

Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding children from harm and abuse is an essential responsibility. We are committed to ensuring that any child who comes into contact with our services is properly safeguarded.

SFCC believes that children and young people need safe environments in which they can grow and develop in confidence.

SFCC recognises that organisations working with and supporting children and young people have a duty to keep them safe.

SFCC places safeguarding children and young people and child protection at the centre of its activities.

SFCC works in accordance with the guidance set out in "Working together to safeguard children" (DfE - 2023). The Guidance makes clear that all those working to support children and their families should follow the guidance and states:

"It should be read and followed by Chairs and senior managers within organisations who commission and provide services for children and families, including social workers and professionals from health services, adult services, the police, Academy Trusts, education, and the voluntary and community sector who have contact with children and families. All relevant professionals should read and comply with this guidance unless exceptional circumstances arise"

SFCC believes that children and young people should not be exposed to negligence or avoidable risks.

SFCC recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are emotive issues that need managing both sensitively and carefully.

SFCC is committed to creating and implementing policies and procedures that will ensure where risks need to be taken regarding children and young people, they are both fully assessed and carefully managed.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

SFCC also subscribes strongly to the view that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who meets them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.

Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say, take their views seriously; and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. A child-centred approach is supervised by:

- a. the Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 53 of the Children Act 2004). This Act requires local authorities to give due regard to a child's wishes when determining what services to provide under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, and before making decisions about action to be taken to protect individual children under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. These duties complement requirements relating to the wishes and feelings of children who are, or may be, looked after (section 22(4) Children Act 1989), including those who are provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and children taken into police protection (section 46(3)(d) of that Act).
- b. the Equality Act 2010 which puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their needs; and,
- c. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children. The UK Government ratified the UNCRC in 1991 and, by doing so, recognises children's rights to expression and receiving information."

SFCC is committed to ensuring that all its staff, volunteers, and trustees are aware of, kept up to date with and operate in accordance with good practice in relation with Safeguarding and Child Protection. This will mean that they will have the ability to recognise, respond to, report, record and refer issues of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Every person under this policy must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children are properly safeguarded.

Every person under this policy holds responsibility for:

- Remaining alert and aware of possible safeguarding risks to children.
- Guarding children against harmful environments with appropriate actions (for example, adequate supervision or ensuring safe environments).
- Taking positive steps to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children engaging with us.
- Reporting concerns expeditiously and appropriately, in line with child protection procedures.
- Understanding the duty to report specific concerns.
- Challenging any inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adult and reporting this accordingly.
- Acting appropriately in the presence of children.
- Not taking any inappropriate risks.
- Not smoking, drinking, or taking any form of illicit substances (prior to or) during our work with children.

Safeguarding Officer

The primary task, role and responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer is to ensure high quality safeguarding children and adult practice throughout the service. The safeguarding agenda will be underpinned in by legislation and Government strategy along with national, regional, and local guidance.

Position: SFCC Coordinator

Email: swindonfamilycc@gmail.com

Telephone: +44 7443 802920

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance, more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- Making sure that children, young people, and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality and Data Protection do not provide barriers to the sharing of information that keeps children and young people safe. Information should be shared with relevant agencies, on a need-to-know basis without delay.

All records relating to safeguarding must be:

- Truthful.
- Accurate.
- Concise (in terms of words), yet detailed (in terms of sharing known information).
- Signed.
- Dated.

All personal information we may process relating to children, shall be processed, and stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy.

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 999. Thereafter, the Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Where there is a safeguarding concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard (about) or witnessed this concern should consult with the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of that same day. If the Safeguarding Officer is not onsite, this person can always be contacted by phone: +44 7443 802920.

Where there is a need to make a safeguarding referral, you will be supported to do this, by the safeguarding officer, or another senior person. However, it will be usual for the person who became aware of the concern to make the safeguarding referral, where this is needed.

