



# **EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

## **PASTORAL CARE IN THE YOUTH SERVICE CHILD PROTECTION**

**APRIL 2007**

## **FOREWORD**

The education and library boards youth services' major priority is to ensure that our approaches, programmes and courses are focused upon the personal and social development of young people as expressed in the "Youth Work - A Model for Effective Practice" document. In carrying out our work we must, however, never lose sight of the necessity to ensure that the young people we engage with can be assured of protection in relationships with peers, adults and their environment.

This policy and practice document is comprehensive and up-to-date, reflecting recent legislation and current thinking. It includes awareness of the more subtle forms of abuse to which children may be vulnerable.

The document not only contains a comprehensive range of policies and procedures but also copies of actual reporting forms and supplementary guidance.

Particular thanks are due to the Western Education and Library Board youth service for their work developing the original policy from which this inter-board youth services document has been formulated.

**The child protection policy contained in this document is intended for education and library board youth service staff.**

**Inter-Board Youth Panel**

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## **1. Introduction and Context**

The principles, policy and procedures set out in this document establish the conceptual framework which underpins the practices within the education and library board's youth service. These practices promote and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people who attend youth clubs or otherwise engage in youth service activities. All actions and decisions taken by staff are informed by the detailed guidance set out in Children (NI) Order 1995, Area Child Protection Policy and Procedures 1999, and Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (DENI Circular 1999/10.)

This document should be read in conjunction with the current education and library board's existing policies and guidelines (e.g. health and safety policy; youth service code of practice).

The Children (N.I.) Order 1995, the Department of Education's circular 1999/10 and the Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) report on 'Personal Safety and Child Protection in the Youth Service' call upon the youth service to dispel the notion that, if procedures are followed, the youth worker's responsibility ends on reporting the disclosure or incident. Circular 1999/10 states that youth clubs have a pastoral responsibility towards their members and should recognize that the children and young people in their charge have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. This places an onus on the youth service to be proactive and preventative in safeguarding or promoting members' safety and well-being. Children cannot develop personally or socially unless they feel secure.

The youth service has a duty to protect all children and young people participating in its activities and to ensure that all environments in which its activities are conducted are places of safety. Each youth club or group should therefore work to create an ethos which contributes to the care, safety and well-being of children and, within its pastoral care policy, should maintain a child protection policy statement which reflects both its legal duties and its pastoral responsibilities.

## **2. General Principles**

The following principles form the basis for effective child protection activity and underpin the guidance to be followed:

- the child's or young person's welfare must always be paramount; this over-rides all other considerations. Where a child or young person has a disability or special needs these must be taken into consideration;



- a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is a conflict, the child's or young person's interests must always come first;
- children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives. Where a child or young person has a disability, specialist assistance should be sought to encourage this consultation and involvement;
- actions taken to protect the child or young person (including investigation) should not in themselves be abusive by causing the child or young person unnecessary distress or further harm;
- intervention should not deal with the child or young person in isolation; the child's or young person's needs should be considered in the context of the family. Agencies' actions must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the child's or young person's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race, and any special needs.

### **3. Legal Context**

The following summary of current legislation is intended as a guide only.

#### **3.1 The United Nations convention on the rights of the child**

Article 3 provides that 'when organisations make decisions which affect children, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.'

Article 12 further provides that 'a child who is capable of forming his/her own views should be assured the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child. These views are to be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.'

Article 19 provides that children have 'the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.'

It further states that protective measures should, as appropriate, include 'effective procedures for prevention, identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow up of instances of child maltreatment.'

### 3.2 The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The central thrust of the Children (NI) Order 1995, which came into effect on 4 November 1996, is that **‘the welfare of the child or young person must be the paramount consideration,’** and it is this essential principle which guides the advice which follows.

The Regulations and Guidance Volume 6, Co-operating to Protect Children, states *“Children, because of their dependency and immaturity, are vulnerable to various forms of abuse. Those with disabilities can be particularly vulnerable due to communication difficulties or their dependence on others for personal care.”*

*“The community also has a responsibility for the well being of children and their protection. Everyone should be alert to the possibility of abuse. When they know or suspect that a child is being abused they should report their concern to the appropriate agencies. Relatives, friends, neighbours, teachers and youth leaders are particularly well placed to help, but they must know what to do if they are concerned.”*

### 3.3 Parental responsibility

The order introduced the legal concept of “Parental Responsibility” (replacing the former concept of “parental rights”) which establishes the link between a child and the person or persons who have authority to care for him/her, or take decisions concerning his/her upbringing. In law the natural mother always has parental responsibility. The natural father gains parental responsibility in one of the following ways:

- if he is married to the child’s mother at the time of the birth or if he subsequently marries her;
- through a formal agreement witnessed by a solicitor;
- through the granting of a Parental Responsibility Order by a court;
- since 15<sup>th</sup> April 2002, if he jointly registers the child’s birth.

These impacts on the signing of parental consent forms for trips, training programmes etc. Step-fathers and step-mothers or other partners may not have parental responsibility unless it has been granted by a court. Other family members can apply for parental responsibility through the same court process

### **3.4 Co-operating to safeguard children – 2003**

Replaced volumes 1 - 6 of the guidance for the Children (NI) Order, its primary focus being inter-agency co-operation.

### **3.5 Sexual Offences Amendment Bill 2001**

All youth work staff who work directly with children and young people are considered to be in a relationship of trust with them. The provisions of the above legislation extend to Northern Ireland and became effective here on 8 January 2001. **In summary, it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in any sexual activity with any person under 18 (irrespective of the age of consent, which is 17 in Northern Ireland ) even if the basis of that relationship is consensual.**

### **3.6 Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967**

‘Where a person has committed an arrestable offence, it shall be the duty of every other person, who knows or believes:

(a) that the offence or some other arrestable offence has been committed;

and

(b) that he/she has information which is likely to secure, or to be of material assistance in securing, the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of any person for that offence; to give that information, within a reasonable time, to a constable.’

To fail to do so, without reasonable excuse, is an offence.

### **3.7 Disability Discrimination Act (1995)**

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate directly against people with disabilities in relation to recruitment, selection, terms and conditions, training or other benefits, or by subjecting the person with a disability to any other detriment.

### **3.8 Human Rights Act (1998)**

Passed by Westminster in 1998, the Act became enforceable on 2 October 2000 and made the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) part of the law in Northern Ireland (and the rest of the UK). Specific rights belonging to all of us must be respected, protected and promoted by government and others.

### **3.9 Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order**

POCVA became law in February 2003 and became operational (with the exception of Article 46) in April 2005. It aims to improve existing safeguards for children by preventing unsuitable people obtaining work in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, with children. All organisations entrusted with the care of children need to have robust recruitment and staff selection procedures and to provide appropriate training for all staff and volunteers. POCVA complements the child protection measures each organization is required to have.

This legislation introduced the concept of “regulated position”, making it a requirement to POC(NI) check all such positions, be they paid or unpaid. It introduced new criminal offences, including employing a person who has been legally disqualified from working with children.

### **4.0 Data Protection Act 1998**

The Data Protection Act 1998 strengthens the rights of individuals in relation to the way personal data is processed. The act extends to manually held data (i.e. paper records) and also places obligations on everyone who records and uses information relating to individuals who, in respect of this policy, are children.

Part IV of the act sets out a number of exemptions to the subject access provisions. In particular, section 29 specifies that personal data are exempt from the non-disclosure provisions in any case in which the personal data processed are for any of the following purposes:

- (a) the prevention and detection of a crime;
- (b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Care should be taken when applying exemptions, which should be applied on a case-by-case basis.

#### Summary

In layman’s terms the statement can be translated as:

- 1 All paper and computer records of child protection incidents or allegations must be stored securely.
- 2 Access to this information is restricted to the child protection officer/worker, their deputy and on a need-to-know basis with the police and social services.

- 3 Child protection data must be disclosed to police/social services to assist in the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

If you are in any doubt as to the processing or disclosure of data, the data protection officer in the board should be consulted.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

The education and library boards' youth service recognises its responsibilities in the area of child protection, namely:

- PREVENTION
- RECOGNITION
- RESPONSE
- REFERRAL
- CONFIDENTIALITY/RECORD KEEPING
- CODES OF PRACTICE
- RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION
- ICT POLICY

Parents will be made aware of the youth service's responsibilities and procedures. A letter, which will be given to parents via their children as part of the registration process (**Appendix 1**) will be accompanied by a statement of the youth service's child protection procedures (**Appendix 1.1**) and by a standard registration form (**Appendix 1.2**), which parents will sign to indicate acknowledgement and acceptance of these procedures.

### 4. Prevention

#### The Context

The youth service has a pastoral care duty for all children and young people who participate in its activities.

*“Young people today face many challenges; they need to acquire a broad range of abilities and skills to cope with and manage existing and future problems and opportunities. In particular, they need to know how to keep safe and protect themselves from situations of risk. In working with children and young people, the protection and welfare of the child or young person must always be the first priority; taking health and safety seriously is a fundamental part of building a safer environment for children and young people in the youth service and elsewhere. As a first step in creating a safe environment, staff in youth centres should carry out risk assessment exercises to ensure the health and safety of users.”*

*“In addition, young people need help to develop an awareness of personal safety issues in relation to bullying, risks associated with misuse of illegal substances, and abuse in all its forms. They also need to be able to identify possible dangers and become aware of strategies they can use to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations, such as those that could lead to abuse of the young person. Youth centres provide opportunities for young people to develop this awareness and*

*these strategies in a safe and secure atmosphere. The staff in these settings must work to ensure that there are arrangements in place which protect children and young people from physical, social, emotional and intellectual harm. They must also ensure that appropriate support is available for young people in situations where they are at risk. Young people need to grow in self-esteem, confidence and independence of thought; they need to develop an understanding of, and become sympathetic and sensitive to, the needs of others; they need to develop the necessary skills to cope with possible threats to their personal safety, and as they mature, to meet with confidence the demands and challenges of adult and working life. The Children Order (1995) recognises the role of education and youth services in the care and protection of children and young people; it places upon such agencies a statutory responsibility to develop policies and practice which safeguard the young people, to implement procedures to keep them from harm and provide appropriate support for those in need."*

(Extract from "Personal Safety and Child Protection in the Youth Service" ETI, 1999/2000, Page 1.)

## **4.1 Creating a safe environment**

Policies and procedures must be in place to ensure good practice in the management of all youth service provision. This means that all aspects of the day-to-day functioning of units (or other services) are subject to rigorous application of a range of quality control measures which effectively guarantees transparency in all dealings with young people, staff, parents, visitors and other agencies. It also ensures that the facilities used by the youth service are properly maintained, adapted and inspected regularly.

These policies and procedures should spell out clearly and concisely what to do to ensure that child abuse is prevented from happening within the service.

The following framework is suggested in the context of **Creating a Safe Environment**. It acts as a catalyst for asking the why, what, where and when questions in relation to examining our understanding, commitment and pursuit of the safest conditions within which quality youth work can happen.

### **4.1.1 The physical environment**

The physical environment within which youth work takes place is governed by a range of policies and procedures. These are important tools in that they ensure that children, young people, staff and other users are safeguarded against injury, loss or abuse. They have been designed with all due consideration to the diverse range of facilities and services used to carry on youth work.

They can be summarised as follows:

- (i) health and safety
- (ii) risk assessment
- (iii) supervision ratios (including special needs)
- (iv) annual building inspection
- (v) fire drills
- (vi) safety of equipment.
- (vii) maintenance and repairs

These policies and procedures are available from the area youth office or youth service headquarters (**see Appendix 2**).

## **4.2 Working with young people**

The youth service will minimise children's and young people's vulnerability by acknowledging their needs and building their self-esteem. It will always seek to present young people with positive role models for them. It will seek to *"provide young people with the necessary skills to help them cope successfully with negative peer pressure and similar influences in areas such as child protection, drug education and sex education"*; the youth service recognises that, as a result of the application of these principles, young people will be *"confident that staff will make a determined effort to [help them] resolve their personal problems and concerns."*

(Quotations from the ETT's paper on evaluation of pastoral care provision in schools).

