



## Ravens Academy Policy on Child Protection

### 1 Introduction

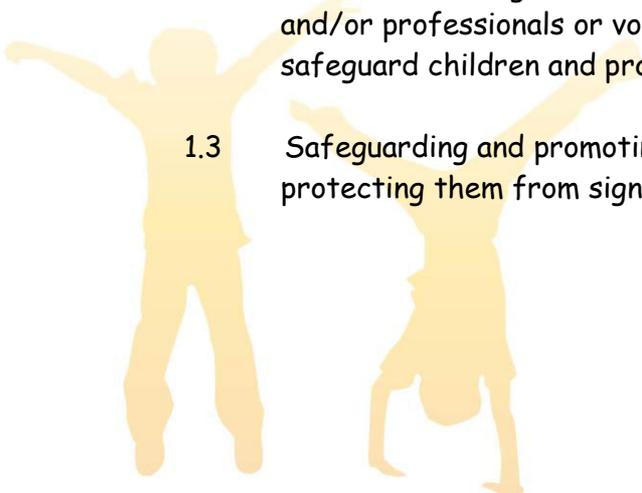
**In this policy there is a formal recognition that there may be additional barriers arising for children in vulnerable groups.**

**This may take the form of:**

- **assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.**
- **the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without showing any signs.**
- **communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.**

**It is crucial when dealing with children from vulnerable groups that these potential inhibitors are given due recognition and consideration.**

- 1.1 The health, safety and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.
- 1.2 Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- 1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint



working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

- 1.4 For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote their welfare, and - where necessary - to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children. All agencies and professionals should:
- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
  - be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
  - share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
  - contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
  - take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
  - work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

1.5 Definitions of abuse and neglect:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child abuse takes a variety of forms:

Physical abuse

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, poisoning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also occur when a parent or carer feigns symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This

situation is commonly described using terms such as Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child such to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children they are worthless and unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far 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 capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration, 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 may occur alone.

### **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 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.

### **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 may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is a specific form of abuse which may be prevalent in schools and is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves. The extent of bullying can include emotional and / or physical harm to such a degree that it constitutes significant harm, as set out in the definitions above, due to the extent to which it affects the health or development of the child subject to the bullying behaviour. Bullying may also be perpetrated within digital or ICT based environments, sometimes known as Cyber-Bullying, and may include 'Sexting'; which must be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying and dealt with accordingly. It must be noted that bullying may also constitute criminal behaviour and therefore certain instances of bullying may need to be reported to the police. Please refer to our separate Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Domestic Violence**

We recognise that Domestic Violence (DV) usually impacts on all aspects of a child's life only varying according to the child's resilience or otherwise to his or her particular circumstances. We also recognise that even where the child is not the direct target of the DV the harm caused to the child/ren can be significant. This can be through emotional and physical abuse and often neglect, as the victim's capacity to parent effectively and protect their child/ren is diminished through a preoccupation with their own survival. This can be at the expense of an awareness of the effect that the abusive relationship is having on their child/ren. At Ravens Academy we will be alert to the possibility of Domestic Violence and allow an opportunity for the abused partner (predominantly the woman but not exclusively so) to disclose. We will treat that disclosure sensitively and refer the matter to Social Care where there is a child or children at risk of significant harm and/or neglect. The definition of Domestic Violence, revised in 2013, also

includes, any pattern of controlling or coercive or threatening behaviour, (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between those aged 16 or over who are or who have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

### **Forced Marriage**

At Ravens Academy we recognise that forced marriage as an abuse of human rights and a form of domestic abuse and, where it affects children and young people, child abuse. Forced marriage, as distinct from arranged marriage, is conducted without consent and under duress. We therefore accept that coercion and duress may be perpetrated by partners but also by extended family members and that this constitutes Domestic Violence, in line with the Government's definition of domestic violence and is closely linked to so called Honour Based Violence. In cases of forced marriage we will follow the guidance as set out in the Essex Child Protection Procedures as a child who is being forced into marriage is at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse. If any member of staff receives a disclosure or is aware that a Forced Marriage is about to happen this must be disclosed to the Designated Senior Lead Person for Child Protection without delay so that the appropriate referrals may be made and/or protective measures may be put in place, especially as the child/ren may be taken out of the country.

