



FARMS FOR CITY CHILDREN

Safeguarding Policy Farms for City Children
Wick Court, Overton Lane, Arlingham, Gloucestershire

First Edition produced in consultation with:



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If you ever have any concerns about a child,
please contact:

Stevie Edge-McKee, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Or if Stevie is not available

Stuart Cragg or Claire McDermott, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)

In an emergency, where a child is at immediate risk, dial 999.

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Foreword

The safety, wellbeing, and happiness of all children and young people who visit the farms is at the heart of everything we do at Farms for City Children ('Charity'). The Charity works diligently to implement the best safeguarding practice across all the Charity's activities, without compromise.

This Safeguarding Policy, together with the accompanying Safeguarding Code of Conduct: Good Practice Guidelines ('Guidelines') demonstrates the Charity's commitment to all visiting children and young people and their families, visiting organisations and their staff, Charity staff, volunteers, funders, and supporters, and all the other partners with whom the Charity works.

To ensure awareness and understanding of the Safeguarding Policy and its practical application to working practices at all levels, the Charity will ensure that all its people – whether paid staff, farming partners, or volunteers – receive regular and appropriate levels of training and support in safeguarding and child protection.

The Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines provide step-by-step guidance on what to do should a visiting child make a safeguarding disclosure. There is also guidance on how Charity staff, volunteers and farming partners should react if they suspect a child is being harmed, and how to report a concern that adult visitors or colleagues, or children/young people may have breached the Safeguarding Policy or pose a threat to children and young people. This policy sets out clear guidance for properly recording and reporting such matters.

By ensuring Charity staff, volunteers and farming partners understand what is expected from them when working with children and young people, the Charity also aims to reduce the risk to staff volunteers and farming partners of facing an allegation.

The Board of Trustees will also ensure that the Charity continues to develop and improve their policies and practices by reviewing and updating them regularly. This policy will be revised annually, following significant events, or changes in best practice.

The Charity would like to thank everyone for their continued commitment to the ongoing development of this vital part of their work. By embracing the principles set out in this policy, the Charity will ensure that the joyful, immersive experiences they provide are part of a safe, supportive, inclusive, and protected environment in which the children and young people who visit the Charity's farms can flourish.



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Policy Statement

The Charity is committed to ensuring the safety and protection of all children and young people who visit the farms. Although adults who bring children and young people to the farms remain *in loco parentis*, the Charity accepts a duty of care to safeguard those children and young people from harm during their stay.

1.1.1 Everyone in the Charity, whether they are paid staff, volunteers, or farming partners must accept their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from harm and abuse.

1.1.2 The primary aim of this policy is to promote good practice, provide appropriate protection to children and young people whilst at the Charity's farms, and to allow the Charity's staff, volunteers, and farming partners to make informed and confident responses to child protection issues.

1.1.3 Within this policy, as per the Children's Act 1989, any person under the age of 18 will be classed as a child.

1.1.4 The Charity is committed to the following core **Safeguarding Principles**:

- ✓ The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- ✓ All children and young people, whatever their culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, or sexual identity, should be able to participate in any Charity activity in a fun and safe environment.
- ✓ All reasonable steps will be taken to protect children and young people from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- ✓ Any suspicions or allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- ✓ All Charity staff, volunteers, and farming partners will be recruited with due regard to their suitability for that responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and farming partners aged 16 years or older will undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before their appointment and will be updated in accordance with the regulations.
- ✓ All Charity staff, volunteers, and farming partners will be provided with an appropriate level of guidance and training in safeguarding good practice and child protection procedures in accordance with Appendix B.

1.2 Communication of the Policy

To ensure successful implementation, this policy will be shared and discussed directly with Charity staff, volunteers, and farming partners at regular intervals throughout the year as a part of ongoing training. Updates will always be shared. This policy will be made available to visiting groups and donors.

1.3 Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the procedures detailed in this Policy and Guidelines will be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Head of Operations (who has overall responsibility for safeguarding) and the Farm School Managers (who have DSL responsibilities on each site) will report progress, challenges, achievements, gaps, and areas where changes are required to the Safeguarding Committee on a termly basis and which in turn reports directly to the Trustee Board

The Policy will be reviewed every year, or more frequently, should there be a major change in the Charity, an incident occurs, or the relevant legislation is amended.

1.4 Breach of Safeguarding Policy

The Charity will take any breach of any part of this policy extremely seriously.

- 1.4.1 All of the safeguarding measures set out apply to the actions of Charity staff, volunteers, and farming partners both during and outside of their usual working hours, whether on site or elsewhere.
- 1.4.2 Where the Charity becomes aware of a serious breach or allegations of illegal activity are made, management will consult with or make a referral to statutory agencies.
- 1.4.3 Where an accident or emergency necessitates immediate action that breaches any of the clauses set out herein, the member of staff must notify the Head of Operations (or as soon as is practicably possible) followed by a written report to the Head of Operations who will take responsibility for investigating concerns - (tim@farmsforcitychildren.org) and sharing the investigation with the Safeguarding Trustee (jonathan.trustee@farmsforcitychildren.org).