### **4.2.1 Rights and responsibilities**

In the course of working with young people it is important that those who access the unit and its services are aware of their rights and their responsibilities. The base line for protecting young peoples' rights can be found within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Young people in the unit should be presented with opportunities to learn what their rights are. They should be shown that they will not be subjected to any behaviour from adults or other young people, which makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

The young person should be informed of opportunities to talk to a responsible adult to discuss their concerns. All education and library board youth clubs/units must prominently display posters giving these details (**see Appendix 3**). Staff are trained to cope with handling initial approaches by concerned young people, critical incidents, disclosures, referrals, and in how to support the young person throughout the process.



Each unit must display, in a prominent area, a set of guidelines which identify behaviour which is appropriate and that which is not appropriate. Young people should be involved in the process of constructing these guidelines, (to be reviewed annually), thus developing a sense of ownership and respect for this code of conduct (see youth service card “A Code of Practice for Adults Working in Youth Clubs” for template Appendix 4). This approach is consistent with the youth service model for effective practice which promotes participation, the testing of values and beliefs and acceptance and understanding of others as its core principles.

When working with young people in the unit it is also important to highlight that with rights comes responsibilities. This includes the need to be truthful and honest at all times and not to engage in “games” and activities which cause risk to them or others, or may hurt the feelings of others.

An education and library board youth forum has developed a youth charter (see **Appendix 5**), within which they have articulated the rights and responsibilities of young people taking part in youth service activities.

#### **4.2.2 Managing disruptive behaviour**

All youth units accept and promote the fact that they have a pastoral responsibility towards the young people who use their service. In order to reduce the risk of harm or injury occurring in the unit or at an external event, a discipline policy for youth club members should be drawn up in consultation with young people within structured settings, detailing how incidents will be managed, including the involvement of the parent, the school where appropriate, and, in more serious cases, the police. Staff will be governed by the education and library board youth service’s **“Code of Conduct for Youth Workers”**, (See **Appendix 8**). Complaints about staff are handled through the comments/complaints policy, or, in the case of a child protection concern, through the child protection procedures. Having these measures in place, and staff being conversant with them, will largely pre-empt incidents where restraint may be required.

Restraint is an area of intervention which could be confusing or holds fears for youth workers. **Appendix 6** offers guidance on the use of reasonable force to restrain or control youth club members. Restraint is defined as a *“set of techniques which should be applied only in extreme circumstances by individuals who have undertaken accredited training and who have been authorised to use such techniques.”* Unless trained, youth service staff should only use those techniques outlined in paragraph 5.2 of Appendix 6.

Staff who have been involved in an incident requiring the use of reasonable force should use the record of use of reasonable force form in **Appendix 6.3** to

record events leading up to, during and after the incident at the earliest possible opportunity. The youth worker-in-charge and designated youth worker for child protection should be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

#### **4.2.3 Anti-bullying policy**

The youth service's approach to bullying issues is informed by the education and library boards' anti-bullying strategy, while taking cognisance of the Department of Education's guidance "Promoting Positive Behaviour" and the new anti-bullying legislation. While the latter does not yet apply to the youth service, it will strive to ensure that anti-bullying and relevant disciplinary measures are put in place to reflect the demands of Article 19 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 as follows:

- i. to determine disciplinary measures in order to encourage good behaviour and respect for others on the part of members and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying amongst club members;
- ii. to consult with registered members, their parents and the advisory committee when determining measures to be taken regarding bullying behaviour;
- iii. to consult with registered members, their parents and the advisory committee before revising or amending any statement of general principles concerning discipline.

The youth service will promote the use of appropriate anti-bullying resource packs when promoting positive behaviour among its membership.

Bullying is a social problem found in many environments both in the life of adults and young people. In the youth club, it can be found in the groups of young people who use the unit and even within staff teams. The role of the leader in charge is to ensure that structures and procedures are embedded in youth club practices to prevent bullying.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intent of hurting another person. Bullying can also result in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures);
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;

- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality;
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

“Cyber bullying” is when a child, pre-teen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, pre-teen or teen using the internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phone.

In preventing and tackling bullying the cornerstone of any approach is the creation of a supportive ethos. This can be achieved in a number of ways. One of these is through the establishment and the promotion of self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as through all levels of the unit working together to demonstrate that bullying will not be tolerated. It is also important that any attempts to solve incidents of bullying and the modification of behaviour should involve both the bullied and the bully. Communication with parents and young people is essential. Parents need to have a clear understanding of unit policy and feel safe in the knowledge that any fears they might have about their child’s safety will be taken seriously. Young people also need to be made aware of the ways that they can report bullying in their unit.

**All units should have their bullying policy displayed prominently in their building and engage young people in the construction, design and implementation of the policy.**

This will further add to the sense of ownership and belonging in the centre. An example of an anti-bullying policy is available in the Save the Children “Focus on Bullying” publication. The form for recording bullying incidents can be found in **Appendix 7**.

#### **4.2.4 Substance misuse, drugs and alcohol policy**

Youth workers often find themselves dealing with issues relating to substance, drugs and alcohol misuse, given the growing pattern of use in Northern Ireland.

The youth worker must be responsible for the management of such issues in an appropriate manner.

A code of practice for youth and community workers indicates that there are several key areas when dealing with these issues (**see Appendix 8**).

Further guidance is available in the Department of Education's publication "Management of Drug-Related Incidents within the Youth Service".

## **4.3 Working with staff**

### **4.3.1 Training.**

The youth service will ensure that effective staff management is provided through adequate training and supervision.

In considering the issue of training, youth workers in charge need to be aware of the range and type of training that staff and volunteers require. This may include:

- induction;
- introduction to youth work and programme development (accredited by OCN);
- practical skills training;
- child protection training;
- staff training in specific issues (e.g. strategies for involving young people in the decision-making process).

In relation to child protection training, all full-time youth work staff, part-time designated and deputy designated workers and their line managers will be expected to undertake a 9 hour "keeping safe" course.

In addition, all part-time staff and volunteers in controlled centre/projects will be expected to undertake an awareness programme (1 hour during induction and a set 3 hour programme).

### **4.3.2 Support and supervision**

Support and supervision will be available to all staff and volunteers as a means of protecting staff, volunteers and young people.

The purpose of supervision is not only to clarify workers' roles and responsibilities but also to have the opportunity to share concerns with a line manager.

### **4.3.3 Conduct of staff**

The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people in the unit rests with all members of staff and volunteers, and there is an implicit assumption that the conduct of staff towards young people must be above

reproach. A code of practice for staff (full-time, part-time and volunteers) in their contact with young people has been drawn up and is attached in **Appendix 4**. The code is a preventative measure and adherence to the code will ensure that staff do not act in any way which might cause their behaviour to be misconstrued, thereby reducing the likelihood of allegations being made against them. The code should be made known to parents in the annual registration process (**see Appendix 1**) to help avoid any misunderstanding.

#### **4.4 Partnerships**

*“The young people generally are not given sufficient opportunities to contribute to the development of policies related to personal safety and child protection.”*

(ETI’s report on Personal Safety and Child Protection in the Youth Service, paragraph 3.8).

The youth service can only function effectively when it has developed strong partnerships with those others who have a key influence on the young people who use the service.

Trust, openness and transparency in our relationship with our partners is of key importance and the youth service appreciates feedback from young people and children, parents, youth work staff, partner agencies and other service users.

##### **4.4.1 Communication with young people**

The youth service strongly believes that young people are our most valuable partners and they will be actively encouraged to comment upon, influence and shape the youth service through mechanisms such as the local youth councils, the education and library boards’ youth fora, the youth centre’s line management system and through the youth service’s management structure.

The youth service is committed to promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes in their youth clubs.

Young people need to know how they can make a complaint if they are concerned about practice which might put their safety at risk. Youth clubs must ensure that young people can make known any concerns they may have about their own safety or another child/young person’s safety (**see Appendix 11**).

#### **4.4.2 Communication with parents**

The youth service will ensure that *“all parents and young people are made aware of all policies and procedures relating to personal safety and child protection”* (ETI’s report paragraph 3.9). Through the annual member registration process a letter should be given to each member to deliver to their parent(s) informing them of the relevant policies. A sample letter and registration form appears in **Appendices 1 and 1.2**.

Parents need to know how they can make a complaint, and the recourse that they have if they are not satisfied with the outcome. Youth clubs should inform parents of the procedure for them to make known any concerns they may have about the safety of their (or another) child. **(See Appendix 12)**

#### **4.4.3 Communication with staff**

The youth service will recommend that its youth work staff is fully involved in the development of policies devised for the youth work setting. This will further ensure that staff understand and accept these policies and procedures and reinforce this through training and staff development (see 4.3.1 “Working with Staff” above.)

#### **4.4.4 Communication with other agencies**

The ETI’s paper on the monitoring and evaluation of pastoral care provision states that pastoral care is more effective when *“representatives of external support agencies provide up-to-date information .... in areas relating to the pupils’ care and protection.....; they cooperate with the [youth centre] in attempting to resolve behavioural, emotional or social problems related to individual [members]”*.

The youth service will support interagency working in order to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

#### **4.4.5 Communication with visitors**

The youth service will provide signage to direct visitors. Members should be trained to alert staff should a visitor enter the reception area without youth workers being aware of their presence. Visitors will have no individual contact with young people unless accompanied by a youth worker, and only then if it is absolutely appropriate. Obviously, bona fide visitors (e.g. parents) are excepted.

## 4.5 The curriculum

The area youth officer and the unit's advisory committee will ensure that the youth work curriculum includes programmes on personal protection (e.g. Kidscape, Teenscape, anti-bullying courses etc). The education and library board youth service has developed and provides a 'child protection ethos' and a preventative curriculum. We offer children an alternative model to violent or abusive behaviour and alternative methods of responding.

The youth service will provide *"accessible and sympathetic contacts among the staff for all of the [members] and opportunities....for them to raise and discuss issues of interest or concern to them personally"* (ETI paper on Evaluating Pastoral Care (1999)), through personal and social development programmes and through personal protection programmes, examples of which are 'Kidscape' and 'Teenscape'. Other programmes may include relationship building, parenting, assertiveness, decision-making and self-awareness skills.

### Relationships and sexuality curriculum

The youth service advises that sex education remains the responsibility of parents and the school. The youth service also acknowledges the Department of Education's guidance on the relationships and sexuality curriculum, which states that sex education may only be delivered with the written consent of parents. In cases where the youth club invites an expert organisation to deliver sex education, (and parental consent has been received), the content of such courses must be approved by the area youth officer.

## 5. Recognition

### 5.1 Definitions for child abuse

#### Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include the non-organic failure to thrive.

#### Physical

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning,

suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

### **Sexual**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, (or in the production of), pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Emotional**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

\* Definitions extracted from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children", Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, May 2003.

**Bullying** is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our youth clubs. All staff members are to be alert at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both victim and bully will be personally contacted immediately bullying behaviour is identified. (See 4.2.3 above – Anti-Bullying Policy).



## 5.2 Indicators of neglect and physical abuse

### Neglect

#### Physical indicators

- Emaciated, poorly, and sad
- Constant hunger
- Tiredness
- Lack of supervision
- Inadequate or inappropriate clothing
- Poor hygiene – repeatedly unwashed, smelly
- Untreated illnesses
- Repeated accidents, especially burns
- Abandonment
- Distended stomach

#### Behavioural indicators

- Tiredness, listlessness
- Withdrawn
- Lack of peer relationships
- Reports that no carer is at home
- Low self-esteem
- Exposure to violence, including violent videos
- Compulsive stealing, begging or scavenging
- Frequently absent or late

### Physical abuse

#### Physical indicators

- Unexplained scratches, lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Bruising on both sides of the ear (any symmetrical bruising is suspicious)
- Burns, especially cigarette burns
- Untreated injuries

#### Behavioural indicators

- Self destructive tendencies
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Chronic runaway
- Behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive)
- Fear of returning home
- Undue fear of adults
- Fearful watchfulness
- Clothing inappropriate to weather – worn to hide part of the body

**THESE ARE NOT CHECKLISTS. If in doubt, share your concerns or suspicions with your designated youth worker for child protection.**

### 5.3 Indicators of sexual and emotional abuse

#### Sexual abuse

##### **Physical indicators**

- Bruises, scratches, bite marks
- Itching in genital area
- Recurrent chronic ailments such as stomach pains or headaches
- Difficulty in walking and sitting
- Bruises on inner thighs or buttocks
- Soreness or bleeding in the genital or anal areas, or in the throat
- Fearful of undressing to put on games kit
- Unexplained pregnancies
- Venereal disease
- Anorexic/bulimic

##### **Behavioural indicators**

- Chronically depressed/suicidal
- Inappropriate language, sexual knowledge for age group
- Inappropriately seductive to adults or other children
- Inappropriately precocious
- Poor self-esteem, self devaluation, lack of confidence
- Afraid of the dark, recurring nightmares
- Role reversal – overly concerned for siblings
- Outbursts of anger/hysteria
- Poor relationships
- Jealousy
- Wariness of being approached by anyone
- Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's artwork or stories

#### Emotional abuse

##### **Physical indicators**

- Sudden speech disorders
- Wetting and soiling
- Signs of mutilation
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Failing to thrive, poor hair and skin
- Extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (Anorexia, stooping, vomiting)

##### **Behavioural indicators**

- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, head banging, thumb sucking)
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Indifference to separation from family
- Indiscriminate attachment.
- Poor peer relationships
- Reluctance for parental liaison

## **6. Response**

Staff in the youth service must note that any communication with young people in the context of child protection concerns or disclosure must be conducted sensitively and in a manner which ensures that the young person's confidentiality is not breached.

