

Adults At Risk & Child Safeguarding Policy

Definitions – for this document

An adult at risk:

Is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerable Adults are entitled to: privacy; be treated with dignity; lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so; be able to choose how they lead their lives; the protection of the law; have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

Child:

Describes a child aged 0-17 years old.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Gateway Collective wants to restore dignity and revive hope to people from all walks of life. We are concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive environment.

We seek to ensure that all our team members are aware of what is required from them under the vulnerable adult and child protection policy and make sure that it is practised at all times.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children.

We commit ourselves to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting official investigation into physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, children or young people (by an adult or young person).

This statement is to be brought to the attention of all staff and lead volunteers when they join, as part of their induction programme. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all team leaders to be cascaded throughout the staff and volunteer teams.

Implementation

The Gateway Collective will:

Plan its work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults and children might occur.

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse vulnerable adults and children is very small, The Gateway Collective can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways. We will, for instance:

- Ensure that there is adequate supervision for all vulnerable adults and children.

- Ensure that any vulnerable adult or child working with The Gateway Collective is aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know where the nearest telephone is in case of emergencies and that phones are clearly labelled with directions for how to make external calls (When working in a building)
- Arrange that an adult is not left alone with a child except in an emergency where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child.
- Make sure the designated person and deputy has correct and up to date training.
- Ensure staff and lead volunteers supervising vulnerable adults or children are suitably trained.
- Ensure that all children participating in activities are supervised by a responsible adult (e.g. parent, grandparent)

Designated person and their role

The Gateway Collective has a designated person who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults or children. There is also a deputy in the absence of the designated person.

The designated person for The Gateway Collective is Ali Horton; the deputy is Janet Hughes

The designated person will be available for vulnerable adults and children to speak with should they feel the need to talk with someone about an incident which has happened whilst working for or receiving assistance from The Gateway Collective, particularly if they feel they have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected by an adult or another young person.

RECORDING

The designated person will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another staff/team member has and seek advice from the Social Services Department or the Police. See 'incident reporting form' at page 7; blank copies are held in the bottom drawer of the filing cabinet in the Garden lock-up/

Staff and volunteers must ensure that their recording of facts, incidents, assessments, referrals, case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, dated and factual. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence. Any supporting evidence should be preserved and clearly labelled. These records must be stored in an individual file and stored securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security. These records are available to individuals on request (not third party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.

WHISTLE-BLOWING

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to take action when suspicious that abuse is occurring at work – no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is. The Gateway Collective will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

Staff have a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of adult abuse. Staff who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

REMEMBER

It is important that everyone in The Gateway Collective is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.

Additional points

Displaying Information

The name of the designated person shall be displayed at every site managed by The Gateway Collective, usually in the lock-up.

All workers in The Gateway Collective should be informed of the name of the designated person and how they might be contacted.

Applying agreed procedures for protecting vulnerable adults and children to all workers

These procedures are set in place to protect vulnerable adults and children should apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to vulnerable adults and children as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect vulnerable adults and children, which are then observed by everyone. This will involve thought and planning within each group to minimise the risk.

If any member of staff or supervising volunteer has concerns please raise them with the designated person. If it is brought to the attention of the designated person and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.

See appropriate flowcharts at pages 5 and 6.

Disclosure of Information

There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed to us is confidential, but may not always be secret.

Personal and delicate information about staff and volunteers will be:

- Confidential to The Gateway Collective and can be shared with staff and lead volunteers on a 'need to know basis' *and*
- Can be shared with another agency when:
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held.
 - There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent.
 - The law requires it.

Give staff and volunteers clear roles

Volunteer Handbook - Abuse of vulnerable adults and children is most easily concealed where there is confusion among adults about roles and responsibilities. Included therefore in all job and role descriptions, both for employees and volunteers, will be a statement laying down the behaviour and values expected from all who work as part of this team.

Over and above the written word, expected behaviour towards vulnerable adults and children when working with The Gateway Collective will be explained to new workers as part of their induction.

Supervision as a means of protection

Regular staff meetings will be held where team leads meet together to raise issues about their area of work and discuss them. When receiving feedback about the work, particular attention should be paid to any situation or suggestion that a vulnerable adult or child is being either highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

Within The Gateway Collective our main area of concern about protecting people lies with the welfare of any vulnerable adult supported volunteers. Where possible, staff and lead volunteers should take opportunities to observe those vulnerable adults and children for whom they are responsible.