SECTION 2: Promoting Good Safeguarding Practice

Introduction

To provide children and young people with the best possible experience, the Charity must always aim to demonstrate good practice, as set out in the Guidelines.

It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, and farming partners to be vigilant and to recognise poor safeguarding and child protection practice – whether exhibited by colleagues, visiting adults accompanying a group, or anyone else that has contact with the children and young people – and to take appropriate action if they have concerns about the welfare of the child (See SECTION 5 – Responding to Concerns).

2.1 Good Safeguarding Practice

The Charity is committed to ensuring the highest standards of good safeguarding practice to prevent the abuse of children and young people. By promoting and raising awareness of good safeguarding practice, and providing safeguarding training for all staff, volunteers, and farming partners, the Charity provides a safe and protected environment for the visiting children and young people.

This guide and the training the Charity provide supports their staff, volunteers, and farming partners to access the knowledge and expertise necessary for them to act appropriately around visiting children and young people, and minimise the risk of any allegation arising.

All staff, volunteers, and farming partners must adhere to the Guidelines as set out in Appendix A and follow these **Good Safeguarding Practices**:

- ✓ Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- ✓ Always put the welfare of the children and young people first.
- ✓ Ensure that any allegations made by a child are reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL (if DSL is unavailable). See SECTION 5: Responding to concerns for more information.
- ✓ Create a positive culture, treating all children and young people equally, with respect and dignity.
- ✓ Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- ✓ Work with visiting adults to deal positively and proactively with bullying or inappropriate behaviour.
- ✓ Maintain an appropriate professional distance when working with children and young people.
- ✓ Work with young people in an open environment avoiding private situations and secrets.
- ✓ Ensure that any required physical contact/touch is necessary to avoid harm occurring, appropriate, and is carried out with **consent**.
- ✓ Always be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking in sight of children and young people.
- ✓ Use positive and inclusive language to create a supportive and enabling environment in which children and young people have the confidence to take on new challenges and overcome fears.
- ✓ Keep up to date with the skills and qualifications needed for your work.
- ✓ Keep a written record of any non-emergency contact, allegation, injury, or incident that occurs and report it in line with the guidance shown in SECTION 4: Responding to concerns.

2.2 Poor Safeguarding Practice

All staff, volunteers, and farming partners must avoid these **Poor Safeguarding Practices**:

- ✘ Don't use inappropriate language (including inappropriate slang terms) or allow children and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- ✘ Don't lose control of your temper, use negative or demeaning language, or threaten a child.
- ✘ Don't only show interest in children and young people who succeed quickly or routinely – also celebrate perseverance, participation, diligence, and incremental progression.
- ✘ Don't do things that the child can do for themselves.
- ✘ Don't spend time alone with children and young people in a closed environment or away from others.
- ✘ Don't engage in physical or rough games. Always avoid physical contact.
- ✘ Don't hug, cuddle, or embrace a child. Always avoid physical contact.
- ✘ Don't make sexually suggestive comments to a child, engage in flirtatious exchanges, or use sexually suggestive innuendo, even in jest.
- ✘ Don't allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- ✘ Don't sleep in the main farmhouse at night. See 5.6 for specific guidance on post-18 visitors.
- ✘ Don't transport children and young people in a Charity-owned vehicle or your own vehicle without being accompanied by a visiting adult who has in loco parentis responsibility for that child. See 5.6 for specific guidance on post-16 visitors.
- ✘ Do not contact any child or young person that has visited one of the Charity's farms or their parents or guardians on a social media site and do not accept any "friend" requests.
- ✘ Do not accept gifts from any visiting children or young people.
- ✘ Do not facilitate visiting adults to consume alcohol when they are in charge of the children in their care. This includes purchasing alcohol at the request of visiting adults or supplying alcohol as part of a hospitality welcome to the sites. It is our policy that Teaching Staff in positions of responsibility for the health and safety and safeguarding of children on a residential visit should not be partaking in the consumption of alcohol when they are in loco parentis.

2.3 Reporting a Safeguarding Occurrence

When any of the following occur, you must inform the DSL or DDSL on site (if DSL not available) immediately and complete the Report a Concern form (an example of the form is provided in Appendix F and can be found on the All Staff Drive) and the DSL will send it by email to the Head of Operations as soon as is practicably possible to investigate.

- You accidentally hurt a child.
- You become aware that a child appears to be particularly, inexplicably, or repeatedly distressed.
- You become aware that a child appears to be sexually aroused by you.
- You become aware that a child appears to be sexually aroused by another adult on site.
- You become aware that a child has misunderstood or misrepresented something you have said or done.
- A child makes a disclosure to you about abuse they have experienced.
- You become aware that an accompanying adult is, or has, behaved inappropriately.

The Head of Operations will consider what action is required in line with the guidance set out in SECTION 5: Responding to concerns.