This can be achieved by conducting conversations ensuring privacy, and by ensuring that non-professional, untrained persons are not privy to details of the case.

### **6.1 What to do in the event of a disclosure**

In the event of the disclosure of, or an allegation of child abuse, the member of staff will:

- listen to the child or young person and accept what is said;
- stay calm and not display shock or disbelief;
- not promise confidentiality, as he/she has a duty to refer;
- as soon as possible record actual statements, not putting their own interpretation or assumptions into the statements, and react only as far as is necessary to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter;
- reassure the child or young person they have done the right thing to talk about it and that they are not to blame;
- if necessary, ask questions only for clarity, e.g. "What is it you have to tell me?" (used at the beginning to help the young person say what they need); "yes?" or "and?" (used to respond/prompt during the disclosure); "Is there anything else you want to tell me?" (used at the end to check that the young person has finished);

#### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

- not criticise the perpetrator;
- act before the child leaves the youth club if the allegations concern a person living in the family home by contacting the designated youth worker for child protection or the duty social worker (**Appendix 13**);

- explain to the child what they have to do next and to whom they have to talk;
- not act alone;
- refer information to the designated youth worker for child protection, who will refer the case according to procedures (role of designated youth worker for child protection is in **Appendix 14**).

## 6.2 Recording

On hearing a disclosure, or as a result of discussion relating to a child protection concern, the youth worker will:

- inform the designated youth worker for child protection;
- record the facts, as stated, as soon as possible after the disclosure. Make very brief notes of significant statements, words or phrases. It is not advised to try to record, in detail, what the child or young person says as he/she is speaking. It could appear as if they are not being listened to, or worse, it could be frightening;
- Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used. If the child uses ‘pet’ words, record those words rather than translating them into ‘proper’ words. Any injuries or bruises noticed may be recorded on a rough body diagram showing position and extent.

## 6.3 The designated youth worker for child protection must:

- record the disclosure, ensuring to note when the suspicions were reported and to whom;
- make a referral to social services if the issue (disclosure, suspicion or otherwise) has been identified as a child protection concern using the form in **Appendix 9**. A copy of the referral must also be sent to the education and library board’s youth officer, child protection, marked “strictly private and confidential”;
- for the sake of security, all notes (even the scribbled ones) and reports will be sent to the education and library board’s youth officer, child protection, to be retained in a central location rather than held within an individual youth unit (ref. summary point 2 on page 7);

- The education and library board's youth officer, child protection, or deputy, will be available for support throughout the process.

**N.B. Records must be maintained securely and confidentially until the child's 21st birthday (Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection, paragraph 62).**

#### **6.4 Diverse youth work environments**

Youth workers find themselves in many environments in the course of their work, some formal, others informal. There are different procedures to be followed in each instance, as the responsibility for dealing with a disclosure belongs to the host institution, and not to the visiting youth worker. The youth worker has a responsibility, however, to ensure that any situation referred by him/her to the designated person in the host organization is recorded and acted upon. The referral must also be notified to the education and library board's youth officer for child protection using the form "confirmation of notification of suspected / admitted / known abuse of a child or children in a location other than a youth service location to social services" (see **Appendix 10**).

- Procedure when a youth service staff member has a concern about possible abuse of a child or young person in his/her own work setting. (**See Appendix 15**).
- Procedure when a youth worker has a concern about possible abuse of a child or young person in a school in which he/she is working. (**See Appendix 15.1**).
- Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a youth worker (except the designated youth worker for child protection). (**See Appendix 15.2**).
- Procedure where a complaint is made about the designated youth worker for child protection. (**See Appendix 15.3**).
- Procedures for education and library board youth workers working in a voluntary youth club. (This includes senior youth workers, area youth workers, youth workers seconded to voluntary youth clubs or youth workers doing occasional work in them). (**See Appendix 15.4**).
- Procedures to follow for education and library board youth workers or grant-aided voluntary organisations' youth workers in whose premises another agency is accommodated (e.g. Prince's Trust volunteers, alternative educational projects). (**See Appendix 15.5**).
- Procedures for youth workers in controlled part-time youth clubs. (**See Appendix 15.6**).

International travel, home-stay trips and residential visits to non-board premises are subject to the procedures outlined in the “Educational Visits Policy”.

## **7. Referral**

### **7.1 Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse**

The youth worker-in-charge will prominently display notices in the youth centre informing members, staff and parents **who** to contact with a child protection concern or issue. The management/advisory committee will nominate the designated youth worker for child protection in the centre’s service level agreement. A sample notice informing centre users who the designated youth worker is can be found in **Appendix 3**.

If a child or young person makes a disclosure to a youth worker or other member of staff, which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child or young person, the member of staff must act promptly.

He/she should not investigate - this is a matter for the social services – but he/she should report these concerns immediately to the youth worker for child protection, discuss the matter with him/her and make full notes.

The designated youth worker for child protection will discuss the matter with the education and library board youth officer, child protection (if appropriate) as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action and ensure that a written record is made. If unavailable, the deputy youth officer, child protection should be contacted

NB: the education and library board youth officer, child protection, or deputy may not be accessible outside of normal working hours. In cases where immediate action/referral is needed, the designated youth worker will seek advice directly from social services.

The designated youth officer, in consultation with the designated member of staff, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child or young person, the matter needs to be referred to social services. If there are concerns that the child or young person may be at risk, the designated youth worker for child protection is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent, carer or family member may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately. Sensitive handling is required in this instance, particularly regarding the identity of an alleged perpetrator of abuse.

The designated youth worker may seek clarification or advice and consult with the senior social worker (or duty social worker out of office hours) before a referral is made. This can be done on an anonymous basis in the first instance, but once the advice is to refer, the designated youth worker must do so. No decision to refer a case to social services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child or young person is our first priority.

## **7.2 Allegations against a member of staff**

- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the youth worker-in-charge (or the designated youth worker for child protection, if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply unless the complaint is about the designated youth worker or youth worker-in-charge.
- The education and library board youth officer, child protection, will be informed immediately.
- If any youth worker or member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or could be misconstrued, a written report should be submitted immediately to the designated youth worker for child protection, or his/her deputy. This would apply especially in a case where a member of staff has been obliged to restrain a child or young person physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self. **(See Appendix 6.3)**
- Any member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should approach the designated youth worker directly.
- Any member of staff who feels that the designated youth worker or deputy designated youth worker has not carried out his/her duties effectively, or if they have any child protection concerns relating to these officers, should contact the education and library board youth officer, child protection. **(See Appendix 13).**
- Staff who have behaved inappropriately or not acted in the best interests of the child will be subject to the board's disciplinary procedure and the line manager will be informed as part of this process.
- Where a member of staff is alleged to have abused a child, the youth service child protection referral procedures will be implemented, the result of which may be an investigation by social services and/or the

police. This child protection investigation will supersede any board disciplinary procedure. Consideration may be given to suspension on a precautionary basis pending the results of these or further enquiries.

### **7.3 Allegations against the youth worker-in-charge**

If a complaint is made against the youth worker-in-charge, the designated youth worker for child protection (or his/her deputy, if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. If the latter is the designated youth worker, refer to his /her deputy or to the area youth officer if there is no deputy, or if he/she is unavailable. He/she will inform the education and library board youth officer, child protection and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

### **7.4 Allegations against the designated youth worker for child protection**

Any complaints must be referred to the youth worker-in-charge. If the latter is the designated youth worker, refer to his /her deputy or to the area youth officer if there is no deputy, or if he/she is unavailable.

### **7.5 Suspension from duties**

Where the matter is referred to social services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with members and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by social services.

### **7.6 Concerns/allegations about visiting staff**

Staff may have concerns about the behaviour of visiting youth work staff or other adults with responsibility for a child or group of children. These will come within the scope of this policy and reporting procedures will apply.

### **7.7 The role of the designated youth worker for child protection**

- listen to the staff member and offer appropriate support;
- remind the member of staff to record the incident, and ensure that the appropriate form is completed;
- record the content of the conversation with the staff member;
- notify the education and library board youth officer, child protection and/or social services and the police immediately;



- take charge of all records and paperwork relating to the allegations.

(See **Appendix 14** for a full description of the role of the designated youth worker for child protection).

## 8. Confidentiality

- The requirement to protect children ultimately outweighs any duty to confidentiality.
- While it is important to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people while on youth service premises, it is also important that all concerned are confident that the information they provide will only be disclosed where it is in the best interests of the child to do so. For these reasons, only those people who need to know should be told and conversations about suspected or alleged abuse should always be held in private. Information received on child protection issues must not be discussed outside the procedures.
- Information disclosed to the youth worker is confidential to the youth service rather than to the individual youth worker and should be shared appropriately with the youth service personnel who need to know. Consistent with the youth service's child protection policy and procedures, the youth worker must inform the designated youth worker for child protection, who will, in turn, inform the youth officer, child protection.
- No guarantee of confidentiality can be given to the child or to the staff member. It is essential, in matters of child protection, to share information with the investigating agencies, namely social services and the PSNI.
- Failure to disclose relevant information about an alleged crime is a criminal offence in itself.

### 8.1 Confidentiality – record keeping

All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or safe. These will only identify the child or young person by their initials and date of birth. These records will be kept separate from any other file which is held on the child or young person.

## **9. Codes of Practice**

Staff are aware of and adhere to the general code of practice for youth workers drawn up by the youth service in 1996 (see **Appendix 8**). Some of the practice guidelines are pertinent to child protection.

### **9.1 Code of conduct on child protection for youth service staff**

**9.1.1** It is expected that all youth service staff will act in a way which will promote, safeguard and protect the welfare of the children and young people with whom they come into contact, within the youth centre and without.

**9.1.2** Youth service staff must always ensure that their relationships with children and young people are appropriate to the age and gender of the children and young people using the youth centre and its facilities. Staff must take care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation and they must also give careful thought to their attitudes, demeanour and language at all times.

**9.1.3** Youth service staff should recognise that any action taken by them, whether during the course of their job or outside of it, which would warrant a social service or police investigation in the area of child protection, may lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked by the youth service.

**9.1.4** Youth service staff are likely to come into physical contact with children in the course of their work. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted by the child or young person. Although touching is often a very important way of offering support, comfort and reassurance, it is also open to misinterpretation and misperception. Children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing for a variety of reasons. It is important for staff to be sensitive to a child or young person's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately. It is also essential not to touch young people in ways or on parts of the body or in circumstances that might be considered inappropriate. It is also possible that physical contact may result in a child or young person's responding inappropriately. This may indicate abuse in another setting, and staff should bring any concerns to the designated youth worker for child protection.

**(See also Appendix 4 “A code of practice for adults working in youth clubs”).**

## **9.2 Using images of children**

The youth service will seek parental consent when taking photographs or making a video of children for the purposes of promoting its youth centres or services. These images may appear in the local press, our printed publications, on video, on our website or in all these media forms. **(See Appendix 16 for pro forma).**

Similarly, when working with groups in schools, parental consent will be sought in compliance with the school's child protection policy. **(See Appendix 17 for pro forma).** The parental consent forms in the school group's case will be copied to the school principal.