Where any child makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important to:

- Listen calmly and carefully, showing that their views are taken seriously.
- Provide an appropriate and honest level of reassurance.
- Avoid interrogating children and asking probing, intrusive and/or leading questions.
- Avoid making false promises regarding secrets and confidentiality with the child (because any concern of abuse/harm must be shared with the Safeguarding Officer and any subsequent safeguarding referral).
- Make a confidential written record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include the key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places, and people concerned. Audio and video recordings of children making disclosures should be avoided.
- Refer all relevant information to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable afterwards.

Upon receipt of any safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding Officer shall consult with (or support you to consult with) any other relevant persons and will support you to make any appropriate referrals to the relevant authorities, such as the applicable Local Authority Children's Services department. This will usually be the department local to where the child lives.

Reporting concerns about other adults within SFCC

Where any person has a concern regarding the conduct of an adult connected to the organisation, which poses or may pose a safeguarding risk to children such as:

- Harming a child either physically or emotionally.
- Exposing a child to behaviour which may cause physical or emotional harm.
- Engaging in criminal activity concerning a child.

This must be raised in the first instance with the Safeguarding Officer (or where this is not appropriate, a different senior member of the organisation) so that the next appropriate steps may be agreed and actioned. We recognise that there could be circumstances where a person may need to report a matter that has taken place in a setting outside of the person's engagement with the organisation.

Usually, any appropriate steps following a safeguarding referral in respect of an individual connected to the organisation will include either:

- Further initial enquiries.
- Escalation to the applicable Local Authority Children's Services department for assessment and/or the police for investigation.
- Instigation of any appropriate disciplinary, formal investigation processes and suspension of any person concerned within the Charity.
- A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland or Access Northern Ireland, or any other relevant regulatory bodies.

Any person within the organisation who has allegations made against them shall be informed properly in a formal meeting of the particulars of the allegations and the relevant next steps which shall be taken. Such a meeting should ordinarily be held by the Safeguarding Officer. On certain occasions, such a meeting may not be convened until this has been approved by any authorities involved (such as the police or the relevant Local Authority).

Any person from within the organisation who has allegations made against them shall be treated fairly. All enquires, investigations and decisions taken shall be just and fair, with the safety of any child concerned at the heart of the process.

Any person from within the organisation who makes an allegation against another person from within SFCC shall be listened to, taken seriously, and shall be treated fairly and justly throughout the process of enquiries, investigations and decision making.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Checks under the appropriate legislation should be undertaken wherever required. The groups of people we will usually undertake checks with include the DBS in relation to are all volunteers, employees, self-employed people, and Trustees.

Wherever we deem it is necessary and appropriate to remove any individual from a position of work in an activity which is regulated under the relevant legislation, we shall also be obliged to make a referral to the DBS.

Safeguarding Children at the SFCC

Responsibilities and planning

Although the Safeguarding Officer will hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing the safety of children, all individuals under this policy must also play an active role in always ensuring the safety of children.

There are certain types of events, activities or trips are taking place, we may issue an additional code of conduct, policy, or some specific other requirements which is specific to that occasion. Any such additional documentation will be made available to all those concerned (staff members, parents, guardians etc.) in advance. They should be read carefully and adhered to.

Appropriate background checking shall be undertaken wherever we are legally required to do so in respect of adults who are engaged by us (see the relevant section above).

Venues

The location for any events, activities and trips which are held by us shall always be risk assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety for children. Fire and safety procedures and precautions shall be made clear to all involved.

Managing Behaviour of Children Generally

Whenever any adult engaged by us is faced with challenging or inappropriate behaviour from a child or with conflict between children, they must:

- Support the parents to respond to this (where appropriate).
- Treat each child fairly and equally.
- Approach the situation in a calm and neutral manner.
- Only ever use physical restraint/intervention to protect the immediate safety of a person, for example to prevent an injury or harm either to the child or others.
- Wherever it is justified to physically restrain a child or to physically intervene, the amount of force used should be kept to the absolute minimum considering the risk posed.
- Make a written record of the incident and ensure this is reported appropriately to the Safeguarding Officer.

