



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

Safeguarding Policy

Important!

If you're worried about a child, young person or adult please use the flowchart on the back page to decide the correct course of action

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Policy Administration

Policy Ownership

For any queries about this policy, please contact the plan owner.

Department	Community Services		
Owner	Mark Beveridge	Mark.Beveridge@ribblevalley.gov.uk	01200 (41)4479
Committee	Policy and Finance / Community Services / Personnel??		

This policy is maintained and published on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council. A copy of this policy will be published on the Council Intranet and will be reviewed and updated as stated below.

Version Control and Review Date

Version	Date	Reason for Publication	Approved by Committee / Date	Review Date
V2.0	December 2022	Review of the policy	Committee Name / Date	XX/XX/20XX
V2.1	13/01/23	Policy dropped into new Policy template	Committee Name / Date	XX/XX/20XX
V2.2				

This policy will be reviewed, as a minimum, on an annual basis. However, consideration should be given to reviewing the policy should there be any changes in legislation or guidance. The policy/procedure owner will ensure the document is reviewed as stated.

Equality Implications

	Action	Yes / No
	An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed	
EIA Hyperlink		

Supporting documents or legislation relating to this Policy

Please include any supporting documents / legislation
1. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
2. Data Protection Act 1998
3. Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
4. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
5. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
6. NSPCC website
7. Internet/Email Acceptable Use Policy
8. Information Technology Security Policy
9. Data Protection Policy
10. Ribble Valley Borough Council Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice
11. Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Safer Working Practices Guidance

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Ribble Valley Borough Council delivers a range of services and activities that impact on the lives of children, young people, and adults both directly and indirectly. Safeguarding these groups - ensuring their welfare, safety, and health - is of paramount importance. We are committed to providing safe and supportive services that will give these groups, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religious belief the opportunities to achieve their full potential, with protection from abuse.

We will:

- Have commitment from senior managers and Councillors to safeguarding.
- Have a safe recruitment and selection process.
- Ensure all relevant staff are Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked at the appropriate level.
- Provide training at appropriate levels for staff, volunteers, and Councillors.
- Have designated 'Safeguarding 'Advisors' or 'Safeguarding Contacts'
- Have information about our safeguarding processes easily accessible on our internet for children, young people, adults, and their families.
- Have all the relevant information for staff available on our intranet and from their line manager.
- Have an easily understandable reporting and monitoring system, working in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis.
- Work co-operatively with partner organisations/services, including using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Ensure licence applicants for taxis, street trading and other similar activities are DBS checked and it is renewed appropriately.

1. Who to tell

- 1.1 All suspicions, and concerns **must** be reported immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Officer or one of the others named below:

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Mark Beveridge, Head of Cultural and Leisure Services	01200 414479
Safeguarding officers	Liz Rawson, HR Officer	01200 414409
	Julie Smith, HR Officer	01200 414409
	Rachael Stott, Housing Officer	01200 413235
	Colin Winterbottom, Leisure Officer	01200 414588

- 1.2 If any of the above are unavailable do not delay, contact:

- Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care - 0300 123 6720
- Lancashire County Council Children's Customer Care - 0300 123 6722
- Lancashire Police - 999

2. Procedure for reporting and dealing with concerns

- 2.1
- Stay calm and listen carefully
 - If the child or adult at risk is present reassure them

- Respond sensitively and take the report seriously
- Do not make promises of confidentiality or on outcomes
- Keep questions to a minimum, just clarify your understanding and leave the detailed questioning to the police or the social care professionals.
- Make the person fully aware that you cannot 'keep a secret' and must disclose any evidence of abuse to the appropriate agency
- Make a note of everything that was discussed as soon as possible after the disclosure (see 'how to record your concerns' below).

3. Decisions about sharing concerns

3.1 If an adult at risk does not wish concerns to be followed up, we will take their wishes into account before what to do, considering:

- The perceived level of risk to the individual and/or others, and
- Their capacity to understand the matter in questions to make decisions relating to it.

3.2 This decision will be made by the DSO.

3.3 In some instances it may be important to talk with parents or carers to clarify any concerns (but not the alleged abuser). For example, if a child seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation for such behaviour which a parent can provide.

3.4 However, sharing such concerns may present a greater risk in some circumstances, for example, were the parent/carer responsible for the abuse. In such circumstances report your concerns to the DSO.

4. Support for anyone reporting or involved with a safeguarding incident

4.1 For staff who may be involved with a safeguarding case, it may be necessary to seek support for any emotional trauma that may arise from being involved in something which although not a common occurrence for Council staff can be distressing. Please either discuss this with your line manager, HR, or the DSO, or alternatively the Council provide confidential support via an employee assist programme (PAM assist).

5. Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers, and Councillors

5.1 It is important for all staff, paid or unpaid, and Councillors to behave correctly and to be positive role models for the children, young people, and adults at risk they encounter as part of their daily work. Any staff in regular, unsupervised contact with children and young people, or any other 'regulated activity' (as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) must adhere to appropriate guidelines.

5.2 Appropriate training will be provided to any staff member having regular contact with children and young people. Managers must also develop local policies and systems to maximise staff safety including the need to carry out risk assessments as appropriate – if you feel that you have a training need or want to know more, please speak to your line manager. However, the following are common points for anyone to consider which will help to create a positive culture and safeguard staff against false allegations:

- Treat everyone fairly and with respect. Maintain professional boundaries and don't have favourites.
- Respect their right to privacy.
- Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations. Where appropriate encourage the individuals to bring in a friend, leave a door open, inform colleagues where you are and how long you will be.
- Don't give lifts outside of agreed activities.
- Don't take people to your home.
- If you must visit a person in their home always make sure that your manager is aware of this, and you record the home visit.
- Don't develop social relationships with people who are service users (including via social media).
- Don't accept money or gifts from service users – don't give money or gifts to service users.
- Never allow or engage in any inappropriate touching or physical contact.
- If working with mixed gender groups of young people off site (on trips, at different venues) ensure there are always male and female staff with them unless previously agreed with the Designated Safeguarding Children Officer.
- Don't smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of service users in any work-related environment.

6. Definitions and Supporting Information

- **Child or young person** – Anyone under the age of 18 years.
- **Adult at risk** – A person aged 18 years or over, who is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.
- **Parent** – Parent, carer, or guardian.
- **Staff, elected members and volunteers** – Anyone working on behalf of, delivering a service, or representing the Council.
- **Abuse** – Any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm.
- **Physical Abuse** – Actual or deliberate physical injury, or neglected failure to prevent injury or suffering, to a child or adult at risk. It may include broken limbs and head injuries and could involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm
- **Emotional Abuse** – Actual or likely severe adverse effect of the emotional and behavioural development of a child or adult at risk, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. It may involve causing a child or adult at risk to feel that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being placed on children. It may involve causing children or adults at risk to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or adults at risk.
- **Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** – Actual or likely sexual exploitation, the child or adult at risk may be dependant and or developmentally immature.
Sexual abuse involving forcing or enticing a child or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. The activities may include physical contact or non-physical activities such children looking at or in the production of pornographic material or encouraging children and adults at risk to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a crime that can affect any child, anytime, anywhere regardless of their social or ethnic background. It involves offenders grooming children and using their position to sexually abuse them. It takes many forms, through seemingly “consensual” relationships or because of gifts.

- **Neglect** – Persistent failure to meet basic physical &/or psychological needs, likely resulting in the serious impairment of health and development. For example, a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or protection from physical harm or danger, including access to medical care and treatment. It may also include neglect or, or unresponsiveness to a child, or adult at risk’s basic emotional needs.
- **Financial Abuse** – Fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.
- **Domestic Abuse** – Domestic abuse is the abuse of power or control over one person by another, it can take many forms, and this may also lead to safeguarding issues arising from this type of abuse.
- **Prevent/Counter terrorism** – Prevent is part of the UK’s counter terrorism strategy to safeguard people and communities from the threat of terrorism. It aims to prevent people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. This can be a safeguarding issue if people with vulnerabilities are “groomed” and manipulated to take part in criminal activity. People in this situation are usually in need of support. The Council offer training on Prevent Awareness and the internal reporting process is the same for any other safeguarding issue.
- **Local Authority Designated Officer** – The LADO is based within Lancashire County Council’s Children’s Services and will be informed of any case where a person working with children has behaved in an inappropriate way. The LADO is contactable on 01772 536694 or LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk

For more information please see:

- The full ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ document is available at [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- The NSPCC website has some helpful information on signs and symptoms of abuse.
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/>

7. How to protect children, young people, and adults at risk.

Staff members should follow the flowchart attached to this document, dependent on the situation.

7.1 How to record your concerns

If you are made aware of any instance of abuse, or have any concerns about it, it is important to note down the details in writing as soon as possible. As well as aiding you in taking the appropriate action as described above, it will also enable you to complete a **safeguarding referral form**, which is available on the intranet/from your line manager. This ensures the Council can maintain a full corporate record of all safeguarding issues encountered by staff, which will allow us to take action to reduce them in future.