In both instances, the youth service will not include details or full names (first name and surname) of any child in an image without good reason. For example, the full name of a competition prize winner may be included if they consent. Personal e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers will not be included. Only images of children who are suitably dressed will be used to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately. Youth group or class-group images will be described using very general labels such as 'community project group' or 'xL group'.

## **9.3 Complaints procedure for young people and parents**

The youth service has developed procedures for a young person who is concerned about his/her own or another child/ young person's safety to ensure that his/her concerns are treated seriously and are acted upon. **(See Appendix 11).**

A complaints procedure for parent(s) concerned about their (or another) child's safety also exists **(see Appendix 12).** These complaints procedures deal with child protection/safety issues only. Any other complaint, e.g. relating to the quality of service, will be dealt with through the education and library board's comments/complaints policy and procedures.

## **10. Recruitment and Selection**

In order to minimize the opportunity for children and young people to suffer harm, it is essential that good practice in recruitment and management of staff and volunteers is adopted by all organisations working with this potentially vulnerable group.

## **10.1 Recruitment and selection process**

The education and library boards work to an agreed recruitment and selection policy, this conforms to the current best practice, standards and requirements.

The boards have clearly defined their role within the recruitment and selection procedures that will help minimise the opportunity for those unsuitable or debarred from working with children from entering their work force. (See human resource section for further details).

## **10.2 Volunteers and references**

New volunteers into the youth service should be asked by each unit to complete an engagement form, provide photographic proof of identity, undertake an informal interview and provide references. References should be taken up in writing.

These should be taken up with at least two people who are not family members and, ideally one of whom should have first hand knowledge of the applicant's previous work or contact with children or adults with a learning disability.

All new volunteers must be POCVA checked prior to starting work with young people.

## **11. ICT Policy**

Information and communications technology has become a commonplace feature of young peoples' lives. There are many educational benefits to be derived through appropriate use of this technology and the education and library boards, through youth service facilities, will endeavour to utilize these opportunities for the personal and social development of young people by making available access to computers, the internet and other technology in the delivery of its programmes and services.

The boards are also aware of the potential risks involved with such technology and aims to protect young people from danger by providing as safe an environment as possible. However, in doing so it must be accepted that it is not possible to give an absolute guarantee that users of the system will not be exposed to some of the possible dangers associated with the use of the internet.

### **11.1 Internet and e-mail usage policy**

This document sets out the policy of the boards in relation to the use of internet and e-mail facilities on the boards' information and communications

technology resources. The policy applies to all board staff and others given permission to use the boards' resources to access internet and e-mail facilities.

The policy also applies to the use of non-board equipment or facilities (including personal ICT equipment at home or elsewhere) for the discharge of official business, e.g. for work-related research or working from home. Individuals must not use non-board equipment or facilities for official business unless they have prior permission to do so.

The youth service will update this policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and/or legislation as necessary, and review it annually with the child protection support service of the education and library boards. Participation and consultation with the education and library board youth councils, young people, parents and advisory committees will be undertaken.

# APPENDICES

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS**

Dear Parent / Guardian,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Club. For some, this will be your first experience of the club, and I warmly welcome both you and your child's involvement. Other children are returning to the club after the short summer break and I am delighted to see them again.

Attached you will find a copy of our child protection policy statement and our standard registration form which needs to be completed for every club member.

**Child Protection Policy Statement**

Please read our policy statement. All members of our staff team are required to follow these guidelines, which are in place to promote the safety and welfare of your child while attending the youth centre or external youth club activities. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns about your child's welfare while he or she is in our care. A complaints procedure is in place for your use.

**Please note that where we have a concern that a child may have been abused or may be in danger, we must, by law, refer the case to the PSNI and/or social services. In cases where this happens the parent will be informed, unless he/she is the alleged perpetrator.**

**Standard Registration Form**

This must be completed in full for each child attending and returned as soon as possible. Your son/daughter cannot be allowed to participate in any of the club activities until we have received your completed and signed registration form.

From time to time you will be contacted for permission for your child to participate in specialist programmes. Should you have any queries about any aspect of the club's programme or our policies and procedures, please contact me on (tel no. \_\_\_\_\_) or visit me at the youth centre.

Yours sincerely

Youth Worker-in-Charge

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

We in \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Centre have a duty of care for the welfare, safety and protection of young people using our services. We will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment which values individuals for their unique talents and abilities and ensures that all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which we seek to protect our young people is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and to acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

All our centre staff including secretarial, ancillary and youth workers, paid and voluntary, have been subject to appropriate criminal background checks. All staff have adopted the youth service's "code of practice for adults working with children" which dictates proper behaviour towards our young people. A copy of this code and the pastoral care policy can be accessed at the youth centre.

The purpose of our child protection procedures is to protect our young people by ensuring that everyone who works in our youth centre – youth workers and non-youth work staff – has clear guidance on the action to be taken where abuse or neglect of a child/young person has been disclosed or is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our youth centre.

The designated youth worker for child protection will inform social services and/or the PSNI of any disclosure, concern or suspicion of child abuse in order to protect the child from further harm. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child will be informed immediately of any referral concerning his/her child unless it is suspected that he/she may be responsible for the abuse.

Similar prompt action will ensue in the event of a complaint, disclosure, concern or suspicion against a member of our staff.

Any complaint of bullying made by a parent will be fully investigated by the designated youth worker for child protection and a personal response to the complaint will be made within one week. Action to protect the victim will be taken immediately including contacting the parents of the bully, and, depending on the seriousness of the attack, suspending him/her from attending the youth centre's activities.



**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORM**

All information contained on this form is confidential and will only be used by staff in order to meet the specific needs of your child.

I give permission for my child to attend \_\_\_\_\_ Youth Club

Child's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone No \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's / Carer's Mobile Telephone No \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name and No \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child \_\_\_\_\_ Home/Mobile No \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor's Name and Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Details of any known conditions, allergies etc (asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) and any medication being taken \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form I confirm that:

- I will inform the youth worker-in-charge of any changes to my child's health, medication or needs which could affect their participation in activities.
- I will inform the youth worker-in-charge of any changes in address or relevant numbers given above.

- I have read the education and library board youth service's child protection policy statement and I will co-operate with the youth centre staff in its implementation and enforcement if and when necessary.
- If I, or my nominee, cannot be contacted in the event of an emergency, the youth worker-in-charge has my consent to arrange for medical treatment.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2**

**Insert own board's contact details**

**APPENDIX 3**

**SAMPLE NOTICE TO INFORM YOUTH CLUB USERS WHO THE  
DESIGNATED YOUTH WORKER FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS**

**(Name of Youth Club/Centre)**

**THE DESIGNATED YOUTH WORKER FOR CHILD PROTECTION IS**

---

**IN HIS/HER ABSENCE**

---

**WILL ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD PROTECTION MATTERS.**

**If you have concerns for your own, or another young person's safety or well-being, please contact the designated youth worker named above or any other youth worker you feel you can share your concerns with.**

**Card**

**“A Code of Practice for Adults Working in Youth Clubs”**

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD**

**YOUTH FORUM**

**YOUNG PEOPLES' CHARTER**

**Article 1**

The education and library board youth forum asserts that all young people have a right to be participative at all levels of club life including:

- planning, implementation and evaluation of relevant programmes;
- representation on management and member committees and local youth councils;
- a role in developing disciplinary procedures and involvement in any appropriate discussion regarding sanctions on members;
- opportunities to train alongside staff, share information and have frank exchanges on unit developments.

**Article 2**

Young people have a right to a clean and safe environment including:

- clean, hazard free buildings;
- adequately trained leaders in all areas of child protection and club procedures;
- adequate supervision levels;
- protection from illegal substances on club premises;
- accessibility to all.

## **EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD**

### **YOUTH FORUM**

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARTER**

##### **Article 3**

Young people have a right to avail of opportunities to explore difference in a safe and controlled environment including:

- opportunities to relate to others of different religious or ethnic origin;
- access to meetings and activities with other groups and organisations;
- access to training to assist young people to live in a diverse society.

##### **Article 4**

Young people have the right to access information and programmes to assist them in the development of appropriate values and beliefs including:

- access to interesting and innovative programmes and projects to assist in the development of better and more active citizens;
- information and programmes to assist and support in life making choices and to extend social awareness;
- opportunities to identify learning needs and develop skills;
- appropriate training and support for members to assist in the development of club activities or become junior leaders;
- opportunities to engage in challenging and motivating activities.

## **EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD**

### **YOUTH FORUM**

### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARTER**

#### **Responsibilities**

The education and library board youth forum has agreed that alongside youth rights there is a range of responsibilities that must also be considered. Young people may need to learn how to get involved, they need to know the limitations of their rights and they must be open-minded and accessible to new and different ideas and opinions.

Other agreed responsibilities include:

- willingness to get involved with a range of different people including leaders and members from other organisations;
- respect for equipment, buildings and safety regulations;
- respect for leaders and peers, and regard for the needs of younger members;
- promotion of acceptance of others;
- a willingness to engage in new and different activities, including training;
- to promote member representation on committees and have respect for issues requiring confidentiality;
- a willingness to assist in areas of club life e.g. fund-raising or supervising junior activities.



## **THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE**

**The following is adapted to suit the youth service from “Towards a model policy in schools on the use of reasonable force”, produced by the working group of the inter-board/CCMS/CCEA group on behaviour management, schools and teacher unions, in response to the Department of Education’s Circular 1999/9, paragraph 7.**

### **1. Context**

- 1.1 The aim of every youth club should be to create a safe and secure learning and recreational environment where all children are treated with respect and dignity. The youth club’s policy on the use of reasonable force should be developed to enable staff to achieve this aim.
- 1.2 No matter how skilfully and sensitively club members are managed, a small minority will occasionally engage in aggressive behaviour, which threatens the safety of other members and staff. The youth service has a duty to care for children and young people using its services and facilities and clubs should therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure that the welfare of the young person is safeguarded and that his/her safety is preserved.
- 1.3 Specific guidance on the use of reasonable force to restrain or control children and young people is contained in the Department of Education Circular 1999/9 which is contained in Appendix 10 of the Department’s “Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection”. Further guidance is available in paragraphs 73 and 74 and in Appendix 9 in the same document.

### **2. Aims for a Policy**

- 2.1 To create a safe and secure learning and recreational environment where all children are treated with respect and dignity.
- 2.2 To protect every person in the youth service environment from harm.
- 2.3 To protect all youth club members and users against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- 2.4 To put in place guidance for all staff members, including non-youth work staff, so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain members and how such reasonable force might be applied.

### 3. Risk Assessment

3.1 The behaviour of the vast majority of the club's membership will never require any form of physical intervention. Occasionally, however, the youth worker or staff member may encounter behaviour which requires some form of physical intervention. In order to minimise the risk of incidents escalating unnecessarily due to lack of foresight, planning and training, a risk assessment should be carried out under two headings:

- Environmental Risk Assessment
- Individual Risk Assessment

#### 3.2 Environmental Risk Assessment

Each youth centre will carry out a risk assessment within the centre to identify those situations and locations where there is an increased risk of incidents happening and decide the appropriate type and level of supervision.

An analysis of all past incidents in the centre will be made to identify medium to high risk locations. Staff and members' opinions should be sought to augment this information.

On the basis of the analysis, the advisory/management committee and the youth worker-in-charge will decide the type and level of supervision required to minimise risks.

#### 3.3 Individual Risk Assessment

If the youth centre staff become aware that a member is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require reasonable force, a plan should be in place to inform staff how to respond if the situation arises. The plan will address:

- *consulting the parents* to ensure they are clear about the specific action the youth centre staff might need to take;
- *briefing staff* to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking. This may identify a need for training or guidance;
- *managing the member* – develop reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, to isolate an incident, to cope with situations where a weapon or object is produced;

- *ensuring that additional support can be summoned wherever possible.*

Environmental and individual risk assessment, allied to careful forward planning, should help result in a reduction in serious incidents. Where they occur, however, these strategies should help to ensure that any force used is the minimum necessary to achieve the desired outcome.