In all recruitment decisions concerning volunteers (those working in a leadership role in the activities of the Gateway Collective):

- a) A detailed application form should be completed
- b) 2 references should be taken about the suitability of the applicant for the post being considered
- c) An informal interview will provide an extended conversation to allow an opportunity to explore in more detail the applicant's experience and motivation for volunteering.

Criminal convictions & DBS Checks

All staff and lead volunteers (those working in a leadership role in the activities of the Gateway Collective) must complete a volunteer application form before commencing work at The Gateway Collective. Details of criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) must be provided so an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken. Dependant on the role and duties of that role, a DBS check may be required which The Gateway Collective would administer. The Gateway Collective's board of directors reserves the right to dismiss a member of staff / volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary.

Training

Training in the prevention of abuse and the action to take if abuse occurs should be included as part of the Training and Induction Programme for all staff and volunteers.

All workers will be informed of this policy and procedures at induction and with any updates required by law.

General

All workers driving any vehicle which transports vulnerable adults and/or children must hold a valid driver's licence for the type/class of vehicle they are driving.

All vehicles used in the transportation of vulnerable adults and/or children must have a valid road fund licence, be appropriately insured, have a valid MOT certificate and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. Seat sharing is not permitted and seat belts must be worn.

Further Information

Further information can be found at:

Sefton LSCB (Local Safeguarding Childrens Board) for local policy and procedure guidance and training relating to the childrens workforce <http://www.seftonlscb.co.uk/>

Support when concerned about an adult in Sefton

[http://www.sefton.gov.uk/social-care/sefton-safeguarding-adults-board-\(ssab\).aspx](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/social-care/sefton-safeguarding-adults-board-(ssab).aspx)

Policy Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.

The Gateway Collective - Working with Children and Vulnerable adults Online (Developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic)

Professional contact

Only use work accounts when contacting a child or vulnerable adult on social media, and ensure staff, ambassadors and volunteers never befriend or add service users to their personal contact list on their own accounts. If using online apps to have interactions with service users including groups, always ensure that they are via work phone numbers and devices. This is to protect service user as well as to have full transparency if any complaints or issues arise. It is also to protect both staff and those who they are engaging with, as you do not want to give away personal information. Organisational accounts should not be used for personal purposes, for example, using a work Zoom account for non-work use.

Avoid Using Personal Devices

All communication with service users should be done on a device that is password protected, where possible this should be device owned by The Gateway Collective. It is advisable to use online platforms where someone else from your team can sign in to observe the session as it takes place. It's easy for information to be backed up and stored in other places on our personal devices, without us realising. When accessing, managing and storing carers data we have to be careful to protect it.

Password Protect Video Conferencing

When arranging a video call session, it is important that the most up to date version of the software is used and that the session is password protected. This is to stop uninvited people from joining the meeting. Make sure that a 'strong' password is used to stop uninvited people from guessing and joining the session. When communicating the session code and password take care that only the relevant people are informed, avoid publishing the details in an open forum or website for example.

Video Conferencing Etiquette

Even with the session taking place online it is good practice to have at least two members of staff to be involved in the session. It is important that we remember that we are most likely connecting with people in a home environment. It is vital therefore that staff know how to mute a connection to avoid listening in on a private conversation. In the same manner it maybe necessary to turn off the video feed of a participant to avoid embarrassment. A polite reminder at the start of each session

about the online rules of interaction would be strongly recommended, including teaching people how they can mute their audio and turn off the video stream if required.

Choice of Software / Apps

When choosing a suitable platform for communication be aware of that platforms minimum age in its terms of service. We should not use any software or app that is not intended for that age group. Ensure that the software or app used is compliant with GDPR and other relevant UK legislation.

Avoid one to one interactions

Making sure that there is transparency and accountability for any conversations you have with young people is key. If you are emailing a child or vulnerable adult, always copy in another member of the team and explain to the carer that you will do so. Private direct messages (DM's) should not be used to any child or vulnerable adult.

Reporting an inappropriate online message

If you are in receipt of an inappropriate message through email or other online technology you must not delete the message and report the incident as soon as possible to a line manager or protection officer. Understandable this can be embarrassing but ultimately it is for your protection.