Managing Risks Posed by Other Children

It is important for all adults engaged by us to recognise that children can face harm from their peers. This can commonly take the form of bullying. Bullying can be defined as any behaviour which is:

- repeated; and
- has the intention of hurting somebody either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can sometimes be motivated by prejudices based on certain groups, for example gender, race religion or sexual orientation. Bullying can often include:

- physical harm perpetrated against another child
- name calling and threats
- cyberbullying (threats and abusive comments made via technology)

Any instance of bullying or concern relating to bullying between children at any event or activities arranged by us will usually be dealt with by us in the first instance.

All steps in relation to the prevention or management of bullying should be taken in consultation with the Safeguarding Officer.

Photography

We ask that any members of the public attending our premises, events or activities do not take photographs, without the consent of the centre.

Families, volunteers and Committee are not allowed to take photos of children or use cameras when the contact session is in progress.

Recruitment

When recruiting SFCC employees, trustees and non-paid staff who have unsupervised access to children, SFCC will adhere to a thorough and standardised procedure that will include making appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. (It replaced the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA):

When first joining the organisation and every three years thereafter – as stated above, this applies to staff/trustees/unsupervised non-paid staff.

Completing and signing a standard application form and a full CV including a written statement of their suitability for the post applied for.

Signing a personal declaration of eligibility stating any criminal convictions including those considered to be spent.

Being asked to provide a minimum of two-character references (excluding family members and those that have known the applicant personally for less than two years)

Reading, understanding, accepting, and complying with SFCC Policy for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as part of the terms and conditions of their appointment as an employee, volunteer or trustee.

This procedure must be followed before any appointments are confirmed.

Any individual or organisation undertaking relevant work for SFCC on a contractual basis will need to demonstrate that they have procedures in place to carry out DBS and or other checks on their staff to an appropriate level.

SFCC commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will also extend to the following:

- NACCC's accreditation and re-accreditation processes for its member centres requiring them to ensure that all their staff and non-paid staff are DBS checked to an enhanced level either when they first become involved with the centre or every three years.
- SFCC ensuring that its staff, volunteers and trustees are all aware of and kept up to date with good practice and procedural changes in relation to DBS checks.

Education and Training

The SFCC induction process will include "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" training for all non-paid staff, staff, and trustees. This is mandatory. Records of all training will be kept at NACCC Head Office.

Support and Supervision

All volunteers and employees with direct access to information about or relating to children will be given on-going supervision. All employees will have regular and formal evaluations with their line manager – this will include one annual appraisal.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: Training for NACCC's member centres

NACCC will design and regularly update training modules which will be made available via the website. SFCC will dispense training for non-paid staff and coordinators regularly and at least every three years.

Safeguarding Training will be completed by all staff and volunteers on an annual basis.

NACCC will encourage its member centres to operate in accordance with their LSCB's policies and procedures.

NACCC will help its member centres to be aware of legislation, guidelines and directives updates as and when they are issued.

NACCC will have a nominated advice line (Monday-Friday 9.30am-4.30pm operating from the NACCC office) and a dedicated Saturday safeguarding helpline run by trained members of staff to provide its member centres with guidance and support when they are working with Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns.

Sharing Information

SFCC staff, trustees and non-paid staff will follow a procedure that ensures that every safeguarding issue brought to the attention of relevant safeguarding authorities and NACCC. Furthermore, steps will be taken to ensure that this is logged correctly and followed up on to ensure that information is shared correctly with the relevant agencies.

Providing Advice and Support

SFCC will ensure that Safeguarding is a rolling agenda item in all staff supervision.

Failing to follow or non-compliance with recognised procedures and good practice in relation to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by SFCC volunteers, staff and trustees will generate support, information, and training.

In more serious cases involving SFCC volunteers or staff, the organisations disciplinary proceedings will be activated by the SFCC Chair or their delegated/nominated appointee.

In more serious cases involving SFCC trustees or non-paid staff the people involved could be removed from the board of trustees or their role as a volunteer, by the Chair of the Board.

Distribution of SFCC Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection


A copy of this policy will be:

- Included in the SFCC Staff Handbook.
- Made available to all SFCC partner organisations.

Review of SFCC Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

This will take place annually. Additional changes to take account of new legislation and practice directions will also be made as and when required.