#### **4. Definition of Reasonable Force**

##### **4.1 The Education (NI) Order 1998 (Part II Article 4(1)) states:**

*“A member of the staff of a grant-aided school may use, in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purposes of preventing the pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely:*

- a. committing any offence;*
- b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or*
- c. engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise.”*

This legal framework applies to youth service staff as well as to the schools.

##### **4.2 Based on this legal framework, the working definition of ‘reasonable force’ is the minimum force necessary to prevent a club member from physically harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner which attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned. The use of reasonable force will always depend on the circumstances of the case and staff should take the following into consideration:**

- whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, given the age, sex, physical strength, size, understanding, medical conditions and any special needs of the member;
- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Physical force, therefore, could not be justified to

prevent a member committing a trivial misdemeanour or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force; and

- the degree of force employed should be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to diffuse the situation.

## **5. Use and Forms of Reasonable Force**

### **5.1 When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?**

Reasonable force should be limited to emergency situations and USED ONLY AS A LAST RESORT in situations where;

- a member of staff is attacked by a club member;
- a club member attacks another club member;
- club members are fighting;
- a club member is running in a corridor or stairway in which he/she might cause an accident likely to injure him/herself or others.

### **5.2 Physical intervention in these circumstances may take several forms, for example:**

- physically getting between two club members;
- blocking a club member's path;
- holding;
- leading a club member by the hand or arm;
- shepherding a club member away by placing a hand in the centre of the back; or
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

5.3 The use of force as a punishment or to intentionally cause pain, injury or humiliation such as the examples given below, (which are not exhaustive), should not be permitted under any circumstances:

- holding around the neck;
- any hold that might restrict breathing;
- kicking, slapping or punching;
- forcing limbs against joints;
- tripping;
- holding by the hair;
- holding the club member face down on the ground.

5.4 When used, physical intervention should avert danger by preventing or deflecting the club member's action or perhaps by removing a physical object which could be used to harm him/herself or others. It should, at all times, be carefully applied and may be eased by degrees as the club member calms down in response to the physical contact. The child/young person should be advised throughout that physical intervention will cease when he/she calms down.

5.5 The use of restraint is only likely to be needed in exceptional circumstances if a club member appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour and is presenting a threat to him/herself or others. The use of reasonable force should involve a calm and measured approach at all times and be in accordance with agreed strategies and action steps (see Appendix 2.1).

5.6 There may be times when members of staff should not intervene in an incident without help, unless it is an emergency (see Appendix 2.2).

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

6.1 The youth club will ensure that all staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of club members.

6.2 Legislation allows 'members of staff' to use 'reasonable force'. In an emergency, if it is likely that a club member will sustain an injury or injure

another club member or adult, any member of staff can intervene and use reasonable force to protect a club member, other staff or defend themselves.

- 6.3 The youth club's advisory/management committee will be involved in the development of the reasonable force policy and in any review of its workings. New staff will be given a copy of the policy and the youth worker-in-charge will advise on its implementation.
- 6.4 Staff will be kept informed of planning in relation to individual club members who are considered likely to pose serious behavioural problems.
- 6.5 Staff will consult with the designate youth worker for child protection regarding any concerns which they have about the physical management of children or young people with special needs.
- 6.6 Line management and lines of reporting with regard to the use of reasonable force should be the same as those for child protection.
- 6.7 Parents will be provided with a copy of the youth club's written policy on the use of reasonable force.

## **7. Record Keeping**

- 7.1 All incidents involving the use of reasonable of force should be recorded on the use of reasonable force record form (Appendix 2.3), and be accompanied by a detailed written report, provided as soon as possible after the incident. Witness accounts should also be sought.
- 7.2 Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action will also be recorded on the use of reasonable force record form.
- 7.3 The designated youth worker for child protection will keep a copy of written reports.

## **8. Complaints**

- 8.1 If an incident occurs in the youth centre involving the use of reasonable force, the procedures governing such incidents will be followed, including informing the parents/guardians of the child.
- 8.2 In the event of a subsequent complaint made against a member of staff either by or on behalf of the child or young person, this will be dealt with in accordance with the education and library boards' comments/complaints procedures. A dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead

to an investigation either under disciplinary procedures or by the police and social services department under child protection procedures.

- 8.3 Staff who themselves are subject to physical violence or assault or the threat of physical violence or assault (e.g. threatened with a weapon or object), will be supported, as appropriate, in taking any necessary action against an assailant.

## **9. Training and Development**

- 9.1 Although it is anticipated that incidences involving the use of reasonable force or physical intervention will be infrequent, all staff should be made aware of the issues relating to the use of reasonable force or physical intervention as well as procedures and practices relating to child protection and the youth centre's discipline policy.

The youth service will provide staff with training in:

- risk assessment;
- critical incident;
- designated youth worker for child protection;
- child protection policy and procedures;
- discipline policy;
- use of reasonable force and managing difficult members and situations;
- use of restraint.

## **PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES**

All youth workers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult club members and service users which they can take to defuse and calm a situation. The strategies listed below as examples will be influenced by the age of the young person and the context in which they are applied.

1. Move calmly and confidently.
2. Make clear and simple statements.
3. Intervene early.
4. Try to maintain eye contact.
5. If necessary, summon help before the problem escalates.
6. If possible, remove any audience away from the immediate location.

### **Action Steps**

1. Tell the young person who is misbehaving to stop and tell him/her the possible consequences of failure to do so.
2. If possible, summon another adult.
3. Continue to communicate with the young person throughout the incident.
4. Make it clear that physical intervention will cease as soon as it is no longer necessary.
5. Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
  - providing medical support;
  - providing respite for those involved;
  - accessing external advice/support.

A calm, measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.



## **INTERVENTION GUIDELINES**

There are situations where staff should not intervene without help. Assistance should be sought when dealing, for example, with:

- an older young person;
- a physically large young person;
- more than one young person;
- when the youth worker believes that he/she may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the young person without help, he/she should:

- remove other young people who may be at risk;
- summon assistance from colleagues;
- where necessary, contact the police;
- inform the young person that help will be arriving; and
- continue to attempt to diffuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE

**RECORD OF THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE**

(This form should be used when any incident of the use of reasonable force or physical intervention has been necessary when dealing with a difficult member or situation).

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Member(s) name:

Date of birth:

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witness(es) to incident:

Member witness(es) to incident:

Outline of events **leading to** the incident including where it occurred, description of the young person's behaviour and steps taken to defuse the situation other than physical intervention:

Outline of use of reasonable force incident, including reason for its use, how it was applied and for how long:

Measures taken following the incident (e.g. respite for young person, support for staff member:

Description of any injury(ies) sustained by anyone, any subsequent treatment and any damage to property:

Date parent/carer informed of incident:

Time:

Who informed the parent/carer:

How was the parent/carer contacted:

Outline of parent/carer's response:

Signature of staff member(s) completing report:

Date:

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Signature of youth worker-in-charge:

Date:

---

Signature of designated youth worker for child protection:

Date:

---

Youth officer's signature:

Date:

---

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action taken:

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**SAMPLE BULLYING INCIDENT FORM**

Name of alleged victim:		Name of alleged bully:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Name calling <input type="checkbox"/> Sarcasm <input type="checkbox"/> Ridiculing/belittling <input type="checkbox"/> Cornering <input type="checkbox"/> Jostling <input type="checkbox"/> Mimicking <input type="checkbox"/> Racially offensive <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging others to bully	<input type="checkbox"/> Threatening <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting <input type="checkbox"/> Unwanted touching <input type="checkbox"/> Interfering with property <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism <input type="checkbox"/> Sexually offensive <input type="checkbox"/> Malicious tales <input type="checkbox"/> Embarrassing graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/> Glaring <input type="checkbox"/> Hiding/stealing property <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying by 'text' or 'e-mail' <input type="checkbox"/> Constant criticising <input type="checkbox"/> Roughing up <input type="checkbox"/> Other .....	
Incident reported to:		Date of incident:	Time:
Where did the alleged bullying take place?			
Witnesses:			
Alleged victim's version of events:			
Alleged bully's version of events:			
Action taken:			
Signature:		Date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Further action taken <input type="checkbox"/> Designated youth worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Notified parents <input type="checkbox"/> Notified youth worker-in-charge <input type="checkbox"/> Management committee chair (vol.)		

## **ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE**

### **1. Aims & Objectives – Me Myself & I**

Given that any unit in the field of youth work can be seen as an integral part of the community and the wider society from which it springs, it is reasonable that it should reflect those values which we, in a civilised and democratic society, hold in high esteem – i.e. freedom, equality, justice and tolerance.

These values, it can be argued, find their expression in certain attitudes, policies, and practices, all of which are aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of the child – viz. the right of the child to privacy; to be loved; to be valued; to be protected and to have the freedom of choice.

Given that this is indeed so, the youth worker in whatever capacity, is morally and socially bound to cultivate attitudes, develop policies, and carry out practices which uphold both the values of our society and the rights of the individual child.

This code of practice attempts to embrace the principles of: -

- the right of young people to participate and enjoy their involvement in the youth unit;
- the responsibilities of the youth workers to ensure that these rights are respected.

# ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE

## 2. Image and Attitude – Me Myself & I

In addition to being a member of staff, the youth worker is a representative of his/her unit as well as the wider youth service and as such is expected to present a positive image and professional attitude within the community. In doing so he/she may encourage greater community involvement and recruitment of members. Courtesy, consideration, and consistency are key elements within the code hence the requirement that, in unit affairs, the worker must:

- be punctual;
- honour arrangements;
- be prepared;
- be appropriately dressed for the activity in which he/she is engaged
- (physical /social /formal/informal/representative);
- observe personal hygiene standards;
- be certain that his/her language will never cause embarrassment nor offence;
- be aware of the implications of body language;
- be careful to ensure that his/her usage of legal drugs, (alcohol, nicotine, medication etc) does not become a vehicle by which the young person is introduced to these substances.



## **ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE**

### **3. The Young Person - Me Myself & I**

In order to achieve a mutually respectful and trusting relationship, the worker will ensure that each young person is shown the same fairness, trust and attention as others, irrespective of their personal circumstances. Thus the worker must:

- show interest in and enjoy the company of young people;
- be tolerant of different views, values and beliefs;
- be an enabler in the support of the emotional, spiritual and physical development of young people;
- work towards the independence and interdependence of young people. Be aware of the boundaries between a professional relationship and a personal friendship;
- be clear about legal confidentiality in relation to all illegal acts;
- be aware that although touching is often a very important way of offering support, comfort, and reassurance, it is also open to misperception and misinterpretation - touch should be used with the greatest care and consideration;
- be aware that aggressive physical contact between workers and young persons is illegal;
- be aware that minimal reasonable force may be used, only as a last resort, and only as a means of restraint;
- always remember that the use, or promotion, of illegal substances is a criminal offence and should be treated accordingly;
- always remember that a person under the age of 17 years cannot, in law, give consent to sexual activity;

- be conscious that any physical relationship entered into by the worker should reflect the ethos and professional standards of the unit;
- be prepared to articulate for young people to ensure that their rights are recognised;
- be respectful of the young person's trust.

## ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE

### 4. Colleagues - Me Myself & I

Consistency leads to effective understanding, harmony, discipline and positive reinforcement of the aims and objectives of the youth service and this consistency must be apparent in interpersonal relationships with both colleagues and young people. Workers must show equal understanding and consideration towards their colleagues as well as to their young people. Workers must:

- remain on duty for the duration of the session;
- be always mindful that youth work is essentially team work;
- be available for training to improve skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding;
- ensure that training requirements are recognised and receive the necessary attention;
- encourage team training at unit level;
- discuss and inculcate the annual training booklet produced by the education and library board youth service;
- participate in the evaluation of their work within the framework established by the education and library board youth service;
- conduct matters in a non-discriminatory way in line with the current equal opportunities policy;
- underpin the professionalism of the service by making returns and keeping records as required by the funding bodies;
- maintain awareness of the centrality of the education and library board and its officers in the maintenance of a cohesive unit.

# ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE

## 5. The Unit - Me Myself I

The environment in which youth work is delivered should reflect the value which is placed on the users, i.e. the young people. The physical size and layout of the premises is not the consideration. Workers have responsibility for creating an environment which is attractive and inviting to young people, one in which they can feel safe and valued. The worker can help to achieve this by making best use of his/her own resources and the physical resources available. In addition, the worker will:

- contribute both directly and indirectly to a safe, clean and welcoming club environment;
- expect and encourage the membership to respect a smoke free environment - with a designated smoking area, if necessary;
- greet members arriving at the club and follow procedures for welcoming new members, visitors etc;
- ensure that everyone connected with the unit is involved in the promotion of hygiene, cleanliness and healthy living;
- update information on notice boards;
- ensure equipment in use is safe and in good condition at all times;
- ensure that staffing ratios in operation are appropriate to the activities under supervision;
- participate in the implementation of the core curriculum policy;
- identify the needs of local young people within the context of the curriculum;
- identify target groups and develop an appropriate delivery style in order to initiate an action plan which will deliver the requirements of the curriculum in relation to the targeted group;

- create opportunities so that young people can experience both a national and international dimension to their lives;
- keep abreast of trends and changes in the lifestyle and culture of young people;
- assess the current and future needs of young people;
- identify the future skills requirements of the unit;
- be aware of the role and importance of funders for the unit;
- support publicly and implement the policies of the unit;
- ensure that a designated person is on hand and available to administer first aid in an emergency.

# ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE

## 6. Participation and Inter-Agency Contact - Me Myself and Others

A positive and professional relationship with bodies as diverse as management committees, local trade associations, caring agencies etc and the press are all reflective of good practice and are therefore central to any code of practice for any group of people. Thus the worker will:

- ensure a free regular exchange of information to the management or advisory committee covering all aspects of the unit;
- encourage young people to participate in the advisory/management committee;
- prepare both young people and adults for the task of management by seeking out training opportunities they may wish to follow;
- establish appropriate support mechanisms for committee members;
- ensure a suitably prepared venue is available for meetings - one which reflects the importance of the occasion;
- ensure an accurate account of the meeting is recorded and suitable minutes are produced within one week of the meeting for distribution to committee members and relevant board officers;
- provide an up-to-date financial report showing income, expenditure and current balance for each meeting;
- produce an annual programme after consultation with colleagues, young people and management committee;
- effectively and regularly advertise the unit's programme through appropriate agencies and within the local community;
- nurture relationships with local voluntary agencies;

- foster working relationships with local journalists but be aware that when a press statement is sought from a worker, consultation with the chairman of the management committee (voluntary organisations), or the education and library board press and information officer should take place;
- recognise the importance of serving on agreed inter agency groupings as an ambassador of the unit and youth service.

# ELB YOUTH SERVICE - CODE OF PRACTICE

## 7. Intimidation - Me Myself & I

Bluntly - intimidation is harmful to young people! It is harmful socially, spiritually, psychologically, educationally, economically and, in some instances, physically. Intimidation not only takes the form that young people have become so, regrettably, accustomed to in this country i.e. sectarianism - but can also manifest itself more universally as bullying. Since workers will wish to conduct their working practice in a manner which reflects concern for young people, it is clear that the unit must not adopt a neutral stance on this matter.

Issues may not be 'ducked' nor passively accepted. The young person and therefore the worker must be fully aware of both sides of an argument and be quick to recognise the relevant negative effects of political, religious or personal prejudice on young people. In this regard workers:

- must empathise with young people who are victims;
- will avoid careless and/or abusive use of sectarian language, personal presentation or behaviour;
- must not escalate, encourage or condone matters by negative association;
- will positively and actively broaden young peoples political horizons;
- will encourage personal development through political education;
- will recognise conflict as an opportunity to address a problem;
- must challenge already aggressive or heated situations using professional awareness and worker intervention;
- must "anticipate" and so "nip in the bud" to avoid escalation;
- should intervene or challenge in a positive manner.



EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE

STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

**RECORDING OF ALLEGATIONS / SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

**This form should be completed on the basis of information available and  
*should not be delayed because of incomplete information***

Name: _____ Centre: _____	
Position: _____	Date: _____
Name of child involved: _____	D.O.B _____
Home address: _____ _____	
Post Code: _____	Tel no. _____
Parent(s) / Guardian(s) name(s): _____	
Address (if different from above): _____ _____	
Post Code: _____	Tel No: _____

Who is expressing concern: \_\_\_\_\_

If not the person writing the report, when was the information passed to you and how:

_____
_____
_____
_____

What has prompted concerns (including dates and times) of any specific incidents:

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Please describe signs of possible abuse including physical/behavioural/indirect:

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Was the child spoken to: YES ☐ NO ☐

If so, by whom:\_\_\_\_\_ Time / Date:\_\_\_\_\_

What was said?

Was parent contacted:

YES

☐

NO

☐

If so, by whom: \_\_\_\_\_ Time / Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Action taken:**

Referred by telephone / in person to: \_\_\_\_\_

on: \_\_\_\_\_

Written referral made to:

Social Services

☐

ELB designated officer

☐

Signature of person making referral: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form should be posted in an envelope marked '**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**' to social services. A similarly labelled copy should also be sent to the Education and Library Board Youth Officer, Child Protection, at ELB Headquarters.

EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE

**CONFIRMATION OF NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECTED / ADMITTED / KNOWN ABUSE OF A CHILD/REN IN A LOCATION OTHER THAN A YOUTH SERVICE LOCATION TO SOCIAL SERVICES**

**This form should be completed on the basis of information readily available and *not be delayed because of incomplete information.***

Child's name _____ D.O.B _____
Address _____
_____ Post Code _____
Where incident occurred: _____
Name of designated person in that location: _____
Address: _____
_____
Tel No: _____

Details of concerns / disclosure (giving outline of incident and dates if possible):
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Action taken:**

Referred by telephone / in person to: \_\_\_\_\_

on: \_\_\_\_\_

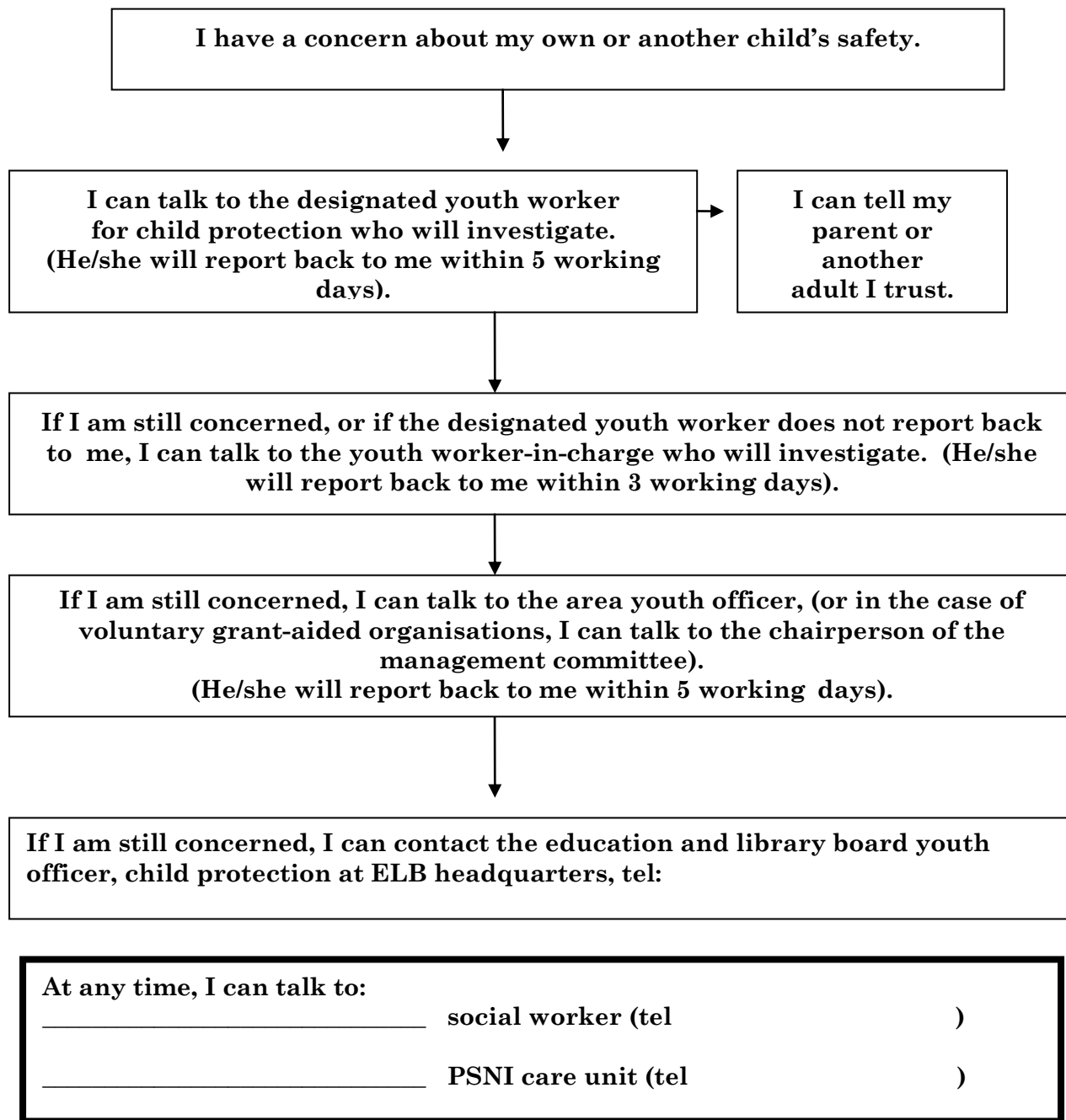
Written referral made to:      Social Services      ☐

ELB designated officer      ☐

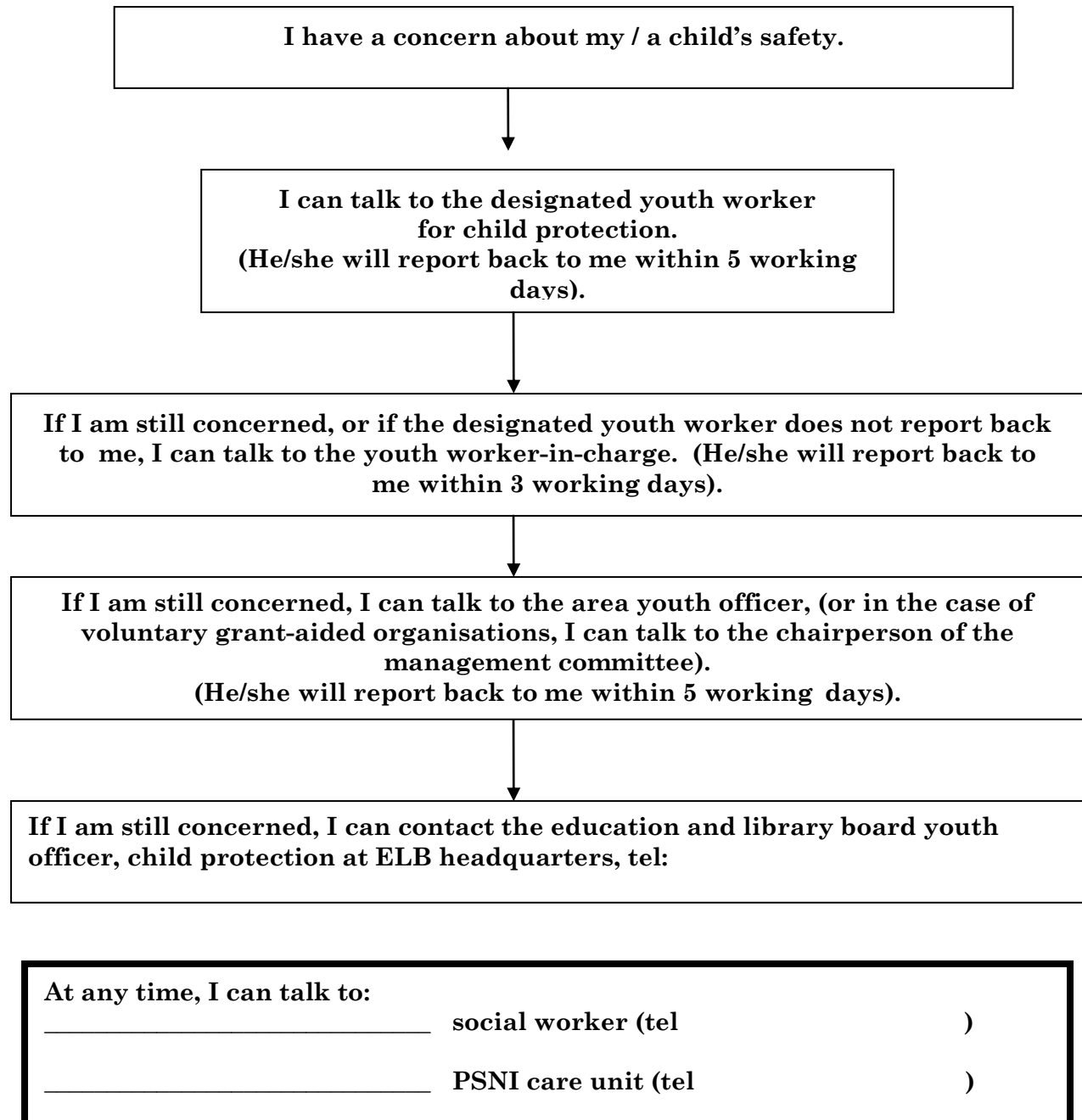
Signature of person making referral: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR A YOUNG PERSON CONCERNED ABOUT HIS/HER OWN OR ANOTHER CHILD'S / YOUNG PERSON'S SAFETY**



