SHARe KNOWSLEY



Supporting and Helping Asylum seekers and Refugees

# Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy

Purpose of the policy: To inform SHARe Knowsley staff and Volunteers of their duties when working with children and young people.

Policy applies to: All trustees, staff and volunteers within SHARe Knowsley who work with children and young people.

Trustee Safeguarding Lead: Ghazaleh Zarrabi-Kashani

Safeguarding Officer: Margaret Roche SHARe Knowsley Manager

Date of Approval: 24/01/23

Signed on behalf of the trustees.

D Monaghan

Amended: September 2023 (New Trustee Lead) Date of Review: January 2024

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## Introduction

SHARe Knowsley is a local charitable organisation supporting asylum seekers and refugees living in the Knowsley area. A key element of SHARe Knowsley's work is to assist clients to make appropriate decisions about different aspects of their lives and to enhance their independence and integration.

SHARe Knowsley recognises that an individual's health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that the clients we support have many additional needs being asylum seekers and refugees, which makes them vulnerable and at risk of abuse and exploitation. Many of our clients have experienced significant life changing experiences which may include, trauma, abuse, distress, violence and rape in their country of origin or on their journey to the UK. and unsurprisingly they often have mental health problems. Coming from minority ethnic groups and encountering a hostile immigration system and environment they also face many barriers, especially around communication.

SHARe Knowsley strives to be an effective advocate of the rights of refugees and asylum seekers and believes in its responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable adults, children and young people.

## **Policy Statement**

SHARe Knowsley is committed to protecting all the children, young people and vulnerable adults that use our services as well as volunteers, staff members and donors. We are committed to undertaking all the appropriate steps to create and maintain a safe and positive environment that promotes and supports the wellbeing for all.

SHARe Knowsley recognises the personal dignity and rights of all vulnerable people to have their privacy respected, to be appropriately supported and to have the protection of the law. We strive to ensure that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults have the same protection regardless of immigration status, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

SHARe Knowsley is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults and children which necessitates: the recognition of the additional needs of children and vulnerable adults with refugee or asylum status, minority ethnic groups and disabilities, the barriers they may face, especially around communication; the recognition of who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns. This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

We believe that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and that everyone working and volunteering for SHARe Knowsley has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and the adults we work with to keep them safe and to operate in a way that prioritises their safety and upholds their rights to live a life free from harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect.



We are committed to undertaking all the appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment that promotes and supports the wellbeing for all. We accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause vulnerable adults, children and young people harm.

SHARe Knowsley will endeavour to safeguard all children, young people and vulnerable adults we work with by:

- Ensuring that safer recruitment practices and safeguarding policies and procedures set out a culture of vigilance and challenge and follow local authority and national guidance.
- Providing induction and regular training that enable all adults working in SHARe Knowsley to recognise signs of abuse and neglect; act in the interests of the client and maintain an attitude that 'it could happen here'.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Sharing information about protection and good practice with children and vulnerable adults, parents and carers, and volunteers.
- Working collaboratively with other agencies to promote early help for young people, vulnerable adults and their families before their needs escalate to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment.
- Challenging ourselves and others to ensure actions are completed in a timely way and press for reconsideration if the situation does not improve
- Ensuring all adults working with clients follow an agreed code of conduct that promotes safe working practices and makes responsibilities and expectations clear, including the understanding that anyone can make a safeguarding referral
- SHARe Knowsley is committed to creating and maintaining an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy and related procedures are applicable to the trustees, manager, employees and volunteers of SHARe Knowsley. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of SHARE Knowsley in working together in promoting the clients' welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organisation.

# Implementation of the Policy

The Board of Trustees of SHARe Knowsley is ultimately accountable for ensuring that SHARe Knowsley abides in full with its legal and regulatory safeguarding obligations. It discharges that responsibility by:

- ensuring this policy is legally compliant and consistent with best safeguarding practice at all times,
- regarding safeguarding as a governance and risk management priority for the organisation,
- delegating operational responsibility for the implementation and periodic review of this policy to the Senior Management Team and Designated Safeguarding Officers of the charity. The Manager, Margaret Roche is the named safeguarding lead and Lindsay Kelly is the named trustee for



Supporting Asylum seekers and Refugees Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy January 2023 Safeguarding. This role is also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of this policy and procedure, including improving service delivery following incidents or client feedback.

• requiring the manager and deputy manager at SHARe Knowsley to complete training courses in safeguarding children and adults as well as Prevent training provided by HM government.