Copies of the revised policy will be made available to SFCC volunteers, staff, its trustees, and partners.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice every three years		
Name: Iryada Ashmore	Signature: 	Date: 31/03/2025
This policy was last reviewed on: 31/03/2025		

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Procedure (SFCC)

Reporting Concerns.

Through ongoing training, and information contained within the Safeguarding Children Policy, the staff, volunteers, and trustees working at SFCC have the competence to identify when children might be placed at a risk of harm and where protective action might need to be taken.

Some of the safeguarding concerns that we might become aware of will come to our attention because of disclosures or our own observations. Whilst some concerns might be brought to our attention by others, including parents.

Regardless of how the concern comes to our attention, we have a duty to make sure that this has been reported to the relevant organisations. Where we cannot be confident of this, such a disclosure will be made by Insert Name Here.

When becoming aware of a risk of harm to children and young people, our first concern is to take steps to increase the safety of that child.

If the child is at immediate risk, or where a criminal offence has been (or is at risk of being) committed the police should be informed by dialling 999.

All non-emergencies will be reported to the Local Authority, in the area where the child(ren) reside.

Safeguarding Steps to be taken

For the sake of this section of the procedure, a professional is a person who is professionally involved with a family, whether paid or unpaid. Where a family member, is a professional and potential safeguarding risks might also pose risks to others through their place or work, there is additional information later in this procedure.

Where we have concerns about the safety of a child, that do not require a 999 call, we should consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead, with all the information that we have available at the time.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will collaborate with the staff member or volunteer raising the concern to consider what action should be taken next. This might include making a referral to Social Services or other agencies.

All concerns must be recorded, in written form, as soon as is practicably possible, this will need to be completed during the same working day. Notes must always be factual, quoting people is often a good idea and we should avoid adding our own opinions. Whereby our opinions might be relevant to the safety of children, we should clearly identify this information as being an opinion and refer to the facts that helped in the formation of this opinion.

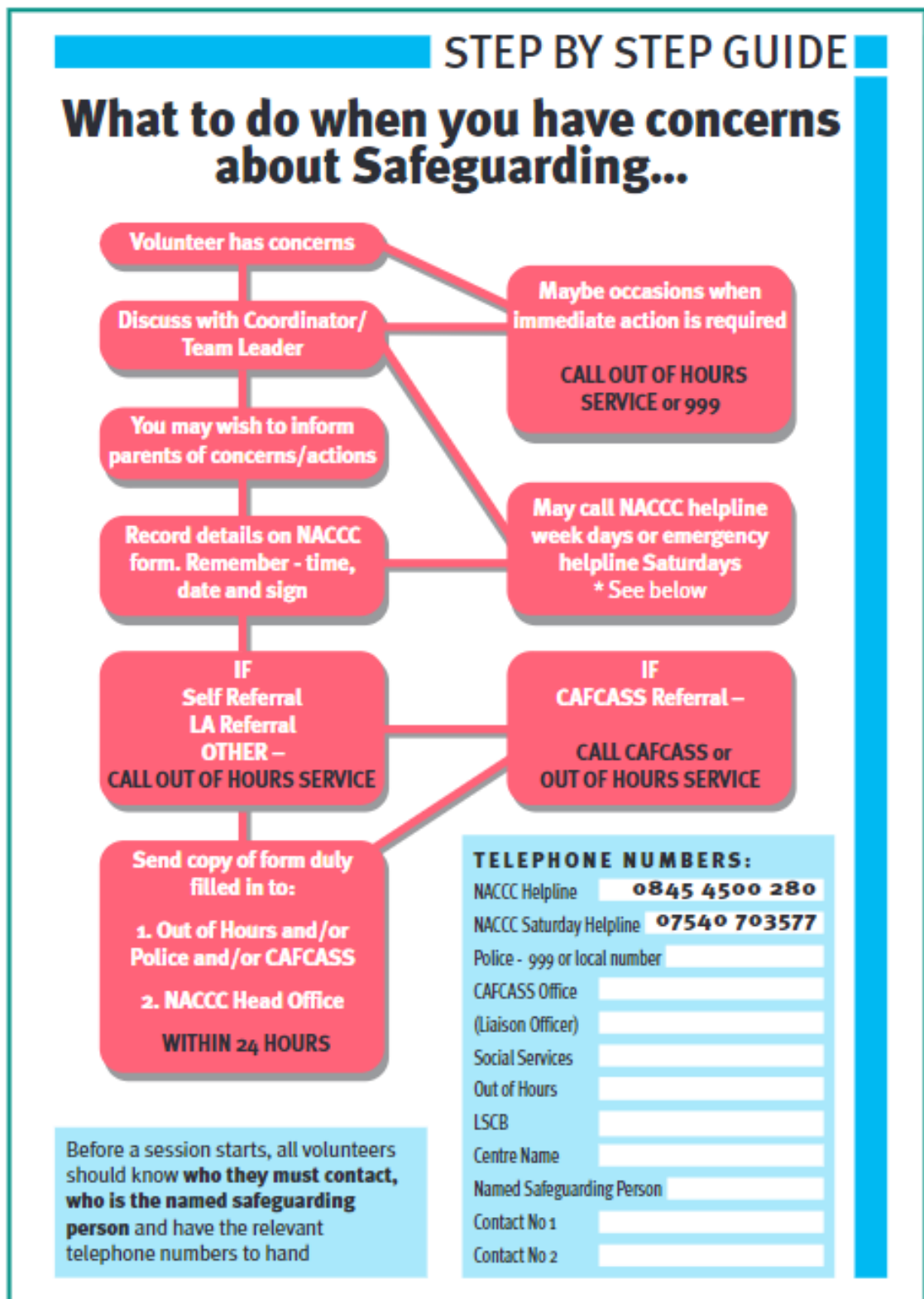
Once the decision has been made to share concerns with social services, this should take place as soon as is practicably possible. This will need to happen on the same day as becoming aware of the concern and without excessive time delays. Sharing this information will take place by phone, to the social services closest to where the child lives (if this is unknown, then closest to where the concern was raised). Social Services will often ask whether the child's parents have been informed of the referral. If doing so does not add to any risk to the child, they will often expect this to have happened.