2.4 Site Access

- 2.4.1 Access to Charity's sites is restricted to ensure the safety and wellbeing for all.
- 2.4.2 All staff must be wearing their branded work-wear T-shirts/hoodies/branded PPE to always identify themselves as staff. Only in extreme heat or cold can FSMs give authority for staff to wear something different – for example an unbranded vest top.
- 2.4.3 Volunteers may only be on-site at times agreed in advance with the on-site managers or volunteer supervisors. Upon arrival, volunteers must present themselves to the Farm School Office or volunteer supervisor to be signed-in and must be wearing their volunteer T Shirts/other branded items to identify them as approved volunteers for that site. The volunteer is required to sign-out immediately before leaving the site. Please also refer to the ***Volunteering Policy***.
- 2.4.4 Visitors may only be on-site at times agreed in advance with the on-site managers or supervisors. Upon arrival, Visitors must present themselves to the Farm School Office or staff supervisor to be signed-in and receive a Visitor badge. The badge must be always visible when on-site. The Visitor must return the badge and sign-out immediately before leaving the site.
- 2.4.5 Where public rights of way cross one of the Charity's sites, it is not possible to restrict access. It is important, however, that members of the public are discouraged from lingering or straying from the path. All staff and volunteers are asked to be vigilant in this regard and to follow the protocols as set out in the Emergency Procedures for their site

2.5 Changing Areas

- 2.5.1 Changing areas are all areas where children and young people undress or change their clothes, particularly dormitories and bathrooms.

- 2.5.2 Except for members of staff who require access during scheduled times when the children and young people are engaged in timetabled activities (this includes all indoor team staff), staff should not enter changing areas when there are children and young people in residence.
- 2.5.3 If emergency repairs or other work is required in changing areas whilst children and young people are in residence, the visiting lead adult must be involved in planning to keep children and young people away from those areas while the work is being undertaken. Charity staff must make a note of this in the safeguarding register maintained by the DSL.
- 2.5.4 Any non-staff workers undertaking work on changing areas when children and young people are in residence must be always accompanied by a member of Charity staff, or an adult who has *in loco parentis* responsibility for the visiting children and young people. Charity staff must make a note of this in the safeguarding register maintained by the DSL.
- 2.5.5 No adult, whether a member of Charity staff, volunteers, visiting adults or others, should ever use the toilet, shower, or undress in the presence of children and young people.
- 2.5.6 Visiting groups will usually be of mixed gender. Separate bathing or showering facilities must be made available.
- 2.5.7 No smartphones, photographic, or video equipment are to be used or installed in changing areas.
- 2.5.8 For children and young people with disabilities, any support required by the child to use changing facilities will be provided by the visiting group leader who is acting in loco parentis and agreed in advance with the Charity.

SECTION 3: What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

- All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Abuse and neglect are any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm and can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race, or ability.
- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse.
- Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- The most common types of abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.
- Children and young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.
- Abuse commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. The abuser may be a family member, someone the child encounters in an educational setting, or in the community, including sports and other social activities.
- Any individual may abuse or neglect a child directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person from harming the child.
- Types of Abuse and how that may look and how to mitigate that are set out in Appendix G








It is **NOT** the responsibility of staff and volunteers at the Charity to decide whether child abuse is occurring, has occurred in the past or to investigate those concerns.

It **IS** the responsibility of those working at the Charity to act on any concerns by reporting them to their DSL or DDSL (if DSL is unavailable). Always consider “what if I am right?” rather than “what if I am wrong?”

SECTION 4: Use of Media

4.1 Photographing and Videoing Children and young people – Charity Staff and Volunteers

Safeguarding and child protection must be a priority when capturing images and videos of children and young people. The following steps will be taken to enable that:

-  Consent to use photographs or videos must come from parents / carers for all children and young people aged 17 or under. People age 18 and over can provide their own consent, providing they have capacity to do so. They will be dealt with by the DSL and Head Office.
-  Photos and videos of children and young people (under 18) should only be taken on Farms for City Children devices (mobile phones, tablets, cameras or laptops). Staff will make it clear to lead adults that the device they are using are using is a work device. Where feasible, stickers or branded cases will be used to help make Farms for City Children devices easily identifiable.
-  Photos and videos will only be taken by employees of Farms for City Children with appropriate DBS checks. Volunteers should never take photos of visiting children or young people.
-  Images and videos will be uploaded to Farms for City Children Office365 storage or social media accounts then deleted from mobile devices at the earliest opportunity.
-  No images should be taken of any child who is undressed or using a changing area, or is in their dormitory.
-  Photos and videos will only be captured where children and young people are wearing appropriate clothing, including PPE where required
-  Live streaming and video calls by a member of staff from the FfCC team, in the presence of children and young people, is prohibited. A visiting teacher may decide to communicate with their home school via video call or live stream.

4.2 Photographing and Videoing Children and young people – Other children and young people

- 4.2.1 Beneficiaries under the age of 16 are not permitted to bring mobile phones or other devices on to site, except where they have an identified medical use e.g. for monitoring blood sugar.
- 4.2.2 Where schools and groups allow children and young people to bring cameras, these are not allowed out on the farm, in dormitories, changing areas or bathrooms. Cameras must be stored securely under the control of visiting adults and only given out at times when their use has been approved.
- 4.2.3 Where beneficiaries aged 16 or over have been permitted to bring their phone or other device, access to these must be limited to agreed times and controls in place to make sure they are not used in dormitories, changing areas or toilets. They will not be allowed out on working farm activities.