**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR PARENT(S) CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR (OR ANOTHER) CHILD'S SAFETY**



**APPENDIX 13**

**CONTACTS AND PHONE NUMBERS OF LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES ETC.**



## **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED YOUTH WORKER FOR CHILD PROTECTION**

In carrying out any components of the role set out below, the designated youth worker for child protection should be guided by two important principles. First, following the Children (NI) Order 1995, the principle that the welfare of the child should be paramount and second, the principle that confidentiality should be respected as far as possible, without compromising the first principle.

### **The purpose of the role of the designated youth worker is:**

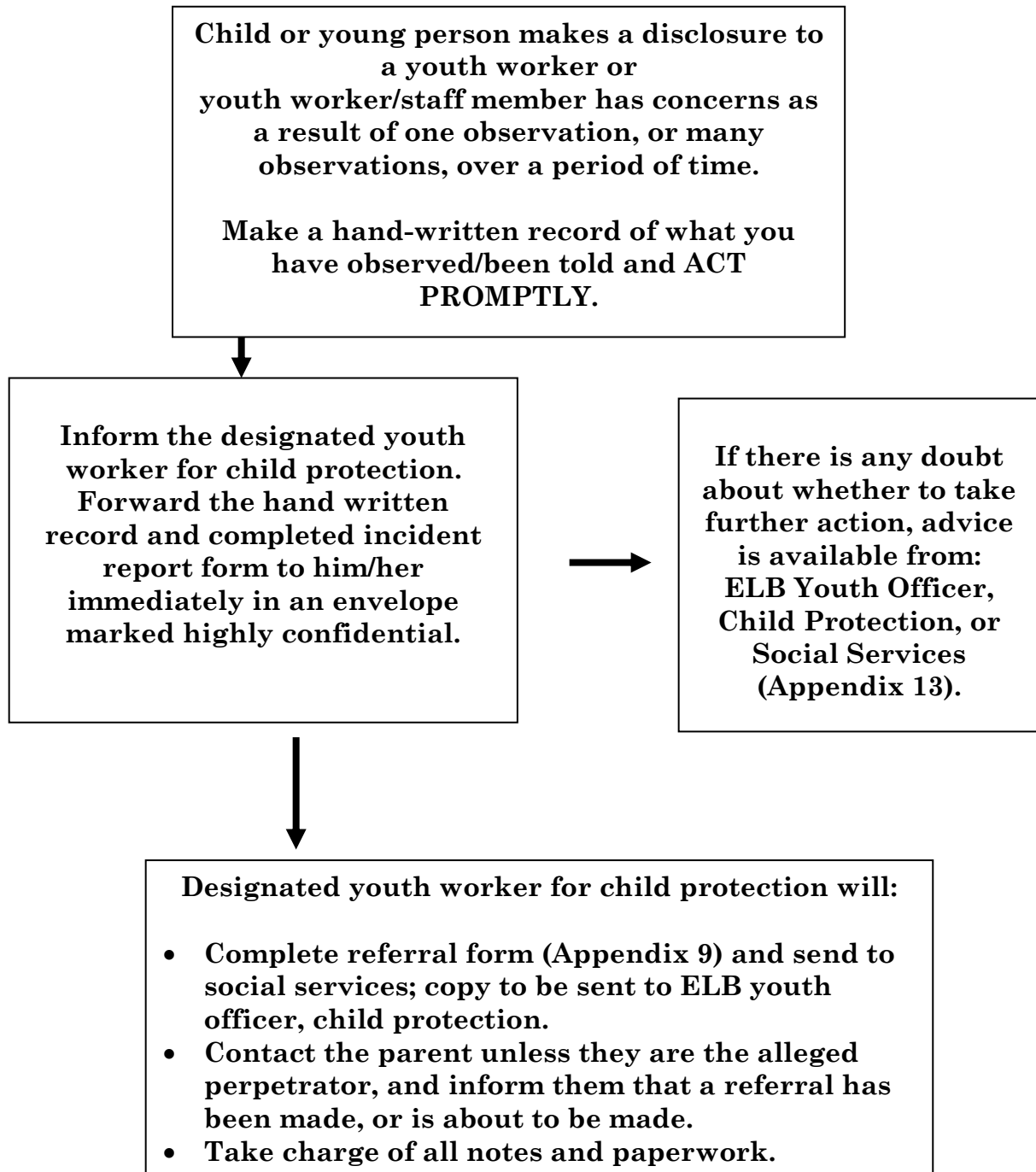
- to be fully conversant with the pastoral care in the youth service – child protection document;
- to co-ordinate action on child abuse within the youth organisation, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection;
- to refer the individual cases of suspected abuse to the relevant social work team, informing the youth officer for child protection;
- to liaise with social services and other agencies on individual cases and on general issues relating to child protection;
- to have responsibility for organising training on all aspects of child protection within the youth organisation;
- to act as a youth centre-based resource on child protection issues for other staff.

### **In greater detail, this involves:**

- ensuring that all staff, youth work (paid and voluntary), ancillary and clerical know about and have access to copies of “Pastoral Care in the Youth Service – Child Protection” document and the youth club-specific guidelines and procedures for child protection;
- ensuring that all cases of suspected abuse are reported according to procedures;
- attending designated youth worker for child protection training organised by the (? ELB) to ensure that:
  - he/she is aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse which might indicate or support suspicion of abuse;

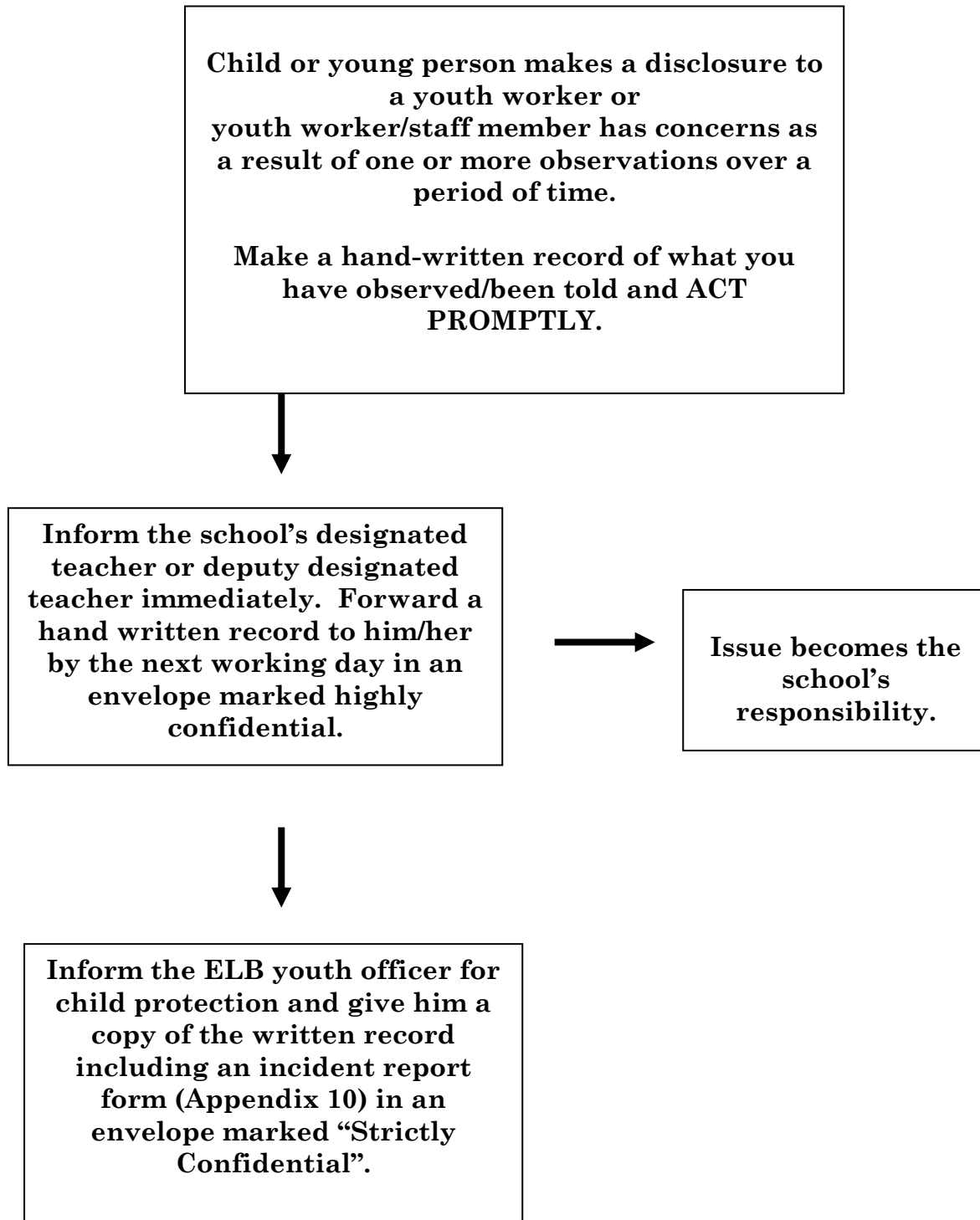
- he/she can advise all staff in cases of uncertainty or difficulty;
- to have responsibility to ensure that all staff in the youth club are trained in child protection;
- keeping the area youth officer informed of general child protection issues in the youth organisation;
- being aware of other agencies involved with child protection and to liaise with them;
- ensuring that, where appropriate, the youth club is represented at child protection case conferences and failing that, a report is submitted to the case conference from the youth club;
- ensuring, together with the area youth officer, that decisions made at a child protection conference which involve youth club staff are carried out as agreed at the conference;
- offering informed advice and guidance to youth workers unfamiliar with child protection conference procedures and with the type of information required by the conference;
- being a key professional support to staff members to whom young people have disclosed abuse;
- advising the area youth officer and the staff in his/her youth club on child protection input to the youth group's curriculum;
- monitoring and evaluate the effectiveness of child protection work carried out in the youth club.