## Aims

This policy exists to help SHARe Knowsley to address current risks to our clients, prevent and respond to concerns of abuse, harm, exploitation or neglect of children and young people using our services or when accessing other services.

In accordance with the Care Act 2014, we believe that staff and volunteers should work together in partnership with clients so that they are:

- Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect
- Treated fairly and with dignity and respect
- Protected when they need to be
- Easily able to get the support, protection and services that they need.

The aims of Child and Young People Safeguarding are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to children and young people with care and/or support needs
- Raise public awareness so that communities, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help the adults in a child's or young person's life understand the different types of abuse, how to keep the child or young person safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or young person.
- Address what has caused the abuse

SHARe Knowsley upholds the Six Principles of Adult Safeguarding as set out in the Care Act 2014:

- 1. Empowerment: people are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information and informed consent
- 2. Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs. Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect and that promote resilience and self determination
- 3. Proportionality: the least intrusive response is made appropriate to the level of risk presented
- 4. Protection: Adults in need are offered support, advocacy and ways to protect themselves, and there is a coordinated response to adult safeguarding.
- 5. Partnership: services offer local solutions through working closely within their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- 6. Accountability: accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

These principles are critical to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring, while also ensuring the best possible level of care is given. By following the key safeguarding principles, we can be sure that we are



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doing the best we can to protect vulnerable people from harm. It is the responsibility of everyone to act if we have concerns about the safety of anyone.

#### KMBC Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contact details

**Telephone**: 0151 443 2600 (24 hours/7 days a week). Where possible, it is good practice to also send an online referral form to the MASH team.

**Online referral**: The online safeguarding referral form for children can be found at <u>Multi Agency Referral</u> <u>Form (knowsley.gov.uk)</u> (be advised that submitted forms are only monitored from 9am to 5pm excluding Bank Holidays.)

#### Home Office Safeguarding contact details

Safeguarding Manager North West Asylum Casework Directory UK Visas and Immigration 1st Floor The Capital Building Liverpool L3 9PP **Telephone**: 01512132682 **Fax**: 08703369998.

Stop Hate UK is an organization dealing with Hate Crime and can be contacted on 0800138 1625.

Hate crimes and incidents can be reported on the Stop Hate UK Hate Crime App for Merseyside where photographs and video can be included in the report.

Merseyside police can be contacted on 101 or dial 999 in an emergency.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.



# Legislation and Context

SHARe Knowsley recognises that there is a legal framework within which they need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

SHARe Knowsley is aware of and acts in accordance with the provisions of the

following Acts:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Children and vulnerable adults Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998 & the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Protection of Children and vulnerable adults Act 1999
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Care Act 2014

## Rights of the Child

At SHARe Knowsley we recognise the rights of the child.

All children have needs and rights:

- The need for physical care and attention
- The need for intellectual stimulation
- The need for love and security
- The need for social contact and relationships
- The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- The right to be protected from discrimination
- The right to be treated as an individual

In our support of children at SHARe Knowsley, we will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, age, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- Out working practices are anti-discriminatory and that we recognise the additional barriers children may face to having their needs met, such as disability and communication needs
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns to the manager or deputy manager



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## **Recruitment and vetting**

SHARe Knowsley considers the tasks and skills necessary for each role undertaken by volunteers and therefore, what kind of person is most suited to the post. The selection process in place has been designed to consider and measure all applicants against these key selection criteria.

Process:

- Application form
- References
- Interview
- Probationary period
- Ongoing supervision
- Appraisal meeting
- Regular quarterly volunteer meeting

All applicants are asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults if this is appropriate to the position being applied for. This declaration states the requirements under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 to disclose any relevant convictions. Offers of volunteering roles are, where appropriate, made subject to successful police checks. All information is treated in strict confidence and accordance with GDPR guidelines

Volunteers are asked to provide documentation to confirm their identity e.g. birth certificate, national insurance number, passport and photograph.

References are obtained from two non-family members and referees are specifically asked to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable adults and children, if this is relevant to the role.

In accordance with DBS guidelines, volunteers who are working in an outreach capacity or 1:1 basis are required to have a current DBS check. In addition, substantial unsupervised access to clients is not allowed until DBS checks are received. All DBS checks are updated at least every three years.

## Training

The manager (Safeguarding lead) and deputy manager are required to attend a safeguarding course for adults and another course for children at least annually. These courses are provided via Knowsley Council. Both the manager and deputy also attend Prevent training, as provided by HM Government.