4.3 Photographing and Videoing Children and young people – Media and Professionals

The following guidelines will be followed when professional photographers/videographers, the media, or filmmakers visit the farms:

- 4.3.1 All media and related professionals must be briefed on the Charity's expectations in relation to safeguarding and confirm that they will adhere to the Charity's strict guidelines.
- 4.3.2 All visiting media personnel must wear Visitors badges throughout and be able to produce

personal identification on request.

4.3.3 Visiting groups must be informed in advance if a photographer or media representative will be in attendance during their stay.

4.3.4 Any photographer or camera crew member must always be accompanied by a member of Charity staff with an Enhanced DBS and Safeguarding training.

4.4 Electronic communication with children and young people: Text, Email, Social Media, and Chat Room Messaging

4.4.1 Direct electronic communication between members of staff, volunteers, or farming partners and individual children and young people is prohibited. This might be via text or multi-media messaging, private chat rooms, message boards, social media direct messaging, or other forms of online or any other discrete or private form of electronic communication.

4.4.2 Open and public interactions between the Charity's official social media accounts and individual children and young people is prohibited.

4.4.3 Direct email communication between individual members of staff or volunteers and children and young people is prohibited. For guidance around our post-18 visitors, see section 5.6.

4.4.4 If a child contacts a member of staff or volunteer via electronic communication, they should not respond and must inform their DSL as soon as possible.

SECTION 5: Responding to concerns.

Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at the Charity in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether abuse has taken place. It is their responsibility to act on any concerns so that the necessary inquiries and actions can be followed to protect the child.

Allegations of abuse can be made some time after the event. When such allegations are made, you should follow the same procedures.

5.1 Receiving Evidence and Responding to Disclosures

- 5.1.1 When a child reports abuse directly to you, it is particularly important that you respond appropriately.
- 5.1.2 It is critically important that any disclosure is treated sensitively, that you do not paraphrase or put words in their mouth, and that the actual words the child uses are recorded accurately, as completely as possible, and without edits or narration.
- 5.1.3 When a child makes a disclosure to you i.e., when a child tells you they or another child have been abused, you should **precisely** follow the steps below:

RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES AND CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Guidance in how to handle disclosure.

- 1**
 - ⬇ Stay calm.
 - ⬇ Reassure the child - tell them they've done the right thing by telling you.
 - ⬇ Tell the child you believe them.

- 2**
 - ⬇ Listen carefully.
 - ⬇ Don't interrupt.
 - ⬇ If you need to clarify any points only use **TED** questions:
 - Tell me
 - Explain to me
 - Describe to me
 - ⬇ DO NOT try to investigate or use leading questions.

- 3**
 - ⬇ Don't promise to keep the child's secret.
 - ⬇ Don't promise everything will be alright.
 - ⬇ Explain what you will do next:
 - Tell the child you must inform someone else.
 - Tell the child who you will inform (usually the DSL)

- 4**
 - ⬇ If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance immediately, inform the DSL (or DDSL if DSL unavailable), and ensure medics are made aware of the disclosure and child protection issue.
 - ⬇ If the child is at immediate risk of further harm, call the police on 999 stating it is a child protection emergency.