### **Female Genital Mutilation.**

It is accepted that some female pupils in our school may be at risk of being subject to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as: all procedures, but not therapeutic or essential surgical operations, which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or injury to female genital organs for non-therapeutic reasons. FGM is considered as a cultural norm by some communities and some also consider FGM necessary for religious reasons. We will always challenge such abusive cultural norms as the welfare and safety of the child is always paramount, equally we also recognise that FGM is not endorsed as a religious practice. In any event it is illegal in the UK to subject any child to FGM or to take a child abroad to undergo FGM. Ravens Academy will follow the procedures for dealing with cases of FGM as set out in the Essex Child Protection Procedures. From a Child Protection perspective a child for whom FGM is planned is at risk of

significant harm through physical and emotional abuse, it may also be considered as sexual abuse. Typical identifiers are:

- Family comes from a community known to practice FGM
- Family / child talks about a long holiday
- Family / child may asked to be excused PE / swimming on return
- Family / child may confide that she is going to a 'special ceremony' when on holiday
- Female child is known to have a mother that has been subject to FGM
- Female child is known to have a sister that has already undergone FGM

Equally the child may be aware of what is going to happen and make disclosure or seek help. If any member of staff receives a disclosure or is aware that a FGM is about to happen this must be disclosed to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection without delay so that the appropriate referrals may be made and/or protective measures may be put in place, especially as the child/ren may be taken out of the country.

### **Staff Awareness**

Staff will be made aware of our policy and procedures:

1. During regular staff briefings
2. During level one staff training on a three yearly basis

- 1.6 In our school, we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.
- 1.7 We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress.
- 1.8 Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.
- 1.9 This policy is based on DfES Circular 10/95 - Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 introduced a new duty requiring governing bodies and LAs to have appropriate child-protection procedures in place. This policy takes account of the requests set out in the Children Act 2004 ('Every Child Matters'), Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006) and

the 2007 DCSF document Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

### **2.1 Our aims are:**

- to provide a safe environment for children to learn in;
- to establish what actions the school can take to ensure that children remain safe, at home as well as at school;
- to raise the awareness of all staff to these issues, and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm;
- to ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;
- to set down the correct procedures for those who encounter any issue of child protection.

## **3 Staff responsibilities**

### **3.1 It is the responsibility of the Principal, Karen Hammond to ensure all of the following:**

- that the governing body adopts appropriate policies and procedures to safeguard children in the school;
- that these policies are implemented by all staff;
- that sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively;
- that all staff and adult helpers in the school are able to voice their concern if they feel that a child is vulnerable, or that there are any particular practices that are unsafe.

### **3.2 There is a named person designated as the Child Protection Coordinator. This is **Karen Hammond** the Principal, **Elaine Rendall** is the deputy designated teacher. The coordinator is guided by two principles:**

- In accordance with the Children Act, the welfare of the child paramount.
- Confidentiality should be respected as far as possible.

A key role of the Coordinator is to be fully conversant with the procedures of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB), and to ensure that the school takes action to support any child who may be at risk. The Coordinator must also make sure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. The Coordinator will work closely with Social Services, as well as the ESCB, when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved will handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, remembering all the time that the interests of the child are of paramount importance.

- 3.3 All staff have a responsibility to report to the Principal or deputy designated teacher any concern they have about the safety of any child in their care.

#### **4 Employment and recruitment**

- 4.1 We will do all we can to ensure that all those working with children in our school are suitable people. This involves scrutinizing applicants, verifying their identity and obtaining references, as well as the mandatory check of List 99 and DBS checks. We follow the DfES guidance set out in Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service, DfES 2002/0278.

#### **5 Procedure to be followed if an adult has concerns about a child**

- 5.1 Any action taken by the named Child Protection Coordinator when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in accordance with the procedures outlined in the LA's Child Protection guidelines.
- 5.2 All adults in our school share responsibility for keeping our children safe. We may on occasion report concerns which, on investigation, prove unfounded.
- 5.3 If teachers suspect that a child in their class may be a victim of abuse, they should not try to investigate, but should immediately inform the Child Protection Coordinator about their concerns. Abuse can be of a physical, sexual or emotional nature. It can also be the result of neglect. Staff must not keep to themselves any information about abuse which a child gives them; they are required by law to pass this information on.

- 5.4 If a child alleges abuse, the school will make a referral to the LA without informing parents.
- 5.5 If a referral is made, a case conference will be held within eight working days. Case conferences offer the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action. Staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held.

## **6 Physical restraint**

- 6.1 There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the DfES circular 10/98 on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. The Principal will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to him or her immediately, and to record it in the Interventions Book.

