Schedule 41 Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

328. Scope

328.1 As a provider of education and training and in accordance with legislation, PETA Limited has a moral and statutory duty to safeguard (including prevent) and promote the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults at its centres.

328.2 Young people are those under 18 years of age and vulnerable adults refers to those 18 and over who, for any reason, may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

329. Policy Statement

329.1 PETA Limited has a statutory and moral responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults receiving training and education at its centres. PETA makes every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where young people and adults feel secure, able to talk and trust they are being listened to.

329.2 The Company recognises its duty of care and legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of all its learners, and by maintaining an attitude of "it could happen here", respond immediately if there is any suspicion that a learner may be at risk, under threat or a victim of any activities or actions which are deemed to be in contravention of this policy or any existing or new legislation.

329.3 The purpose of this policy is to provide paid and unpaid staff with the framework they need in order to keep young people and vulnerable adults safe and secure whilst at PETA and to inform parents, guardians and relevant bodies how the Company will safeguard their young people and vulnerable adults whilst they are in PETA's care.

330. Statutory Framework

330.1 PETA aims to meet legislative requirements and good practice in Safeguarding and Prevent. The following statutory regulations and guidance place responsibility on PETA to protect young people and vulnerable adults:

330.1.1 **The Children Act 1989/2004** – Act aims to improve effective local working to safeguard and promote children's well- being. The Act takes a child-centred approach and includes universal as well as targeted and specialist services.

330.1.2 **Education Act** – places a duty on educational institutes to safeguard children and young people from abuse or neglect and sets out roles and responsibilities of teaching staff and those with delegated responsibility for child protection.

330.1.3 **Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009** – sets out the right to an apprenticeship for suitably qualifies 16–18-year-olds and includes guidance on safeguarding in the workplace.

330.1.4 **The Care Act 2014** – Act sets the six principles of safeguarding vulnerable adults and the responsibilities of the local authorities to ensure those in need receive services.

330.1.5 **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act** – helps avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from gaining access to them through their work.

330.1.6 **Sexual Offences Act** - makes it is an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. a teacher or other member of staff) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

330.1.7 **Protection of Freedoms Act** - changed the definition of Regulated Activity including who is eligible for a barred list check.

330.1.8 **Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015** - contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent Duty.

330.1.9 **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022** - statutory guidance from the Department for Education. Schools and colleges must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

330.1.10 **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

331. Definitions

Safeguarding - is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm, to include Prevent Duty. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Child Protection - is an aspect of safeguarding but is focused on how we respond to young people who have been significantly harmed or are at risk of significant harm.

Young People – a young person or young people are individuals who have not yet reached their 18th birthday

Vulnerable Adults – are those aged 18 or over: who are, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability. Who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation

Harm - includes ill treatment (including sexual abuse, exploitation and forms of ill treatment which are not physical); the impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural); self-harm and neglect; unlawful conduct which adversely affects a person's property, rights or interests (for example, financial abuse).

Duty of Care - the duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure the safety of a young person or adult involved in any activity or interaction for which that individual or organisation is responsible.

Extremism - Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas **Radicalisation** - The process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, then join terrorist groups

British Values – underpin what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Britain. They allow us to create environments free from discrimination, intolerance and hate and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping, whilst strengthening relationships within the community.

Staff - applies to all those working for or on behalf of PETA Limited, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

332. Guiding Principles

332.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As such it does not rest solely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their Deputy to take a lead responsibility in all the areas covered within this policy. Some areas, such as Health and Safety and staff recruitment, are a specialist area of safeguarding and separate leads for these areas are in place within PETA.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Senior Management team via the Integrated Management System, quarterly review meetings.

332.2 To fulfil our duty PETA will:

332.2.1 **Establish a safe environment within which young people can learn and develop**

All staff, Learners, Delegates and Visitors are required to always wear lanyards with ID badges on a PETA site. All staff and learners will receive induction sessions at the start of their time at PETA which will make clear the Safeguarding and Prevent ethos at PETA as it important to establish PETA as a positive, supportive, and secure environment which gives all Learners a sense of being valued. It is the responsibility of the whole of the organisation to create and maintain this ethos, which is in line with British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

It should be noted that some groups of Learners may face specific safeguarding challenges or need further guidance in accessing support where it may be necessary. These groups will include (not exclusively):

- Learners with special educational needs and disability (SEND)
- Looked After Learners and Care Leavers
- Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Learners with English as a second or additional language
- Learners with protected characteristics (the nine characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity)

PETA will ensure that systems are in place for any Learner to be able to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed, and valued.