Records will be kept for an appropriate amount of time to comply with legislation. They should also be kept in a secure location and not shared with other staff, other

than the designated safeguarding leads. If you need more information on the safe storage of data/information, then contact Mark Beveridge or Stuart Haworth.

7.2 e-Safeguarding

e-Safeguarding refers to all safeguarding issues which relate to the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT). There are two main elements to these issues:

- **e-Security:** Procedures to protect the physical network infrastructure to ensure all confidential information and electronic data that the Council holds relating to children, young people and adults, is securely maintained. These procedures form part of our overall approach to electronic data sharing, which restricts the use of removable media (such as USB drives) and also governs secure external data transfer by secure GCSX (Government Connect Secure Extranet) e-mails.
- **e-Safety:** Procedures to ensure that any child, young person, or adult accessing the internet whilst being employed by or under the care of Council staff, whether on Council premises or not, know their access rights and responsibilities and are kept safe. Every new employee with PC access is given copies of the Council's 'Internet/Email Acceptable Use Policy, Information Technology Security Policy and data Protection Policy and are required to sign a declaration which states they have read and understood these policies that govern their use of the network.

For further information regarding any of the above contact the ICT Manager on ext 4458

For more information please see:

- Internet/Email Acceptable Use Policy
http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/downloads/INTERNET_email_acceptable_use_policy.pdf
- Information Technology Security Policy
http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/downloads/Information_Technology_Security_Policy.pdf
- Data Protection Policy
http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/downloads/Data_Protection_Policy.pdf

7.3 Work Experience for Young People

Individual services may offer work experience positions to young people as part of their ongoing education. The code of conduct and recruitment and selection procedures outlined above will apply. HR are available to offer tailored advice, including advising whether any member of staff supervising young people needs to undertake a DBS check.

For more information please see:

- Ribble Valley Borough Council Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice
http://intranet.rvbc.gov.uk/downloads/Recruitment_and_Selection_Policy.pdf
- The Disclosure and Barring Service
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs>
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Safer Working Practices Guidance
<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/view.asp?siteid=3829&pageid=20745&e=e>

7.4 Training

It is the responsibility of each service, in liaison with HR, to make sure that all staff have received the appropriate level of training for them to be confident and competent when working with children and being able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns. Training must be updated regularly, to keep up with new developments and initiatives.

7.5 New Starters

All new starters will have an introduction to the safeguarding policy and procedures through their local/service induction process. Induction is more than reading a document and ticking a box, the trainer has to check out that employees have an understanding of the policy and processes. New starters who have had child protection/safeguarding training through a previous employer will still have to do the Council's training – this training includes how to work within the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures. In this way we make sure that those staff members that have contact with children have a workable understanding of Council policy and have the knowledge and skill to make sure that children are safe.

Should a specific job role require a higher level of training, the recruiting manager will ensure that the appropriate training, whether internal or external, is undertaken as soon as possible after the new employee starts.

7.6 All staff

All staff will undertake a Safeguarding Awareness briefing, which gives a basic awareness of issues related to the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Any other training needs relating to safeguarding issues will be identified through an employee's annual appraisal process. Staff with regular contact with children will update their training every 3 years (as a minimum) and again it is the responsibility of the line manager to arrange for this training to take place.

7.7 Allegations against Staff, Councillors or Volunteers

Staff who work with children can be vulnerable to malicious or misplaced allegations against them. Unfortunately, there are also occasions where some adults/professionals have been found to be perpetrators of child abuse or displaying unsuitable behaviours which would harm the children they work with.

Allegations of harm or inappropriate behaviour made against staff, either paid or unpaid, are serious and must be dealt with by the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**, a professional independent of Ribble Valley Borough Council who has been appointed by the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

The LADO is **Tim Booth** (01772 536694, tim.booth@lancashire.gov.uk). His role includes:

- The management and oversight of individual cases

- Providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- Liaising with the police and other agencies
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process

7.8 Guidance for staff on dealing with allegations of harm or inappropriate behaviour

If someone (a child, parent, service user, fellow colleague, etc) makes an allegation to you about another member of staff:

- Do NOT investigate yourself but speak to your line manager
- Your line manager will contact the DSCO and HR Manager
- The DSO or Head of Human Resources will contact the LADO directly at the earliest available opportunity.