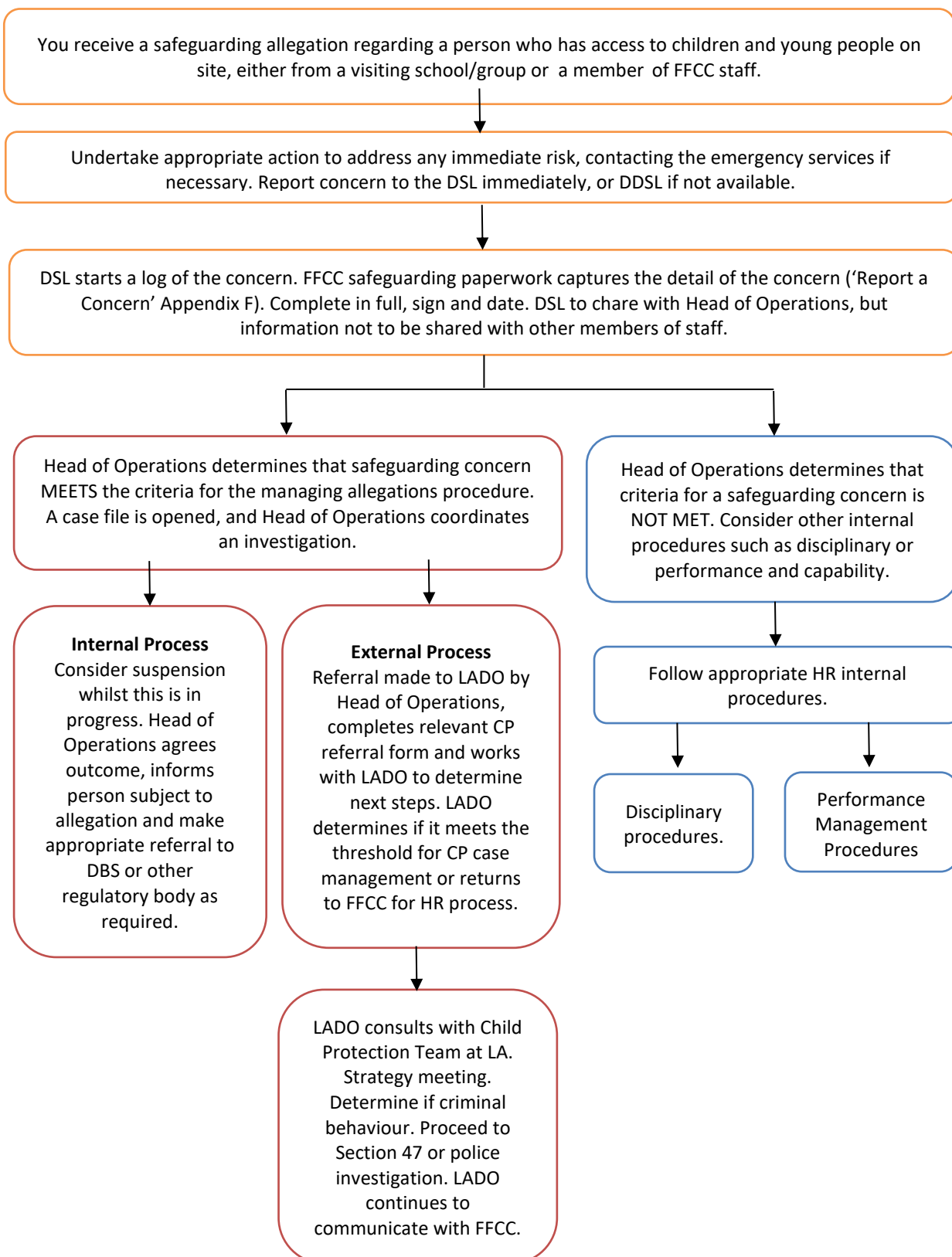
- 5**
 - ⬇ Immediately make accurate notes of the child's own words and actions on the Report a Concern Form. DO NOT add anything.
 - ⬇ Immediately inform the DSL (or DDSL if DSL unavailable).
 - ⬇ Present your completed Report a Concern Form to the DSL who will ensure all notes are stored securely in accordance with the [Document Retention Policy](#).

- 6**
 - ⬇ The DSL must inform the lead visiting adult as soon as is practicably possible and that person will action the groups own safeguarding protocol and will (usually) take the lead in managing the matter on-site.
 - ⬇ The DSL must inform the Head of Operations that an incident has occurred.
 - ⬇ The Head of Operations must inform Safeguarding Trustee as soon as is practicably possible.
 - ⬇ The Head of Operations and Safeguarding Trustee will advise on next steps which may include informing the Head Teacher (if the visiting group is a school) or senior leader of the visiting organisation if not already on site and aware, advising the appropriate Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or informing other agencies or authorities as deemed necessary.

- 7**
 - ⬇ If the lead visiting adult and/or Head Teacher or senior leader is implicated in the disclosure or child protection issue, or a member of Farms for City Children's own staff, the Head of Operations and Safeguarding Trustee will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the child's home District.
 - ⬇ In all cases, the Head of Operations will remain in contact with the Head Teacher, senior leader, or LADO to confirm that the matter has been followed up appropriately.

What is the process if the disclosure involves an FfCC adult or visiting adult?

In this situation, please follow the process of this flow chart.



What is the process if a member of the FfCC team has concerns about a visiting adult?

Concerns about visiting teachers and other responsible adults must always be taken seriously, however we must be careful to distinguish between perceived poor professional behaviour and genuine safeguarding concerns within this policy.

If you can evidence that a teacher or other responsible adult has overstepped their legal obligations, for example by committing an act of violence or sexual misconduct, then it is critical that you follow the steps as set out in the flow chart on page 15, ensuring you take appropriate action to address any immediate risk in the first instance and involving the DSL at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you feel that a teacher or visiting adult is demonstrating evidence of poor professional conduct, for example shouting excessively at children or failing to engage with them in a constructive way, you should discuss your concern with your DSL and avoid committing anything to writing. As an organisation we may have views about these sort of issues, but recognise that we are not always best placed to make judgements around professional conduct, and that this Safeguarding Policy is not necessarily the right platform to deal with them. The DSL will need to make a decision about whether or not the concern meets the threshold to be escalated to the LADO – only in those cases should a report a concern form naming any individual teacher or visiting adult be completed.

However, the DSL and the charity do have recourse to follow up on professional conduct issues outside of this policy, and the FSM/CEO may choose to take these up directly with the lead teacher or school leadership as they deem appropriate, ensuring they are presented as feedback rather than a safeguarding allegation.