Once recruited, those volunteers and staff who work with clients receive initial training. This training includes Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Staff and volunteers are kept well-informed by regular team meetings and quarterly update meetings for all volunteers. They receive supervision and support so that they are less likely to become involved in actions which can lead to harm or be misinterpreted and possibly lead to false allegations being made against them. Volunteers are expected to attend relevant update training annually.



SHARe Knowsley ensures that volunteers are clear about their roles and the limits that apply to them through training. They are made aware of the organisations Safeguarding Policy and their obligations to other policies such as Health and Safety.

All appointments are subject to a three-month trial period during which time the volunteer is supervised and particular attention is given to their approach to working with our service users.

SHARe Knowsley holds regular volunteer meetings and all staff have the opportunity to meet on a one-toone basis, giving both volunteers and SHARe Knowsley the opportunity to address training needs, voice any concerns and agree any action points. All meetings are regarded as confidential and as such, enable the Manager and volunteers to share any concerns they may have regarding another colleague's behaviour, with a designated person.

It is the intention of the organisation that all staff, volunteers and as many trustees as practical, will have access to further training opportunities in addition to the initial and annual training we provide as a minimum.

# Code of Conduct and good practice

SHARe Knowsley has strict safeguarding principles and these are made known to all adults, young people, children, staff and volunteers. These principles include the right of everyone to be listened to, that they have the right to be valued and respected as individuals, that adults have the right to be involved in decision making processes as appropriate and that they have the right to praise and encouragement. All concerned, including volunteers, service users, their children and visitors are given clear guidelines on what is expected, and what is not acceptable with respect to their behaviour. SHARe Knowsley operates a discipline policy that is positive and non-violent. It will not tolerate bullying in any form, neither will it tolerate prejudice or oppressive behaviour.

All staff and volunteers should behave in a professional and appropriate manner. Professional integrity will guard against allegations of misconduct and abuse and create a positive climate for all our service users. All staff and volunteers working with clients are given training and clear guidelines regarding good practice when working with children and vulnerable adults and young people and SHARe Knowsley takes every precaution to ensure that these guidelines are adhered to. All trustees, staff and volunteers are given our volunteer handbook during their training, which they must sign for, to confirm that they have read and understood the policies.

The following are examples of good practice, when working with children:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets). There may be occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary and, in such circumstances, the
- interview should be conducted in a room with an open door or visual access. Where this is not possible, the member of staff should ensure that there is another adult nearby. Never make gratuitous physical contact with a participant. (There may be occasions where a
- distressed participant needs comfort which may include physical comforting and staff should use their discretion to ensure that it is appropriate and not unnecessary or unjustified contact.) Be



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cautious about physical contact in games. Where physical contact is inescapable (e.g., to demonstrate equipment) staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should take place and of the possibility for misinterpretation of such contact.

- Treat all children equally, and with respect and dignity. SHARe Knowsley will take positive action to
  eliminate discrimination against any person or group of people. Staff should ensure that children
  are protected from discrimination on any grounds, including ability and challenge discriminating
  comments and behaviour. Activities should be designed to include all children and to promote
  positive attitudes towards differences.
- Ensure that if children of mixed genders are to be supervised, they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Never use physical force against a child. If it is necessary to restrain a child because they are an immediate danger to themselves or others, then the minimum amount of restraint should be used for the shortest amount of time. Remain calm and get the attention and support of other staff. The incident should be recorded in writing, with a witness statement (where possible), immediately afterwards.
- Never use physical punishment.
- Secure parental or guardian consent if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment where the participant is under the age of 16. First aid given should be recorded in writing and reported to the lead member of staff and a written record of any injury should be kept along with the details of any treatment given.

Practices never to be sanctioned:

- Engaging in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Children's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour. This should always be challenged.
- Sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Failing to challenge, record and act on allegations made by a child.
- Undertaking task of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves (e.g., apply sun cream).
- Inviting or allowing children to stay with you at your home or arranging meetings outside of SHARe Knowsley business.

# Types of Abuse

SHARe Knowsley recognises that abuse can take many forms and accept that the following behaviour is damaging to children:

**Neglect**: Leaving a child uncared for, disregarding her/his needs or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development.



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**Physical abuse**: Actual or risk of physical injury to a child, intentional physical abuse of a child, failure to prevent physical suffering or injury to a child

Sexual abuse: Actual or risk of sexual exploitation of a child

**Emotional abuse**: Actual or risk of severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection.

**Child sexual exploitation** (CSE): is a type of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status, or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activity.

