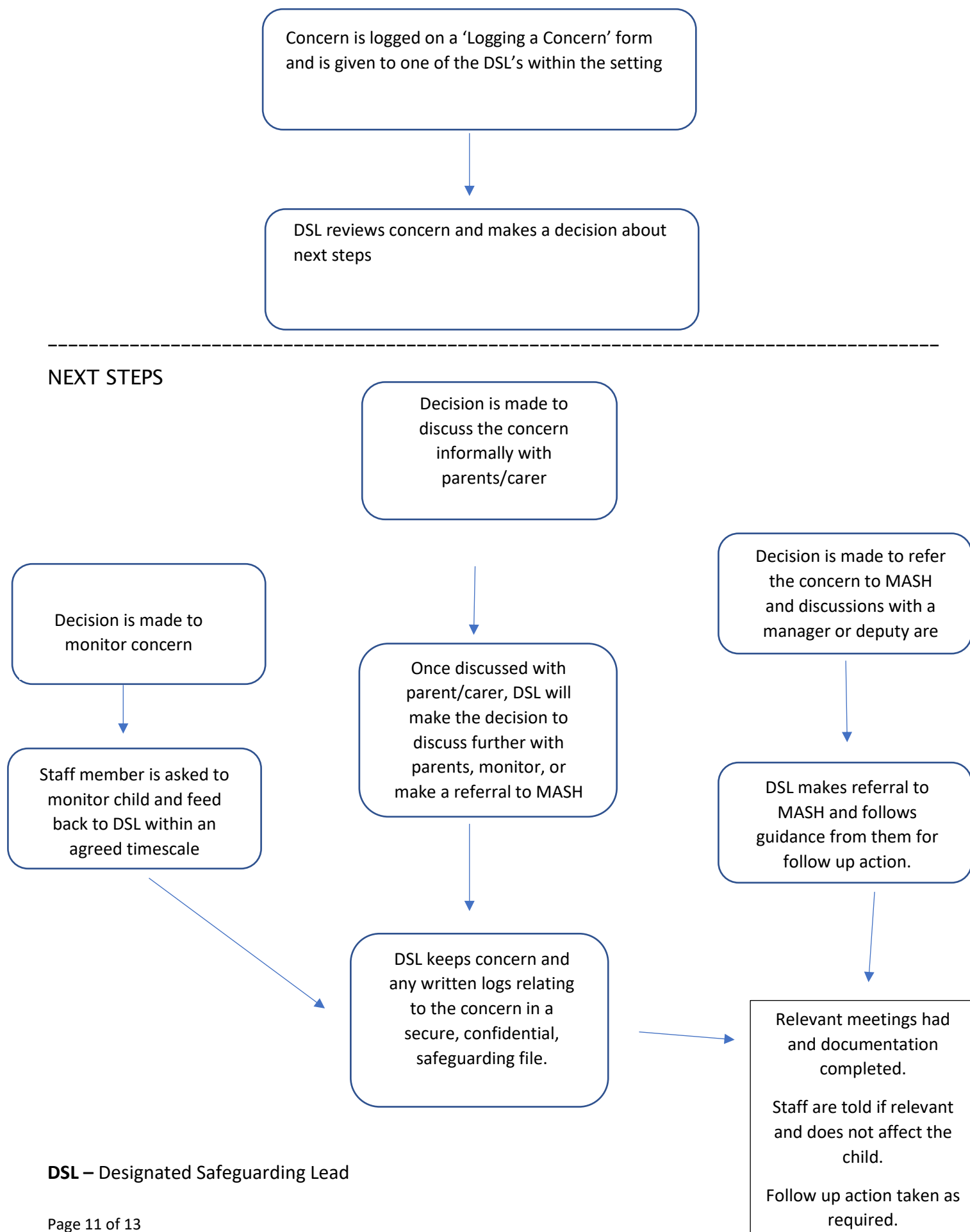
Body Map

A Body Map will be filled out if any injuries are visible that a member of staff notices.

They will also be filled out if a parent informs a member of staff about any pre-existing injuries.