5.2 Recording Information

- 5.2.1 To ensure that information is as helpful as possible and admissible if legal action is taken, an accurate record should always be made *as soon as possible* after the disclosure/concern has been made using the **Report a Concern Form (Appendix F)**. This includes any low-level concerns you may have. It is always best to report any concern and the DSL and Head of Operations can decide if any further action needs to be taken. Even if no further action is taken, these reports must be kept.
- 5.2.2 Only take notes during the disclosure if someone else is with you. It is essential to remain focused on the child and what they are saying rather than being distracted by note taking. The best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. If making notes, remain conscious of the need to remain engaged. **Either way, it is essential a written record is made.**
- 5.2.3 Only use the child's own words that they told you at the time of the disclosure.
- 5.2.4 Only state the facts the child shared with you at the time of the disclosure.
- 5.2.5 DO NOT include your own opinions, suspicions, interpretations, assumptions, fears, or thoughts.
- 5.2.6 DO NOT include any comments from other people, whether shared at the time of the disclosure, before that event, or after it.
- 5.2.7 Your report must address all sections of the **Report a Concern Form** and the form must be fully completed, signed, and dated so it can be used in court.

5.3 Reporting

- 5.3.1 Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children’s Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.
- 5.3.2 All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately.
- 5.3.3 Do not take any action that might jeopardise a future child protection legal case. This means you must control your own emotional response to a disclosure and not discuss the matter except with colleagues involved in the safeguarding referral process.
- 5.3.4 If the DSL is not available, then the DDSL should be contacted or come straight to the Head of Operations, Tim Rose.
- 5.3.5 If none of these people can be contacted, or if these people are implicated in the concern or disclosure, contact the Safeguarding Trustee directly (details on page 3), seek advice from the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000), your local social services department, or the police. If you wish to do so you can report your concern about a colleague using the Charity’s [Whistleblowing Policy](#).
- 5.3.6 Where there is a complaint against Charity staff or a volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:
- Criminal, in which case the police are immediately involved.
 - Child protection, in which case the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the child’s home District (and possibly the police) will be involved.
 - Disciplinary or misconduct, in which case the Head of Operations and Charity will be involved.
- 5.3.7 If there is any doubt in your mind about something you’ve been told, have seen, or suspect, you must report it to your DSL (or DDSL if DSL is unavailable).

Further support is available from

- **Children and Families Helpdesk (Gloucs Council)** on 01452 426565 (and select option 3) or email childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk
- **Police:** 101 (999 in an emergency)
- **NSPCC:** 0808 800 5000

If a child is at an immediate risk of further harm immediately call the police on 999 and report a child protection emergency.

5.4 Confidentiality and GDPR

- 5.4.1 Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when a disclosure or allegation is made. Information should be stored securely in accordance with the [Charity’s Data Protection Policies](#) and shared on a confidential, need to know basis only. This may include the following people:
- Lead visiting adult in residence with *in loco parentis* responsibility for the child.
 - Head Teacher if the visiting group is a school or senior leader of the organisation.
 - Social Services – LADO
 - Police
 - DSL or DDSL

- Head of Operations
- Safeguarding Trustee
- The person making the disclosure or allegation.

5.4.2 All written reports and information provided should be given to the DSL and stored in a secure place with access limited to designated people, in line with the Charity's Data Protection Policies.

5.5 Internal Inquiries and Suspension

5.5.1 Any suspicion, allegation, or disclosure against a member of Charity staff, volunteer or farming partner will be treated extremely seriously and sensitively.

5.5.2 Suspicions, allegations, or disclosures made against a member of Charity staff, volunteer or farming partner MUST be recorded and reported immediately, following the guidelines set out here in Section 5.

5.5.3 If a suspicion, allegation, or disclosure is made against a member of Charity staff or volunteer, the member of staff or volunteer will be immediately suspended on full pay as a precautionary measure to protect them, and to allow time for a thorough internal investigation coordinated by the Head of Operations.

5.5.4 If a suspicion, allegation, or disclosure is made against a farming partner, the Charity will suspend visits to that farming partner's farm as a precautionary measure to protect them, and to allow time for a thorough internal investigation.

5.5.5 As well as following the recording and reporting procedures set out above, the Charity will undertake a thorough internal investigation into any suspicions, allegations, or disclosures made against a member of Charity staff, volunteers, or farming partners.

5.5.6 In such cases the Head of Operations and Safeguarding Trustee will gather evidence and take expert advice as required, to determine the most appropriate course of action.

5.5.7 Any member of Charity staff, volunteer, or farming partner who is subject of a suspicion, allegation or disclosure will be kept informed of the progress until the internal investigation is completed and a decision reached as to the appropriate next steps.

5.6 Where we have a mixed age group of young people on site which includes those both over and under 18 years of age

5.6.1 Our Safeguarding Policy remains unchanged for any young person aged 17 and under.

5.5.2 We will only accept enrolments from unaccompanied young people between the ages of 16 and 18, such as the DofE Gold Award Residential weeks, with written parental/guardian consent. Our own staff team remain in loco-parentis for this group throughout the entirety of their stay and must have access to their next-of-kin contact details in case of emergency. We do not accept enrolment of any unaccompanied child under the age of 16.

5.6.3 Our in loco-parentis responsibility starts when a young person arrives on site. If we have agreed to pick up and drop off at a train station the in loco parentis also extends to the time spent in a staff vehicle (noting, there must be at least two adults in a vehicle with any beneficiary aged 17 and under).

5.6.4 Unaccompanied beneficiaries aged 17 and under must never share a dormitory with those aged over 18.

5.6.5 When unaccompanied beneficiaries are in residence at least 2 staff members remain on the property overnight, and young people have their contact details and know where to find them.