**Domestic abuse:** Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or psychological abuse. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children and young people. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

**FGM:** Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for nonmedical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

**Child trafficking:** Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved, or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children can be trafficked into the UK and within the UK.

**Criminal exploitation**: Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes (predominately drug related).

**Radicalisation:** Children may be groomed or coerced to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is a form of harm.

# Dealing with concerns about the abuse or neglect of children

All staff and volunteers who work with SHARe Knowsley clients are made aware, through appropriate training, of the various ways in which somebody in the organisation may become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of abuse, and of the action that should be taken.

The Manager is responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse which will be logged. Information may be gathered from other volunteers, carers, service users, adults or children who may have any safeguarding concerns.

The manager will then assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter and pass it on to the trustees within 24 hours within a closed trustee WhatsApp Group.

The Manager will then consult immediately with a statutory agency such as the local social services department or health board, to test out any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns as soon as possible.



Supporting Asylum seekers and Refugees Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy January 2023 The manager will then make a formal referral to the statutory agency concerned and/or the police without delay. It is not the role of the Manager or SHARe Knowsley to decide whether an adult or child has been the subject of abuse, trafficking or exploitation.

#### The procedure is clearly outlined in Appendix 1

### **Child Protection Procedures**

SHARe Knowsley will follow the following procedures to:

- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the lead staff member. However, staff should remember that they are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Ensure all records are kept securely.
- Follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Follow procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.

## Awareness of Actual or Likely Occurrences of Abuse

There are several ways in which abuse may come to light:

- A child discloses abuse.
- Someone else discloses that a child has told him/her or that he/she strongly believes a child has been or is being abused.
- A child may show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- A child's behaviour may indicate that it is likely that he/she is being abused.
- A member of staff's behaviour or in the way in which he/she relates to a child causes concern.

## **Issues of Disclosure**

Becoming aware of abuse can cause a multitude of emotional reactions, which are personal to the individual. Whatever the reaction and however the abuse has become apparent, actual, or suspected, it must be responded to in the correct manner according to the procedure outlined in Appendix 1.

We recognise that the identification of child abuse and dealing appropriately with abused

children requires skill and sensitivity.

Diagnosis of abuse is left to qualified professionals; staff, or volunteers do **not** have an investigative role. SHARe Knowsley will therefore ensure that all staff and volunteers are given the necessary information, training and support needed to ensure they will be able to fulfil their duty to protect the children they work with.

**Respond:** When a client discloses abuse, it is important that the person disclosing the information is treated sympathetically. Do not promise confidentiality but reassure the child that the only person you will tell will be the person in charge of safeguarding so that they can help. You must not investigate or ask leading questions.



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**Record & Report:** A record of the conversation should be made. Any abuse must be reported to the Designated Officer via a safeguarding/cause for concern report form (Appendices 2 and/or 3) Whatever the source of the information or suspicion, this must be recorded on the client's file. This includes anonymous information or information from people who do not want to be identified. Take care to record what is said in the words used by the person disclosing.

**Refer:** All safeguarding issues should be reported within 24 hours. Discuss with the designated safeguarding officer whether to refer externally to social services, or the police, emergency services.

Many clients will have experienced abuse in the past and may wish for no action to be taken, or indeed action may not be possible or practical.

## Procedure for Reporting Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse

In any case where an allegation or disclosure is made or someone in the organisation has concerns, a record must be made on a cause for concern form or and given to the designated officer to pass on to social services. The following details should be collected as far as reasonably practical:

- Name and age
- Home address
- Date of birth
- Name and address of parent(s) or those with parental responsibility
- Telephone number of the child
- State clearly who has concerns and their details
- What has caused concerns including dates and times
- Whether the child has been spoken to and if so, what has she/he alleged.

#### Some useful Do's and Don'ts:

#### Do

- ✓ Act on any concerns, suspicions or doubts.
- ✓ In an emergency, if there is actual or immediate risk of abuse, call 999.
- ✓ Try to ensure the immediate safety of those concerned but not at the risk of your own safety.
- ✓ Provide first aid if necessary and someone is available with appropriate skills.
- ✓ Listen and clarify what the concern is / what has happened.
- ✓ Provide reassurance and comfort; offer a cup of tea.
- $\checkmark$  Assure the person that the matter will be taken seriously.
- ✓ Ask the person what they want done.
- ✓ Explain what you will need to do and who you may need to inform others
- $\checkmark$  Try to gain consent to share information as necessary.
- ✓ Consider the person's mental capacity to consent and seek assistance if you are uncertain.
- ✓ Actively preserve any evidence.
- ✓ Respect privacy as far as possible.
- ✓ Arrange support for the alleged victim.
- ✓ Contact the local authority children's services if a child is, or may also be, at risk.
- ✓ Report all your concerns to a manager in line with organisational and local multi-agency procedures.