332.2.2 **Provide continuing support for Learners who have been, or are, at risk of significant harm**

PETA will always support Learners who are at risk of harm or who suffer harm. Where staff may have concerns, they will raise them with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, or their Line Manager who will decide the best course of action to support the individual. Learners will receive continual support and guidance as to the Safeguarding and Prevent process throughout their learning, via classroom sessions and Learner Progress Reviews.

332.2.3 **Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with young people**

PETA will look closely at all job applicants, verifying their identity and qualifications. PETA will carry out online checks of all shortlisted applicants to ensure that their public profile does not make them unsuitable to work with Learners. All applicants will be interviewed prior to an offer of employment being

made. Where an offer of employment is made at least two references will be obtained and previous employment history checked. These checks will also apply to other workers not directly employed by PETA such as volunteers, agencies or the self-employed.

All staff will be subject to the required DBS check in accordance with the Department for Education Documents: Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruiting in Education (2012), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022).

332.2.4 **Carry out regular Child Protection and Safeguarding Training, in line with legal requirements**

Safeguarding training will form a mandatory part of Induction for all new staff. As part of this induction all staff will receive either electronically or in hard copy a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 and Annex B).

All staff will undertake formal training every three years to equip them with the knowledge to carry out their responsibilities for Safeguarding effectively. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy will attend refresher training at least every two years and all staff will receive regular Safeguarding updates as required, and at least annually.

332.2.5 **Develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including the Police and Children's Services**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy will, where appropriate, liaise with Safeguarding Partners, e.g. the police and the local authority and other agencies that support Learners, such as Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Children's Services, DfE Prevent Coordinator. They will attend relevant reviews and conferences related to Safeguarding and individual Learners. This includes reporting of cases and outcomes, to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)/Department for Education (DfE) and/or the Charites Commission, as appropriate.

332.2.6 **Regularly review our Prevent Risk Assessment and implement necessary actions**

PETA will make Learners aware of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and what to do if they are worried about someone. In addition, we will promote and uphold the fundamental British Values of Individual Liberty, The Rule of Law, Democracy, Mutual Respect and Tolerance. Staff will be trained in spotting potential indicators of extremism and how to refer these using our safeguarding procedures. Where there are concerns regarding an individual PETA will share these concerns with all relevant agencies and authorities, including the Police, ESFA/DfE and Local Authority Prevent Officers, MASH, and the Channel Programme in line with statutory guidance.

332.2.7 **Maintain and review security of the sites**

PETA aims to provide secure centres, recognising the centres are only as secure as the people who use them. Access to the Cosham site is controlled by a manned reception during opening hours. Out of hours all doors require a coded pass to gain access. At the Havant site access to the building is always controlled by coded

passes. All people on the sites must adhere to the following rules when on PETA sites:

- Staff must always wear a Staff Lanyard complete with a photo ID badge, with the badge clearly visible.
- All board members, learners, delegates, associate tutors, contractors and visitors must wear the appropriate designated lanyard to determine their visitor status, with an appropriate ID card, with the badge clearly visible.
- All visitors must adhere to the signing in/out procedures for PETA centres

CCTV coverage and security measures will be reviewed on a regular basis.

332.2.8 **Monitor IT systems security**

PETA operates two IT systems, to promote the safety of learners and staff, when using computers. All internet traffic to site is analysed and filtered to block sites which contain information in categories such as, but not excluded to, Pornography, Drugs, Intolerance, Terrorism and Self-Harm. Additionally, all staff and learner computers have Securus software installed, that detects words appearing on screen and words typed that are categorised as a Safeguarding and/or Prevent risk. If these words are detected, a designated member of staff is alerted to the trigger. They will then review a screenshot of the user's computer screen at the time of the detection, to understand context, and act as appropriate, to protect learners and staff.

332.2.9 **Manage the safety of students and staff on off-site visits**

As part of the wider curriculum, Learners, supervised by PETA staff, may take part in off site visits. Where this is the case an Off-Site Activities Approval form will be completed to assess the risks involved. This form will be signed off by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy prior to the trip taking place.