SECTION 6: Recruitment and Training

Introduction

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people. Anyone who has a previous conviction of offences related to child abuse is automatically excluded from working with or for the Charity in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid.

It is equally important to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that Charity staff, volunteers, and farming partners, have the knowledge and awareness they need about safeguarding policy and child protection matters in general to work safely in an environment with children and young people, keep visiting children and young people safe from harm, and to protect themselves from unwarranted suspicion and allegations.

6.1 Recruitment

6.1.1 Recruiting Managers must ensure the following requirements are met before a new joiner starts work or their permanent appointment is confirmed:

- Applications are to be submitted using an application form rather than a CV and covering letter.
- New Employee Form completed and received by HR.
- Two written references received by HR. Must include previous employer (or academic tutor for school/university leavers). Cannot be from related persons.
- Successful candidates will be subject to a social media check and asked to complete a self-declaration related to their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.
- Relevant certificates and qualifications (as required for the role and indicated in the JD) received and reviewed by HR.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate received and reviewed by HR.
- An original copy of an official government-issued photo ID (such as a passport or driving

license) must be seen by the Recruiting Manager and a signed scan copy received by HR.

- Signed Safeguarding Policy Statement received by HR, confirming that the Safeguarding policy has been received, read, and understood. The Safeguarding Policy Statement is in APPENDIX A – Safeguarding Code of Conduct: Good Practice Guidelines
- Child Protection in Education training certificate completed on EduCare received by HR.

6.2 Training

6.2.1 Safeguarding Training

- All staff, volunteers, and farming partners are required to undertake Safeguarding Training at a level appropriate to their role.
- The minimum levels of Safeguarding and Child Protection training required are set out in APPENDIX B – SAFEGUARDING TRAINING SCHEDULE.
- Mandatory Safeguarding training will be paid for by the Charity and will take place during paid working hours.

APPENDIX A - Safeguarding Code of Conduct: Good Practice Guidelines

All staff, volunteers and farming partners must maintain a relationship with children and young people based on openness, honesty, and mutual trust. You will:

- Not engage in behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect)
- Communicate positively and proactively with children and young people about the activity or task they will be doing.
- Take time to understand the needs of visiting children and young people and consider what adjustments you can make to your interactions or the activities to ensure all children and young people can have a positive experience.
- Ensure that the physical intensity of activities is challenging but appropriate.
- Ensure that physical contact with children and young people is appropriate, necessary and is carried out with consent.
- Not engage in any inappropriate conversations or contact with any children and young people. Any sexual or provocative language, innuendo, flirting, physical contact, games, gestures, terms, or phrases are strictly prohibited. Hugging, cuddling and tickling children and young people should also be avoided.
- Liaise with the DSL for assistance if it becomes clear that a child is attempting to develop an inappropriate relationship with you.
- Respect children and young people's opinions when making their own decisions about their participation in an activity.
- Allow children and young people to discuss and participate in the decision-making processes wherever possible.

If you ever have concerns about the welfare of a child or the conduct of an adult speak to your DSL (or DDSL if DSL is unavailable) immediately

Safeguarding Policy Statement

I have received, read, and understood this Safeguarding Policy and acknowledge the expectations upon me and accept my responsibilities as set out in the policy.

First Name _____ Surname _____

Position _____ Site _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please submit scan copy to HR@farmsforcitychildren.org

APPENDIX B – Safeguarding Training Schedule

What	Who	When	Control	Repeat Frequency
Read and understand the full Charity Safeguarding Policy and accept responsibilities therein.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff, Trustees, volunteers, and farming partners 	Upon appointment, and before the first day of work, whether paid or voluntary	Signed copy of <i>Safeguarding Policy Statement</i> (Appendix A)	Every September, and every time the policy is updated.
Child Protection in Education training EduCare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new staff, Trustees, and farming partners All new volunteers who are expected to make 5 or more volunteering visits in any 12-month period 	Within 2 months of starting work, whether paid or voluntary	Training course certificate	Induction only
Child Protection Refresher EduCare	All staff, Trustees, and volunteers	Annually, but not required if undertaking full Child Protection training or Level 3 Safeguarding training in September	Training Course Certificate	Every September
Read KCSIE part 1 and Annex B (Annex A if not working directly with children)	All staff, Trustees, and volunteers	Annually	Staff Sign off	Every September
Child Protection Advanced EduCare	DDSL	Within 3 months of appointment	Training course certificate	Every 3 years
Level 3 Safeguarding External Provider	DSL Head of Operations Safeguarding Trustee	Within 3 months of appointment	Training Course Certificate	Every 3 years

APPENDIX C – Safeguarding Register

Farm _____

Name of DSL making this entry in register		Date	
		Time	
Reason/purpose for making entry in safeguarding register (include names/company details when visitors require access to children and young people’s accommodation)			
Action Taken		Name of Lead Adult	
		Lead Adult Informed?	
		Local Authority Informed?	

Name of DSL making this entry in register		Date	
		Time	
Reason/purpose for making entry in safeguarding register (include names/company details when visitors require access to children and young people’s accommodation)			
Action Taken		Name of Lead Adult	
		Lead Adult Informed?	
		Local Authority Informed?	