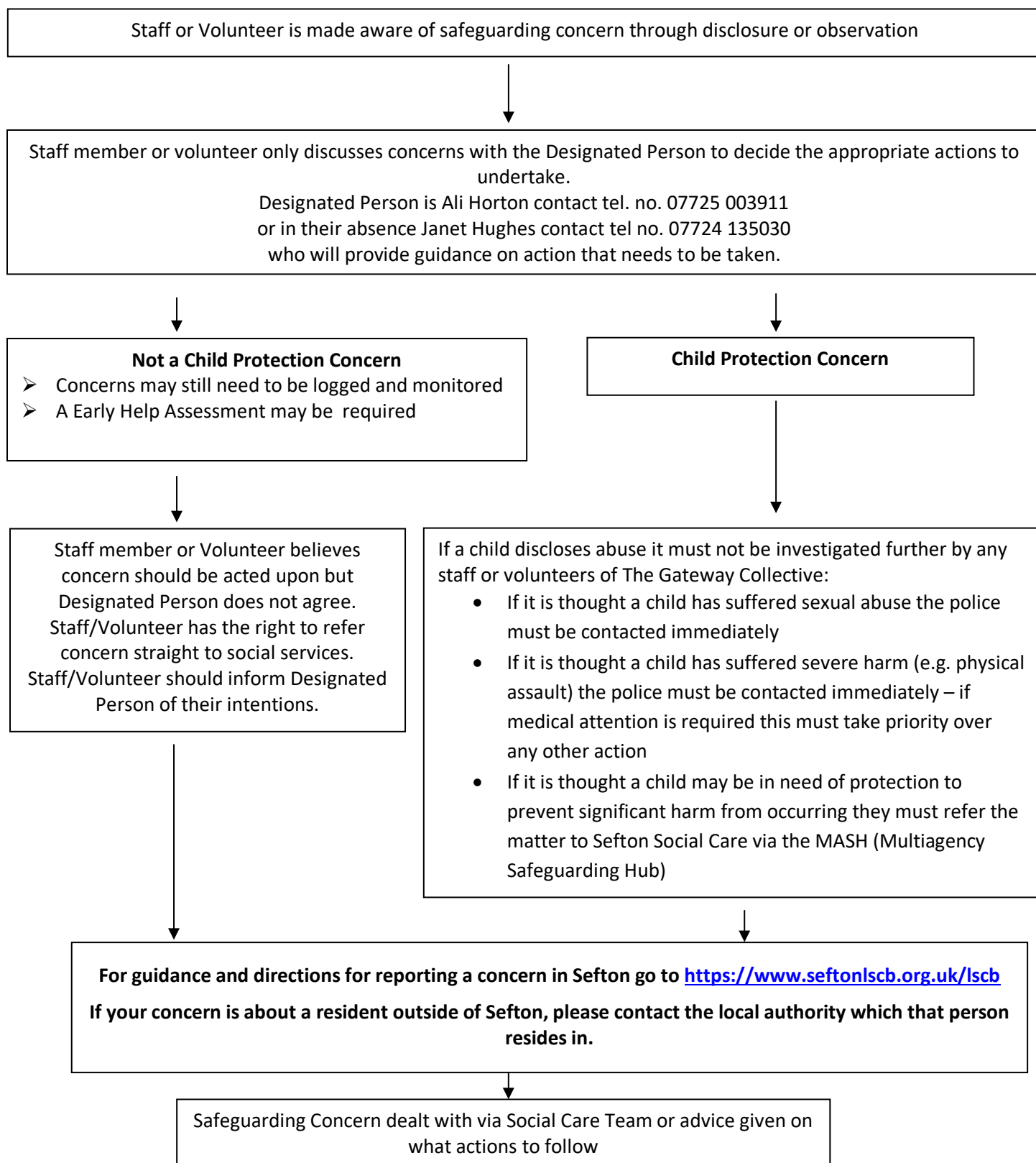
Leading online discussions

If you are having online group discussions or sessions, think about who is involved, their ages and how they will interact and know each other. It's important that the session leader sets appropriate ground rules based on the age range and knowledge of the group. This could range from 'being kind to everyone' to specific rules including appropriate use of language, the length of contribution, over-speaking, avoiding discrimination and other forms of offence.