333. Roles and Responsibilities

333.1 **Designated Officer (Chief Executive Officer)** – has overall responsibility for Safeguarding and Prevent within the organisation ensuring appropriate policies and procedures exist to ensure young people and vulnerable adults safe and secure whilst at PETA. The Designated Officer will be specifically responsible for:

- The referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies such as the Police, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and social services
- Refer cases to the Channel Programme in consultation with the Prevent Co-ordinator
- Referring cases where a member of staff has been dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a young person to the LADO and Disclosure and Barring Service
- Conducting Case Reviews with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate to supporting our safeguarding policy controls

333.2 **Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads** – are responsible for:

- Ensuring Safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to
- Supporting and advising the Designated Officer when deciding to make a referral to a relevant external agency
- Supporting the Designated Officer in referring cases to the relevant external agencies
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to Safeguarding and support

- Maintaining a proper record of Safeguarding cases, complaints, or allegations
- Running internal case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
- Attending external case conferences and review meetings as appropriate
- Liaising with the Local Authority and DfE Prevent Co-ordinators
- Developing, implementing and reviewing Company Safeguarding and Prevent policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that staff receive basic training in Safeguarding and Prevent appropriate to their roles, and are aware of the Company's Safeguarding and Prevent procedures

333.3 **Department Managers** – are responsible for:

- Managing Safeguarding cases within the department
- Supporting staff to identify, report and support young people and vulnerable adults at risk
- Liaising with Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy on Safeguarding cases
- Ensure proper case records are maintained

333.4 **All Staff** – have a responsibility to:

- Be familiar with Part 1 and Annex B of Keep Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Establish and maintain an environment where young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure young people know who they can approach if they are worried about any problems
- Attend designated training
- Be vigilant to the signs of abuse and harm maintaining an attitude of "it could happen here"
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a young person is at risk of, or is being abused, and report these to the relevant person
- Follow Company policy and procedure in relation to Safeguarding and Prevent
- Treat information with confidentiality but never promise to 'keep a secret'
- Ensure they know who the Designated Safeguarding Leads and their Deputies are, and know how to contact them

Key Personnel

333.4.1 The Designated Officer for PETA is Fiona Stilwell, Chief Executive Officer.

Telephone: 023 9253 8700

E-mail: safeguarding@peta.co.uk

333.4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Sandra Broad (Havant) and Philip Mirner (Cosham)

Telephone: 023 9253 8700

E-mail: safeguarding@peta.co.uk

333.4.3 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Andrew Worth, and Hamizah Rahman

Telephone: 023 9253 8700

E-mail: safeguarding@peta.co.uk

334. Types of Harm

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of individuals who may need help or protection. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

334.1 **Abuse** – a form of maltreatment of a young person/vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person/vulnerable adult by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Individuals may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. A young person/vulnerable adult may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

334.2 **Physical abuse** – a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person/vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a young person/vulnerable adult.

334.3 **Emotional abuse** – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a young person/vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the individual's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a young person/vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the young person/vulnerable adult 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 the individual. These may include interactions that are beyond a young person/vulnerable adults' developmental capability as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the individual from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing individuals frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of individuals. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a young person/vulnerable adult, although it may occur alone.

334.4 **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 in 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

334.5 **Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a young person/vulnerable adults' basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the individual's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, the individual's basic emotional needs.

335. Safeguarding Issues

The following are specific Safeguarding Issues that must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy or your Line Manger:

335.1 **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through technology-based contact.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

335.2 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through technology-based contact. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

335.3 **County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in several locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and

money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

335.4 **Domestic Abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

335.5 **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

335.6 **So-called 'Honour-Based' Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

335.7 **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach.

335.8 **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

335.9 **FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty for Teachers**

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

335.10 **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for

example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and Multi-agency guidelines, pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk.

335.11 **Preventing Radicalisation**

- Children and young people are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.
- Extremism – is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces
- Radicalisation – refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- Terrorism – is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause
- There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).
- However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff must remain to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.
- The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

335.12 **The Prevent Duty**

- All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.
- There is additional guidance: Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales that applies to colleges.

335.13 **Channel**

- Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.
- Guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance.

335.14 **Peer on Peer/ Child on Child Abuse**

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

335.15 **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges**

Context

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.
- Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, likely, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.
- Staff should be aware of the importance of:
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

335.16 **What is Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment?**

335.16.1 **Sexual Violence**

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape – A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

335.16.2 **Assault by Penetration** – A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or

anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

335.16.3 **Sexual Assault** – A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

335.16.4 **What is consent?** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

335.16.5 **Sexual Harassment**

- When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.
- Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:
- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- sexual "jokes" or taunting
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include
    a. non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
    b. sexualised online bullying;
    c. unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
    d. sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and
    e. upskirting