This form should be completed when there is cause for concern and given to your DSL or DDSL (if DSL unavailable) as soon as possible.

Details of Child/Young Person sharing a concern:

Name:

Age/School Year:

Details of the person reporting concerns:

Full Name:

Role:

Details of Child/Young Person who is subject of the concern (if different)

Name:

Age/School Year:

Do these concerns relate to a specific incident/disclosure? If YES complete Section A; If NO, omit section A and move straight to Section B

Section A:

Date and time of incident/disclosure:

Location of incident/disclosure:

Witnesses to the incident/disclosure:

Date this form was completed:

Other persons present when completing this form:

Section B:

Details of concern/disclosure/incident/injuries:
(What was said, observed, reported. Use the child's own words.)

Child/Young Person's demeanor/behaviour when making the disclosure:

Any witnesses to the abuse?

Action taken:
(What did you do following the incident/disclosure/concern?)

Any other relevant information:

Signed:

Date:

For completion by the DSL:

DSL Response:

Action taken by DSL:

Rationale for decision making/actions taken:

Outcome of action taken by DSL:

Follow up action by DSL:

Feedback given to person reporting the concerns:

Signed by DSL:

Full Name:

Date:

Checklist for DSL:

- ✓ Concern described in sufficient detail?
- ✓ Distinguished between fact, opinion and hearsay?
- ✓ Child's own words used? (Swear words, insults or intimate vocabulary should be written down verbatim)
- ✓ Jargon free?
- ✓ Free from discrimination/stereotyping or assumptions?
- ✓ Concern recorded and passed to Head of Operations and Safeguarding Trustee in a timely manner?

APPENDIX G - Types of Abuse

1. **Physical Abuse** is a form of abuse which occurs when someone causes physical harm or injury to a child or young person e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning, or forced or extreme physical exertion.

This type of abuse can leave more than physical marks on the body. Physical abuse can make children feel anxious and depressed. They may feel completely isolated and try to harm themselves or run away. It is common for children who are physically abused to have little or no self-esteem and trouble eating and/or sleeping properly. They may display signs of anger and be unable to concentrate on tasks.

At the Charity you may notice a visiting adult forcing children and young people to undertake excessively demanding physical activity which causes injury or distress when it disregards the capacity of the children and young people.

2. **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening. This includes full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling, or exposing genitals. Showing children and young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner is also sexual abuse.

A child who has suffered or is suffering sexual abuse may display inappropriate sexual awareness or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour. They might have a distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected. Other signs are:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting. Alcohol or drug misuse. Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.

At the Charity, sexual abuse might occur during any activity that involves close physical contact with children and young people, or at any time when a child or group is isolated from wider supervision.

3. **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as causing severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately or repeatedly scaring, humiliating, isolating, or denigrating a child, or telling them they are unloved, worthless, useless, or inadequate. Emotionally abused children and young people often feel frightened or become withdrawn as they are in danger of being constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted. When children and young people are subjected to persistent negative emotional ill treatment, they are likely to face severe and lasting adverse effects.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse, which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own. As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- seem unconfident or lack self-assurance.
- struggle to control their emotions.
- have difficulty making or maintaining relationships.

- act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

At the Charity, emotional abuse may occur when a member of staff, volunteer, or visiting adult repeatedly criticises, mocks, shames, belittles, ridicules, shuns, or reprimands a child, or gives persistently negative feedback. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of staff participating in name calling initiated by other children and young people.

4. **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to occur when an adult fails to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that the child's health, wellbeing, or development is seriously impaired. Examples of this could be failing to provide adequate food, shelter, and clothing; failing to protect from physical or emotional harm or danger; or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect can be difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

- Poor appearance and hygiene
- Health and development problems
- Housing and family issues
- Changes in behaviour

At the Charity, neglect could occur if we do not ensure a child with special dietary requirements is appropriately catered for or if they expose a child to undue risk by failing to comply with the correct health and safety procedures.

5. **Drugs and Alcohol**, giving children and young people alcohol, tobacco or drugs also constitutes abuse.
6. **Child-on-child Abuse**

Child on child abuse occurs when a child abuses another child. This can happen both inside and outside of school settings, online and when undertaking external activities linked to school. Examples of this could be bullying; abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers; or physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, and hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual harassment, such as sexual comments or remarks; pantsing and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images.

At the Charity, child-on-child abuse could occur and, in fact it can be more likely to occur, while children and young people are on a residential trip. It is essential to understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing inappropriate language as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Whilst children are not allowed to bring electronic devices to the farms, some schools do allow children to bring cameras and Charity staff should be vigilant to the additional risk these present, especially outside of supervised activity such as in dormitories and bathrooms.

APPENDIX H - Linked Policies, useful sites, and information

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline - <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Childnet - <https://www.childnet.com/>

Thinkuknow - <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Saferinternet - <https://saferinternet.org.uk/>

Relevant FFCC Policies

Whistleblowing

Health & Safety

Data Protection Policy

Recruitment Policy

All of the above policies can be found in the [Staff Handbook](#).