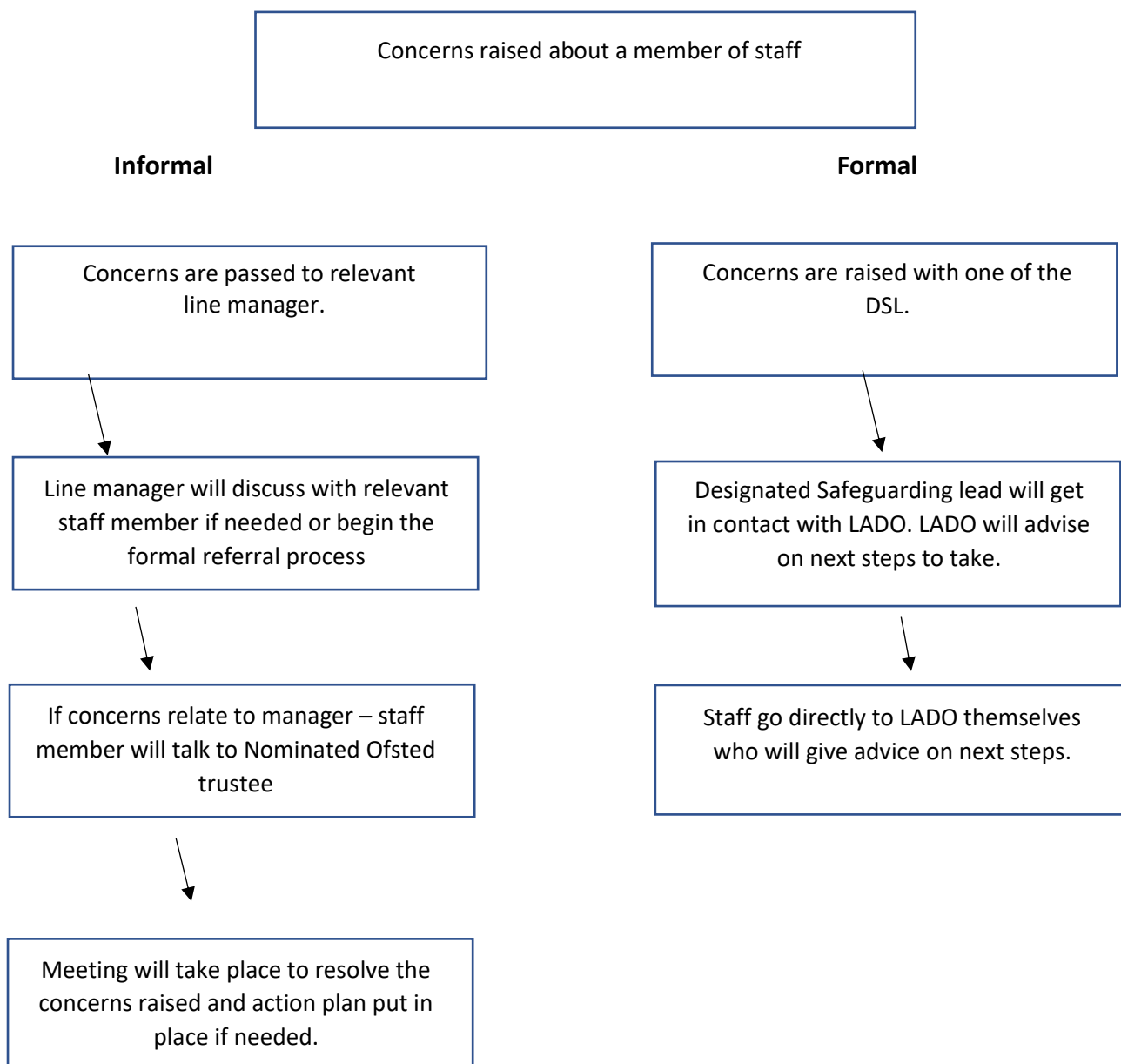
Signatures will be obtained from the parents and this record will be logged on the incident report form and placed in the relevant child's file.

Appendix 3 - Flow Chart for Safeguarding concerns relating to a child



DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead

Appendix 4 - Flow Diagram for LADO Referrals



This policy was adopted by: Community Playcentre @ Walberton	Date: December 2022
To be reviewed: by end December 2023	Signed:  Chair Trustees CP@W

This policy is not contractual.