335.16.6 **Upskirting**

- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

335.17 **Dealing with Disclosures**

- When dealing with disclosures it should be noted that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy are more likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate to make decisions and responses to safeguarding concerns.
- In the event of a young person or vulnerable adult at risk telling a member of staff about possible abuse the following should be followed:
- Inform the person that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of whom you will report the matter to
- Listen to the person, do not directly question him or her
- Never stop a person who is freely recalling significant events
- Staff must not question the child or adult at risk beyond obtaining initial details of the alleged abuse
- Make a detailed note of the discussion, taking care to record when and where it happened and who was present, as well as what the person said
- The member of staff who is the first person to receive a report or see an injury should make detailed notes of what is seen or heard of the disclosure
- Contact with those having parental responsibility for the young person should be undertaken by a Line Manger, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy
- All incidents must be recorded in the Safeguarding IMS system via the IMS Co-ordinator. All case notes will be recorded and held in the safeguarding cases file (this file has restricted access)
- Report the concern to a Line Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy at the earliest opportunity
- In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy at the outset of the concern.
- It may be necessary in exceptional circumstances for the individual to be seen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy without the prior knowledge of those having parental responsibility for the young person or vulnerable adult at risk. In such a situation the designated person or deputy should be available to attend
- Staff should determine with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy whether and when a referral should be made
- All referrals will be made by the CEO or in their absence the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy or the Head of Operations

335.18 **Dealing with Allegations Against Staff**

- In rare instances, staff within education institutions have been found responsible for child abuse. Due to their frequent contact with children, young people and adults at risk, staff may have allegations made against them. PETA recognises that an allegation made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and those investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
- Where an allegation has been made that meets the 'harms threshold' which means the member of staff has;
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or young person or may have harmed them;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or young person;

- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to them;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children and young people;
- the DSL will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before any investigation is undertaken.
- Where the allegation is either a potential criminal act or indicates that the young person or vulnerable adult has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the matter should be reported immediately to the police.
- Other potential outcomes are:
- The allegation represents inappropriate behaviour or poor practice by the member of staff and is neither potentially a crime nor a cause of significant harm to the individual. In such circumstances, the matter should be addressed in accordance with PETA's disciplinary procedures and low level concerns procedure.
- The allegation can be shown to be false because the facts alleged could not possibly be true

The People Business Partner will report all PETA-employee-related cases that involve other people or could deem a risk to apprentices, regardless of the outcome, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for a case review.

335.19 **Enquiries and Investigations**

- Enquiries by Social Services or the Police should not be confused with internal, disciplinary enquiries by PETA who may be able to use the outcome of external agency enquiries as part of its own procedures. Whilst the child protection agencies, including the Police, have no power to direct PETA the organisation will assist the agencies with their enquiries.
- PETA shall hold in abeyance its own internal enquiries while the formal Police or Social Services investigations proceed. Any internal enquiries shall conform to the existing staff disciplinary procedures.
- If there is an investigation by an external agency the CEO (or designated person) will normally be involved in, and contribute to, the inter-agency strategy discussions and will ensure PETA gives every assistance with the agency's enquiries. They will also ensure appropriate confidentiality is maintained in connection with the enquiries.
- The CEO (or designated person) will:
- Ensure that the parents/carers of the individual making the allegation have been informed that the allegation has been made and what the likely process will involve
- Inform the individual or parent/carer making the allegation that the investigation is taking place and what the process is likely to involve.
- Inform the member of staff against whom the allegation was made of the fact that the investigation is taking place and what the process is likely to involve.

335.20 **Suspension of Staff**

- In the case of an allegation against a member of staff suspension should not be automatic however it may be considered at any stage of the allegation. Where suspension is considered it should be a neutral, not disciplinary act. Where possible consideration shall be given to alternatives: e.g. paid leave of absence; agreement to refrain from attending work; change of, or withdrawal from, specified duties.
- Suspension should only occur for a good reason. For example:
    - Where a child is at risk

- Where the allegations are, potentially, sufficiently serious to justify dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct
- Where necessary for the good and efficient conduct of the investigation.

335.21 **Disciplinary Investigations**

- All disciplinary investigations will be conducted in accordance with the PETA disciplinary procedure.