When verbally sharing information with social services, they will usually expect this information to be complimented with a written record of the concerns you have shared. Sometimes they will ask you to complete an online form, on other occasions they may email you a document and sometimes sending them a report with the information available to you will be sufficient. It is important to make sure you are aware of the expectations for the local area, whilst on the phone with them.

Once this information has been provided, care should be taken to confirm that the intended person / office has received this.

This process is summarised on the following page.

This process is summarised as follows.



Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Reporting Form

Safeguarding Recording/Reporting Form	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This form must be used to record information about a safeguarding concern. It can also be used to send information about the concern to Children's Services or your local Safeguarding Board within 24 hours of the concern arising. When completing the form please use facts wherever possible and distinguish between fact, observation, opinion, and information from others. 	

Name of Person completing the form:	
Position:	
Name of centre/service:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	

Name of family causing concern:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	

Names, date of birth and gender of child/ren causing concern and any siblings:		
Name	Date of birth	Gender
What is the child/ren's first language?		

Do any of the children have special needs? (Please indicate)	Yes	No
If 'Yes', please give details		
Names of any other household members or significant others involved with the children.		
Name	Relationship to child	

People contacted:				
Name	Organisation	Telephone number	Date	Time

Referral Status (Please Indicate)		
Supervised Contact Y / N	Supported Contact Y / N	
Mediation Y / N	Social Services Y / N	Private Law referral Y / N
Court Order Y / N	Self-referral Y / N	SRS (Safe Referral System) Y / N

Names of other agencies and workers involved with the family/children	
Contact name of worker	Agency of worker
Nature/reason for your concern	

Please give an opinion as to whether the children may need urgent action to make them safe		
Has a parent with parental responsibility given consent for a referral to Children's Services or a Safeguarding Board to be made? (Please indicate)	Yes	No

Please record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.					
Name:		Date		Time	

Copy of this form has been sent within 24 hours to: (please complete and indicate method of sending form) In any event the form must be sent to the NACCC office.					
Organisation	Email	Post	Web Form	Time	Date
Police					
Out of hours Services					
Cafcass					
NACCC head office					
Other (please specify)					