## **7 Allegations against staff**

- 7.1 If an allegation is made against a member of the school staff (or a volunteer helper), it will always be investigated by the Principal, Karen Hammond or, in the case of the allegation being against the Principal, by the chair of the governing board, Mr Rod Lane. If it is felt, after these initial investigations, that a further enquiry is needed, then the member of staff will be suspended. Suspension is a neutral act, and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrongdoing. However, it is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and the school will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe. The school will seek advice from the LA on these matters, and comply with national and locally agreed guidance.

## **8 Staff training**

- 8.1 All adults in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse, and to improve their knowledge of the child protection procedures that have been agreed locally. Teachers and non-teaching staff have participated in Level 1 Child Protection training. This must be renewed every three years. The Principal, Karen Hammond has also taken

the Level 2 training. The maximum period of time before refresher training must take place is two years.

## **9 Confidentiality**

- 9.1 We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat it accordingly. We pass information on to appropriate persons only.
- 9.2 We comply with the government requirements set out in DHS Circular LA 83/14, and by the LA, with regard to confidentiality. The files we keep on children are open to those children's parents. Information from third parties will not be disclosed without their prior consent. Access to these files may be withheld in certain prescribed cases where there are instances of actual or alleged abuse (see DfES Circular 16/19). Working notes are not subject to disclosure, but will be summarised and then kept on file. These guidelines of ours are in line with the safeguards on disclosure of information set out in the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1 The governing body will ensure that the school has a senior member of staff designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues. Governors will regularly monitor and review any incidents detailed in the interventions book, while a named governor, Rod Lane participates in the school's training with regard to child protection procedures.
- 10.2 This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body, this will include checking telephone numbers, the accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

**Signed: K. Hammond**

**Date: March 2015**

## **Child Protection Procedures**

### **What to do if you have concerns about a child.**

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should follow the advice listed below:

- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. *'Everything will be alright now', 'You'll never have to see that person again'*.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'*.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (e.g. *Did he touch your private parts?*), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with your *line manager, or Karen Hammond, the Principal and designated teacher, or Rosie Hatt, the deputy designated teacher*. If you still have concerns, you or your manager should refer to the Children's Social Care Services for further advice.