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✓ Make an accurate record of what has occurred (or what has been disclosed/alleged) and what action has been taken.

#### Don't

- 🗷 Ignore.
- Promise confidentiality explain how and why the information might need to be shared.
- 🗷 Rush the person.
- Probe or question just record the facts and seek clarification where necessary.
- Contaminate or disturb any evidence.
- Interview witnesses but do record any information volunteered by them.
- Panic or show shock /disbelief.
- 🗷 Be judgemental.
- ☑ Jump to conclusions.
- Approach the alleged abuser (unless they also have care and support needs and are in your care or they are a member of your staff).
- Gossip, only inform others on a need to know basis.
- Put management or organisational interests before safety.

# Further reading:

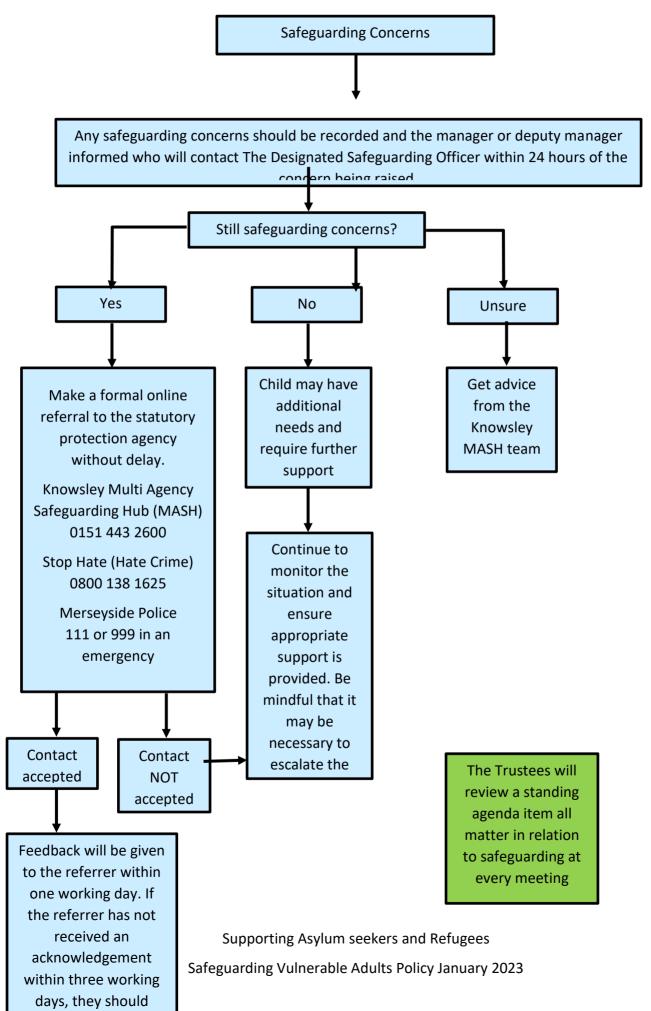
Every Child Matters 2003

Every Child Matters: Next Steps 2004

Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked 2011







## **APPENDIX 2**



# SHARe Knowsley Children's Safeguarding Reporting Form

Your details – the person completing the form		
Name		
Position		
Telephone		
Email		

Details of the child affected		
Name		
Address		
Age/D.O.B.		
Telephone		
Email		

Parent/Caregiver's Details	
Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Port Reference (if approp)	

ate(s) of Incident(s)

Date Reported
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Details of the incident or concern including dates and times (please describe in detail	
using only the facts)	

Other present o	r potential witnesses
Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Additional relev or important)	ant information (please detail anything else that you believe to be helpful
3. Actions Taker	n: please state clearly any immediate/proposed action taken
4. What agencie	s, if any have been notified/involved?



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NHS/GP	Pharmacy	PartnerAgency (specify)	
Police/Fire	Social Services	Other (specify)	
Please give details (including dates)			

I have completed this form and provided information that is factual and does not contain my own views or opinions on the matter.

Name	
Signature	
Date Completed	

Name Of Parent/Carer (if applicable)	
Signature	
Date Completed	