335.22 **Low Level Concerns**

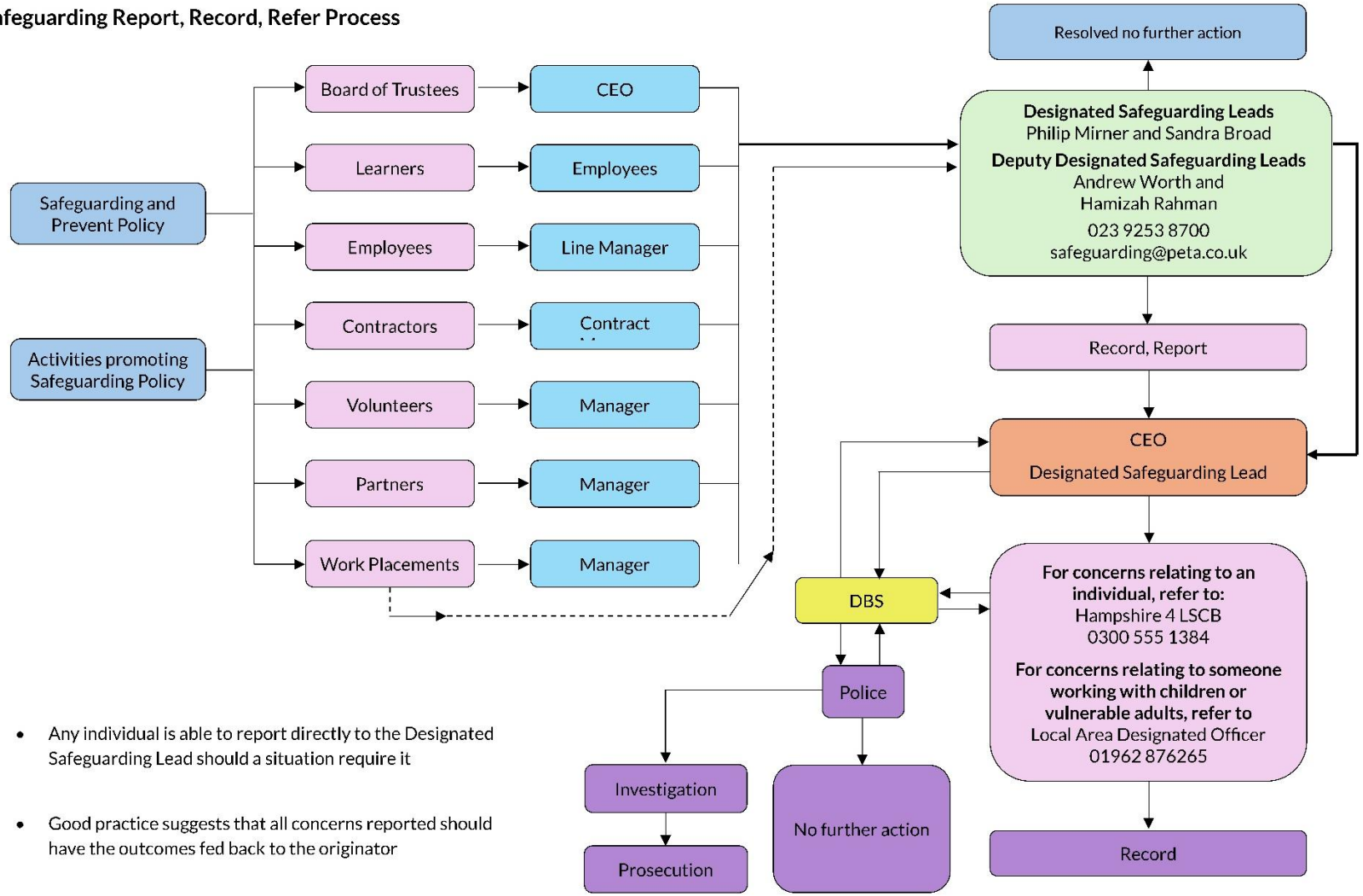
- If staff have a safeguarding concern or wish to make an allegation about another member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' that an adult working in or on behalf of SWT may have acted in a way that:
- -is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
- being over friendly with children,
- having favourites,
- taking photographs of young people on their personal mobile phone,
- engaging with a young person or a vulnerable adult on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door,
- humiliating a young person or vulnerable adult.
- It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the DSL and recorded and dealt with appropriately. It will be a matter for the DSL and Managing Director to decide on any further action where 'low-level' concerns are reported.
- The DSL and Chief Executive Officer will also need to refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and decide whether the member of staff should be suspended pending a full investigation.