Call the Initial Response Team,

Tel: 0845 6037627

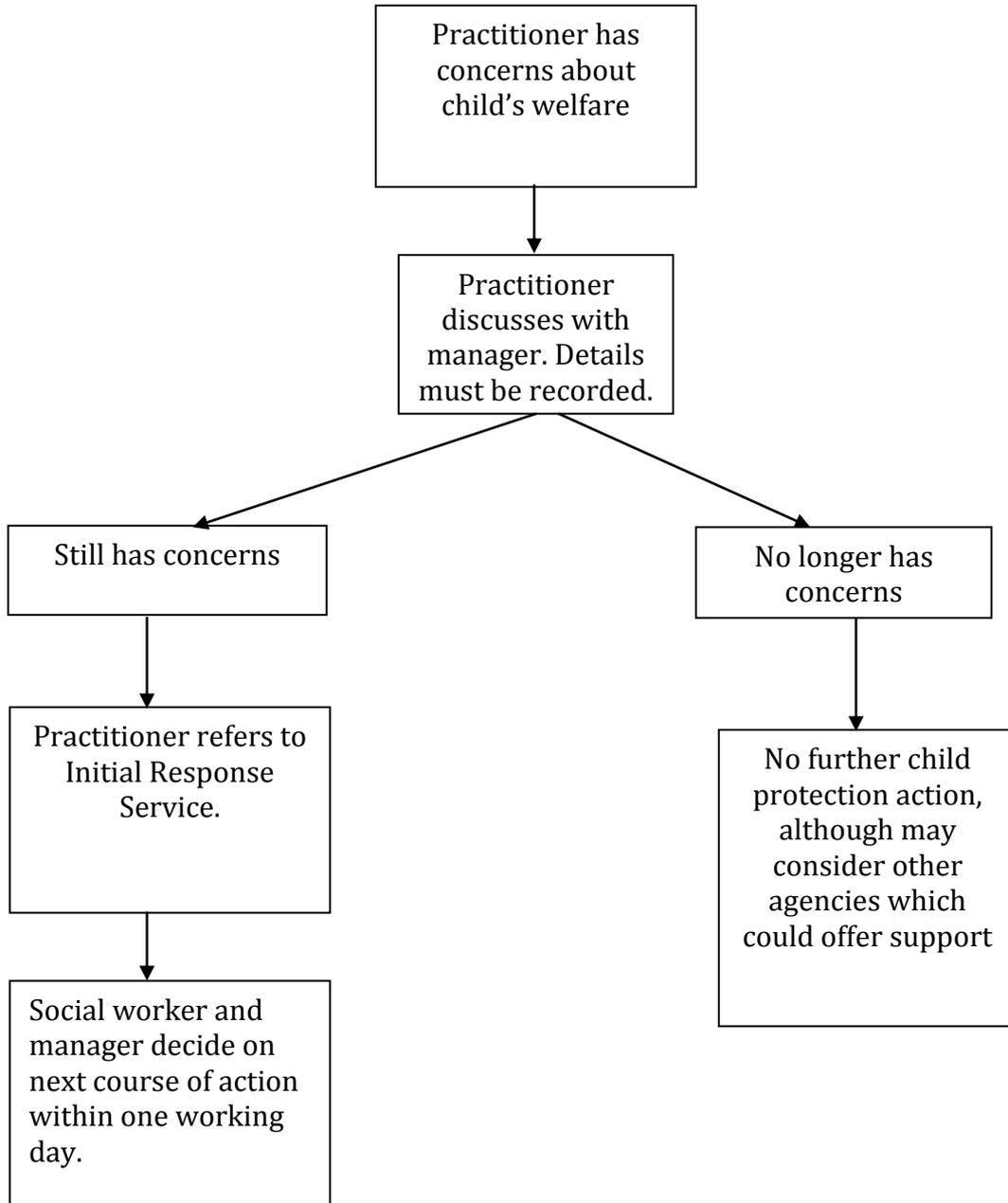
Out of hours number: 0845 6061212

#### What information will you need when making a referral? :

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

**Appendix 1 Flow Chart**

**What to do if you have concerns that a child is being abused**



**The Initial Response Service can be contacted on 0845 6037627, or in an extreme emergency dial 999 for the Police.**

**Allegations involving a member of staff / volunteer:**

This organisation is committed to having effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people. Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the ESCB.

However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer. Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. Each agency is required to have a Named Senior Officer who will receive all reports of allegations. Our Named Senior Officer is the Principal, Karen Hammond. If the allegation is against the Principal then the Chair of Governors, Mr Rod Lane will receive any reports.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, 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 which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

All allegations should be notified to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. (call 01245 436744)

The agency's Named Senior Officer should receive reports in relation to allegations against those within the organisation. A senior member of the Human Resources section for the agency must also be consulted.

The LADO will discuss the matter with the Named Senior Officer/Manager to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to the Children's Social Care Services is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to the Children's Social Care Services and the [Police](#), but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer [Significant Harm](#), the LADO will immediately refer the matter to the Children's Social Care Services and ask for a [Strategy Discussion/Meeting](#) to be convened straight away.

Where the safety of other children is in question as a result of the allegation, consideration should be given to invoking the [Complex \(Organised or Multiple\) Abuse Procedure](#) (this can be found on the ESCB website [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk) ).

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Children's Social Care Services. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation. Consequently the LADO should be informed of all allegations that come to the

employer's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult [Police](#) and social care colleagues as appropriate.

Where a referral is made directly to Children's Social Care Services, they will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the [Police](#) and the Named Senior Officer/Manager in the relevant agency or organisation.