Signature of Chair of Trustees

Date Policy Adopted _____

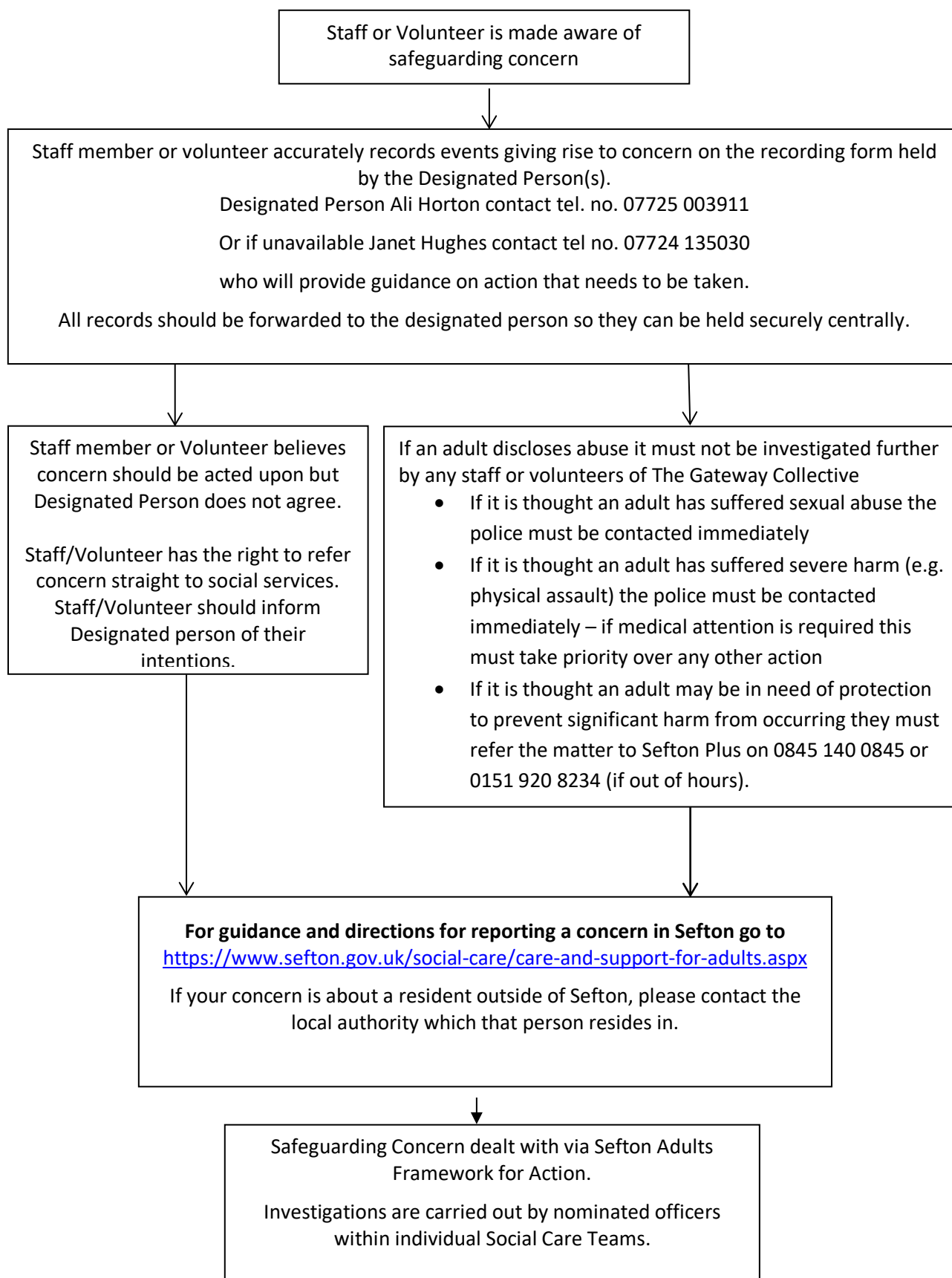
Safeguarding Children's Flow Chart



If Social Care assesses that concerns meet their referral threshold criteria and an assessment / intervention is co-ordinated, Social Care may not always be able to share all information regarding individual cases referred to them due to data protection and sensitive information. However, it is good practice to follow up that support is being appropriately provided and to continue to advocate for support if there are continuing concerns.

If Social Care does not see the case as appropriately meeting their threshold for referral it may be that there is a multi agency response required to support the child/family via an Early Help Assessment arrangement which the organisation may have continued involvement within.

Safeguarding Adults At Risk Flow Chart



Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

Please complete this form as fully as possible and hand it to your designated lead officer who will be able to support you in following the policy and procedures. The designated lead officer is also responsible for confidentially storing and monitoring this information in line with data protection guidelines.

Name of Adult _____ Gender _____

Age and date of birth _____ Ethnicity _____

Religion _____ First language _____

Any Disabilities _____ Any special factors _____

Carer's name(s) (if any) _____

Home address (and phone no. if available). _____

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details. _____

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times etc. of any specific incidents. _____

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs? _____

Have you spoken to the adult? If so, what was said? _____

Have you spoken to the carer(s) If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.

Have you consulted anybody else? Give details.

Your name and position.

In what capacity have you had any contact with the adult?

To whom reported and date of reporting.

Staff / Volunteer Signature

Today's date

Adults Signature
(Where appropriate)

Date

Action taken by the Designated Person

Designated Persons Signature

Date