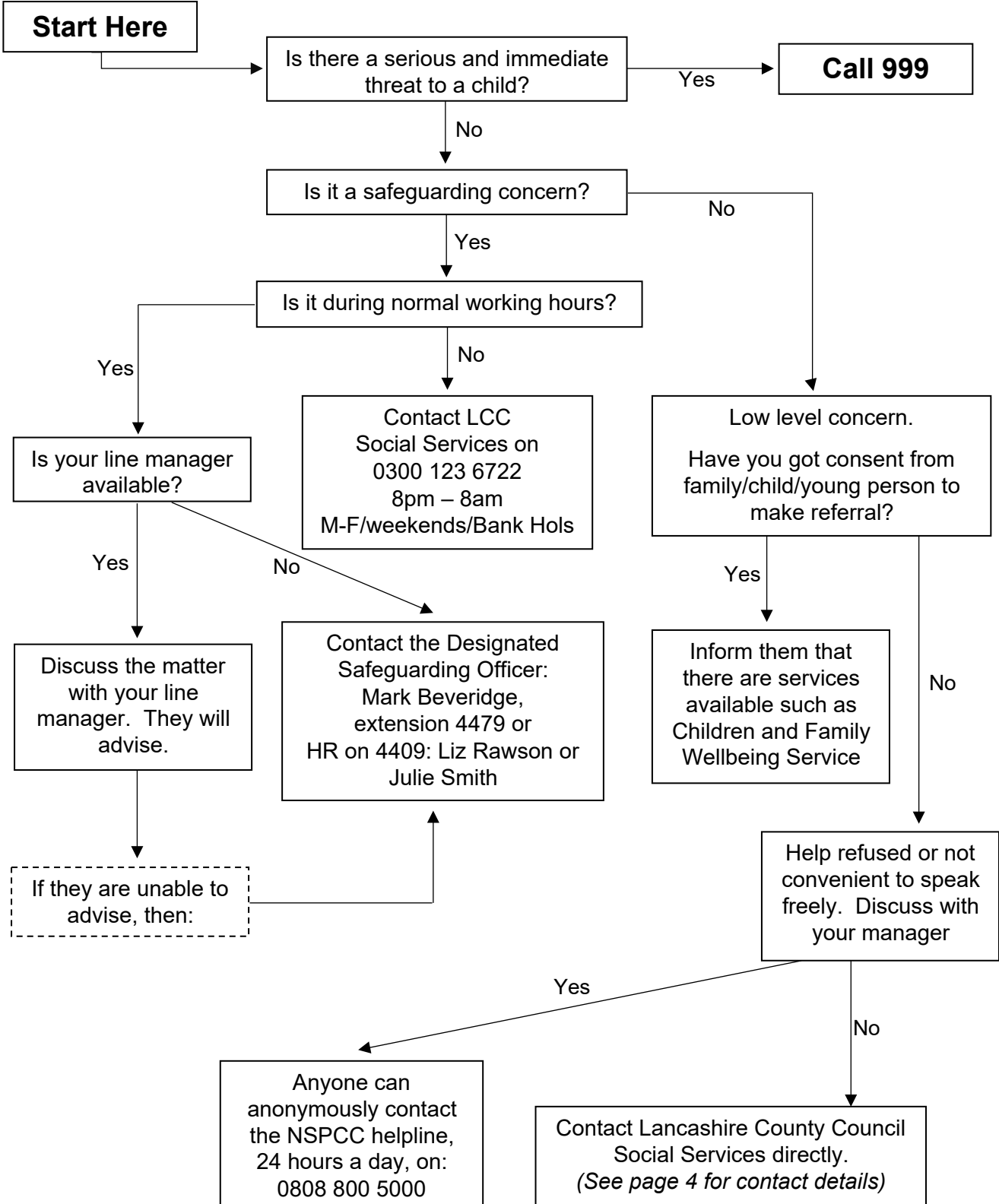
If you have concerns about your line manager, the DSCO, or anyone else that may make the above process inappropriate, please refer to the Council's 'Whistleblowing' Policy [Whistleblowing Policy v1 Dec22.pdf](#).

7.9 The Welfare of Staff

Ribble Valley Borough Council is committed to following the correct process for dealing with any allegation against a member of staff, but it is also mindful of the welfare of that staff member and will provide appropriate help and support to them. Line managers, in liaison with HR, will offer their staff members appropriate advice and support.

Taking Action

If an incident occurs or you have concerns, please follow the flowchart below to understand what to do:



Throughout the above, please keep notes. This ensures we can maintain a full record of all safeguarding issues encountered by staff, allowing us to learn for future incidents. Please forward your notes to the DSO, Mark Beveridge, they will be kept in accordance with GDPR. The DSO will also advise on confidentiality and if a referral to LCC or the Police is required with or without consent.