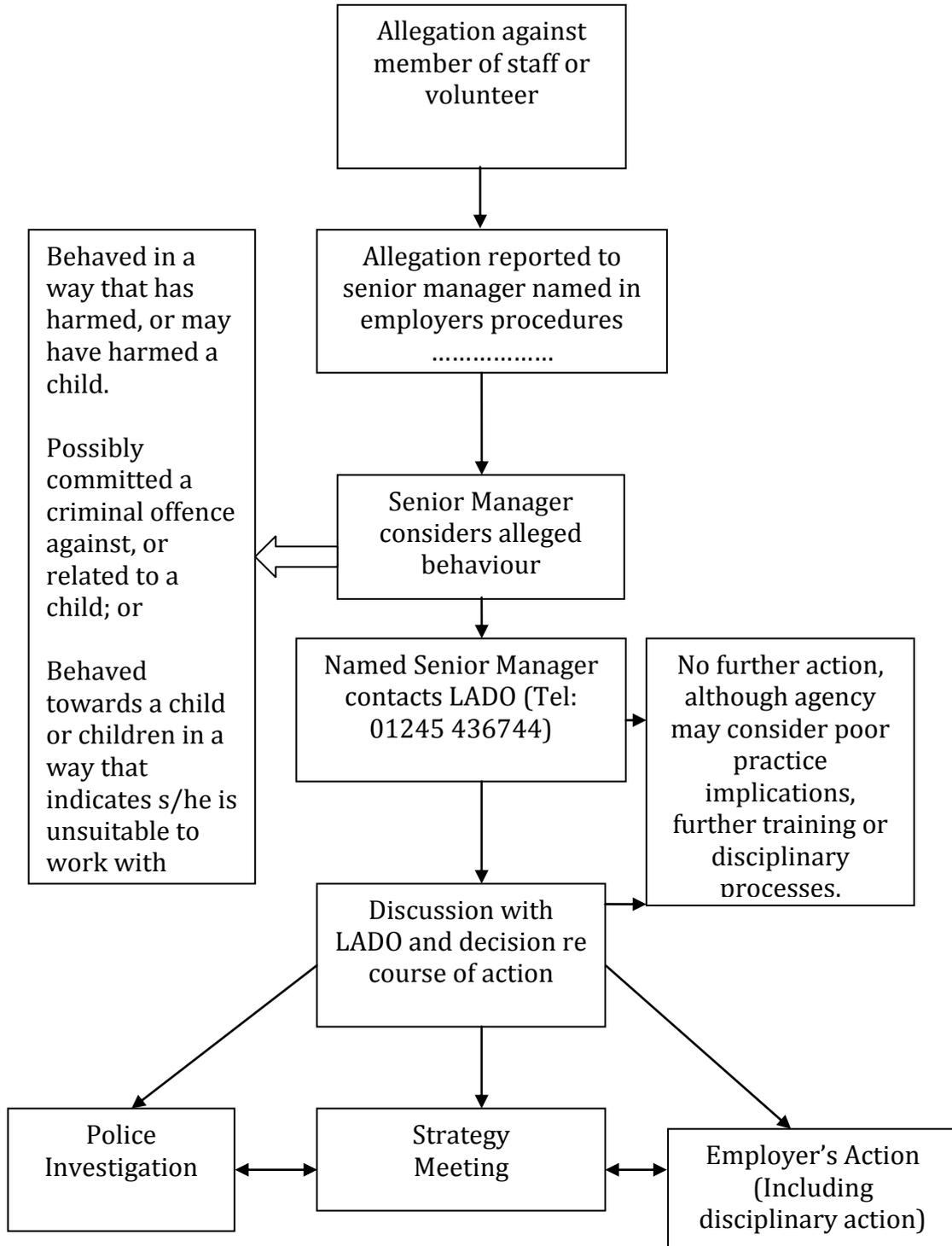
Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

1. The police investigation of a possible criminal offence
2. Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care Services as to whether the child is need of protection or in need of services
3. Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

**In addition, such allegations may give rise to complaints of poor practice, which should be considered in line with the agencies complaints or disciplinary procedures.**

More information and the full Essex Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures can be found at [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk).

Appendix 2  
Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers



Assessment by Children's Services e.g. s47 Child Protection Enquiry

LADO tracks progress, monitors outcomes and reports to LSCB and DCSF

### Appendix 3

#### Glossary of terms

Child - a young person under the age of 18 yrs.

Child Protection Enquiry - A Child Protection Enquiry (usually referred to as a Section 47 Enquiry) is required if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer [significant harm](#).

Common Assessment Framework - The aim of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is to ensure that every child and young person receives the universal services to which they are entitled and any additional services they need at the earliest opportunity. To achieve this there is an expectation that all agencies, both statutory and voluntary, will work more closely together, share information appropriately and focus the provision of services around the needs of the child or young person. In Essex the CAF form is also used to make Child Protection referrals to Children's Social Care.

LADO - Local Authority Designated Officer - The Local Authority must appoint a Designated Officer (LADO) whose responsibility it is to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases which fall within this procedure, providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the Police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistently, and with a thorough and fair process.

Named Senior Officer - agencies should appoint a Named Senior Officer to have overall responsibility for ensuring that their agency operates procedures for dealing with allegations against those who work with children in accordance with the guidance set out in Appendix 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006), resolving inter agency issues and liaising with the Essex Safeguarding Children Board / LADO on the subject.

Significant Harm - The Children Act 1989 introduced Significant Harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

Significant Harm is any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life.

Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. This definition was clarified in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include, "for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another".

Suspicious or allegations that a child is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm may result in a Core Assessment incorporating a Section 47 Enquiry.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

**Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB) - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective coordination in every local area. For this reason, the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board. The ESCB must coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for that purpose.**