335.23 **Allegations without Foundation**

- False allegations may be indicative of problems of abuse elsewhere. Where false allegations are made a record should be kept and consideration given to a referral to the local Social Services or relevant agency in order that other agencies may act upon the information.
- The member of staff against who the allegation was made will be notified verbally and in writing that no further action will be taken.
- Where the false allegation has been made by a young person consideration will be given to informing the parents/carers
- A report will be compiled outlining the allegation and the reasons for the conclusion it had no foundation and confirming the actions taken.

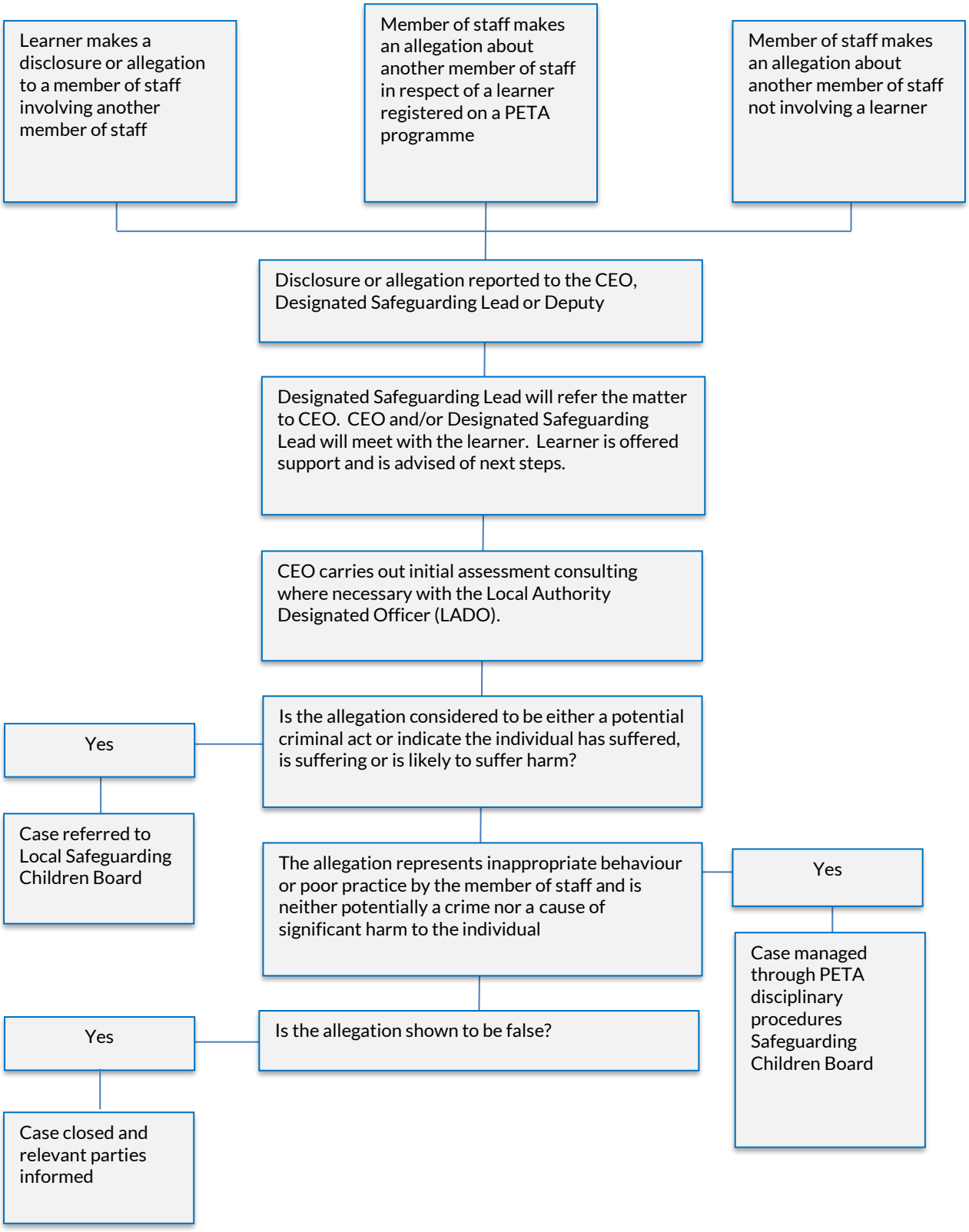
335.24 Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Report, Record, Refer Process

Safeguarding Report, Record, Refer Process



- Any individual is able to report directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead should a situation require it
- Good practice suggests that all concerns reported should have the outcomes fed back to the originator

335.25 Appendix 2 – Process for dealing with allegations against staff



Amendments Appendix:

15/01/2026 Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads updated.