**PROCEDURE WHEN A YOUTH SERVICE STAFF MEMBER HAS A CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE OF A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON**



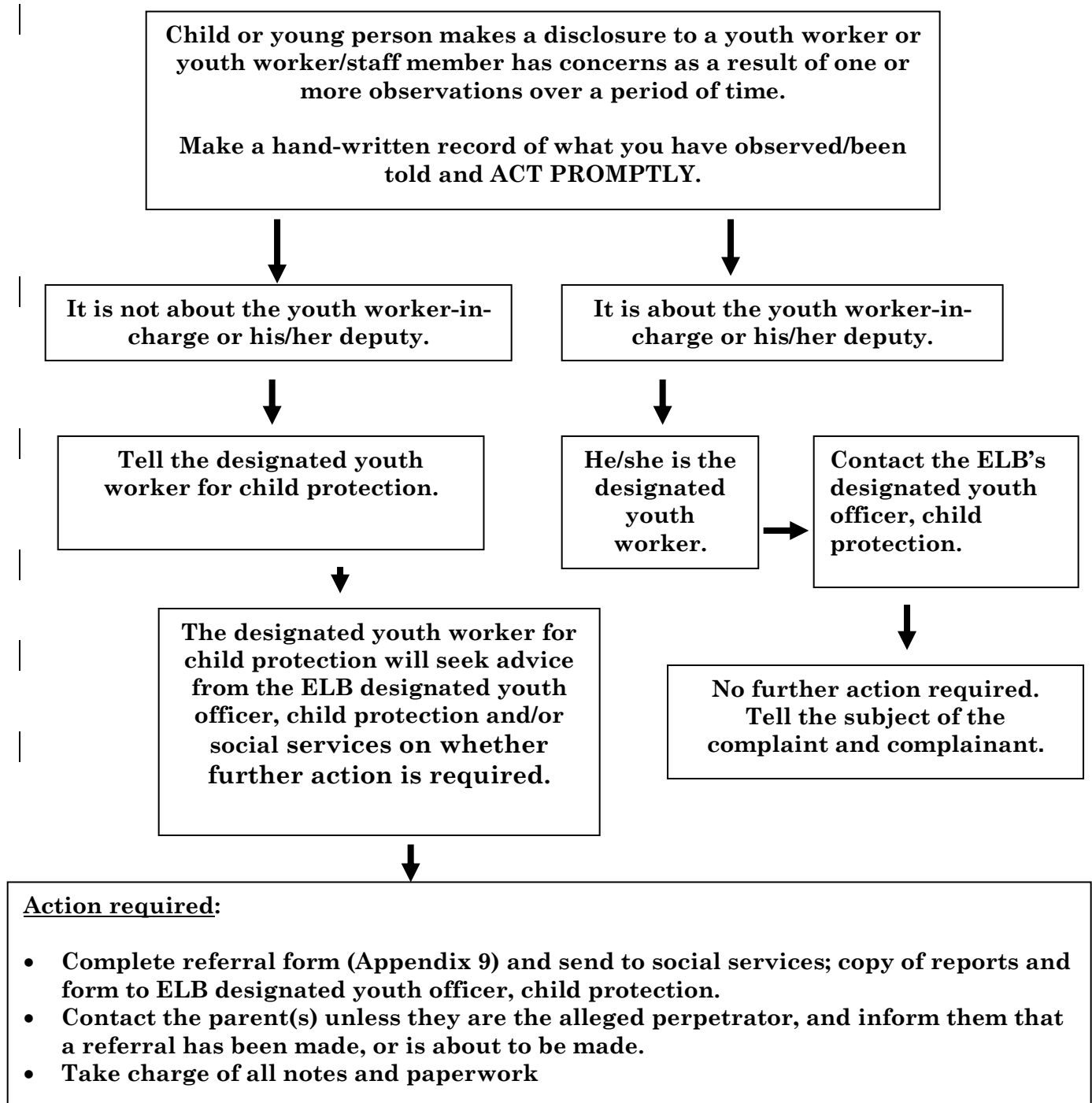
## APPENDIX 15.1

### **PROCEDURE WHEN A YOUTH WORKER HAS A CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE OF A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IN A SCHOOL IN WHICH HE/SHE IS WORKING**

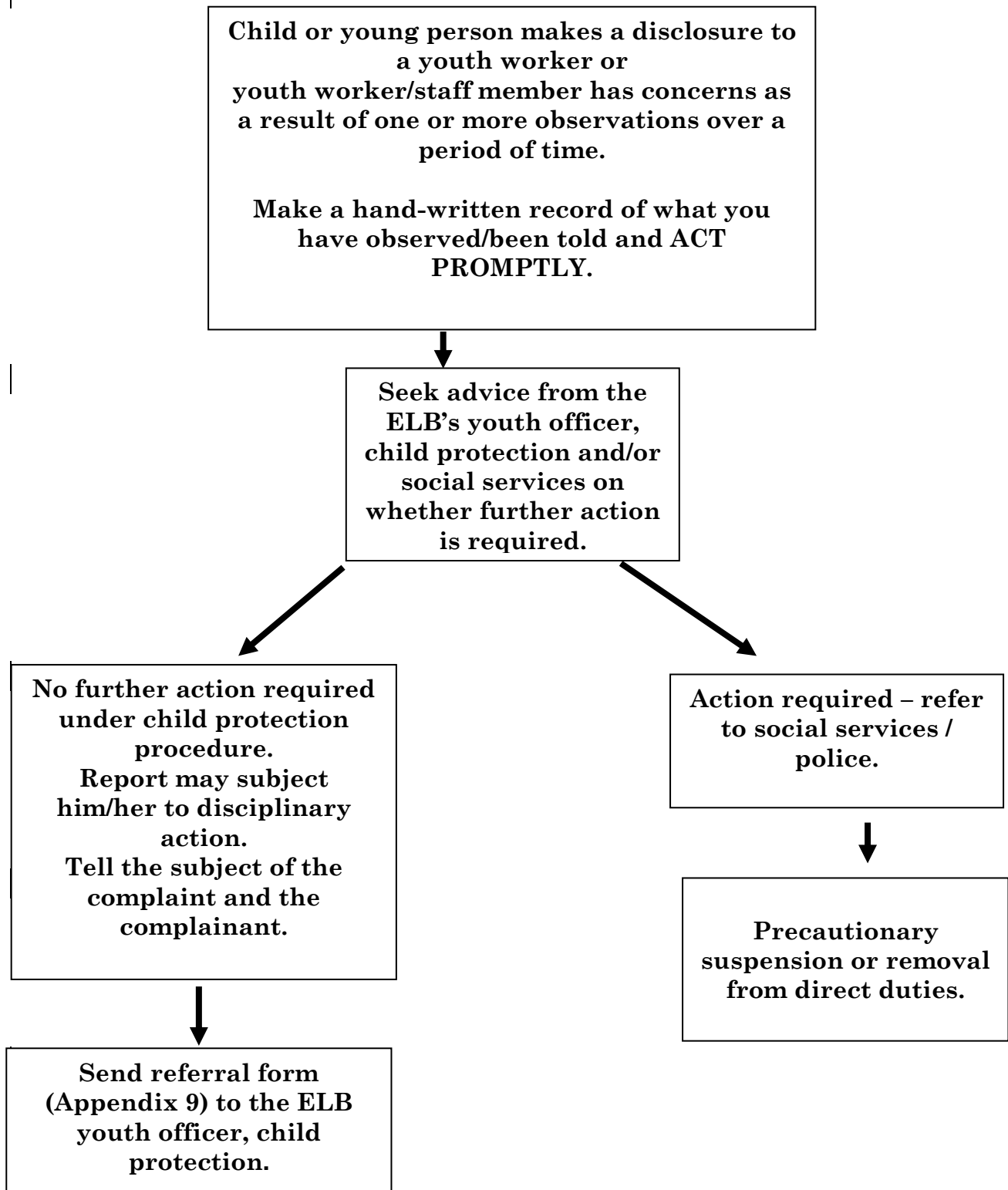


## APPENDIX 15.2

### **PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A YOUTH WORKER (EXCEPT THE DESIGNATED YOUTH WORKER FOR CHILD PROTECTION - SEE APPENDIX 15.3)**



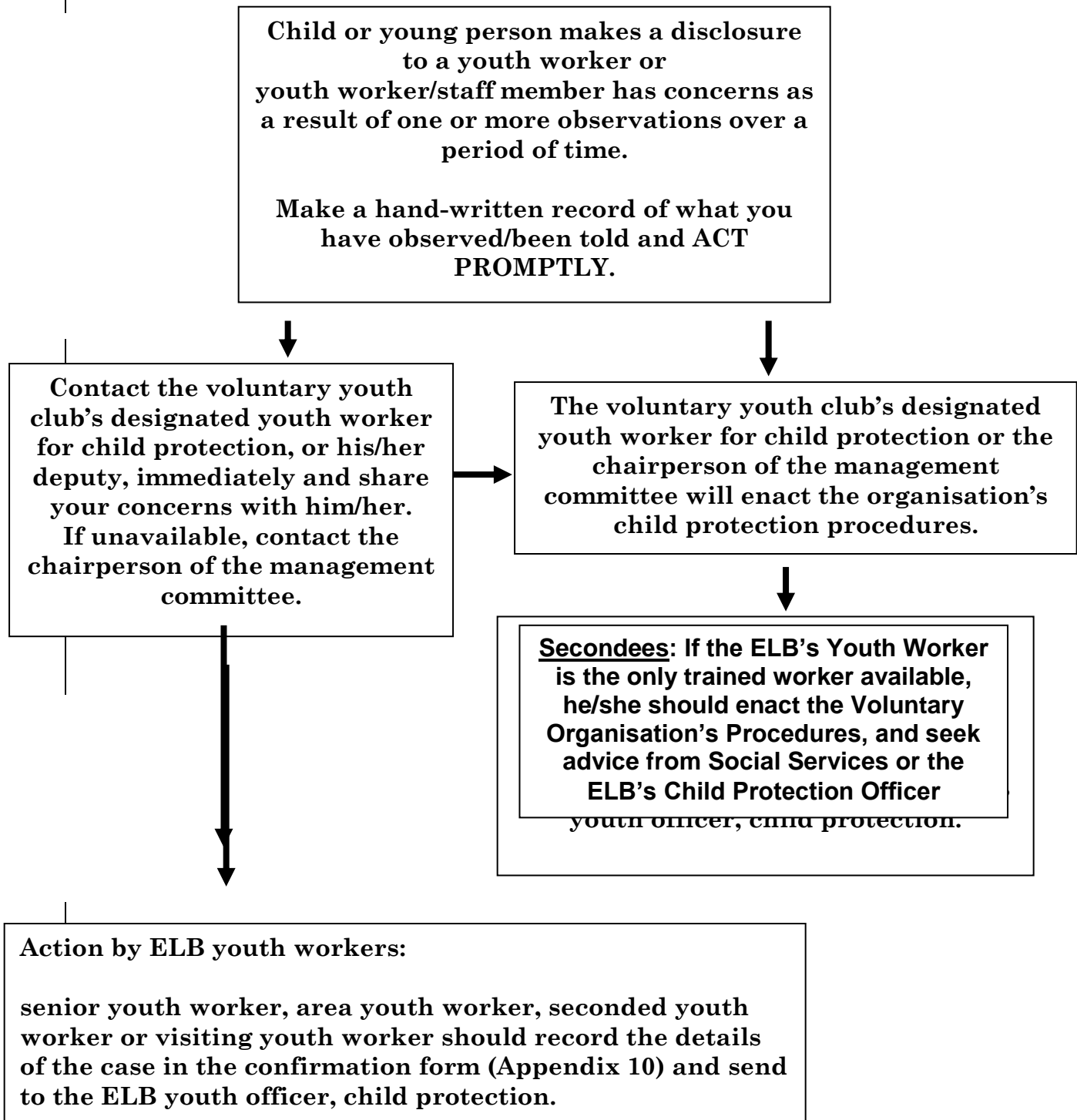
**PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT IS MADE ABOUT THE DESIGNATED YOUTH WORKER FOR CHILD PROTECTION**



#### APPENDIX 15.4

### **PROCEDURES FOR BOARD YOUTH WORKERS WORKING IN A VOLUNTARY YOUTH CLUB**

(This includes senior youth workers, area youth workers, youth workers seconded to voluntary youth clubs or youth workers doing occasional work in them).



## APPENDIX 15.5

### **PROCEDURES FOR YOUTH WORKERS IN VOLUNTARY FULL-TIME YOUTH CLUBS GRANT-AIDED BY THE EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**Child or young person makes a disclosure to a youth worker or youth worker/staff member has concerns as a result of one or more observations over a period of time.**

**Make a hand-written record of what you have observed/been told and ACT PROMPTLY.**



**Contact the voluntary youth club's designated youth worker for child protection or his/her deputy immediately and share your concerns with him/her. If unavailable, contact the chairperson of the management committee.**



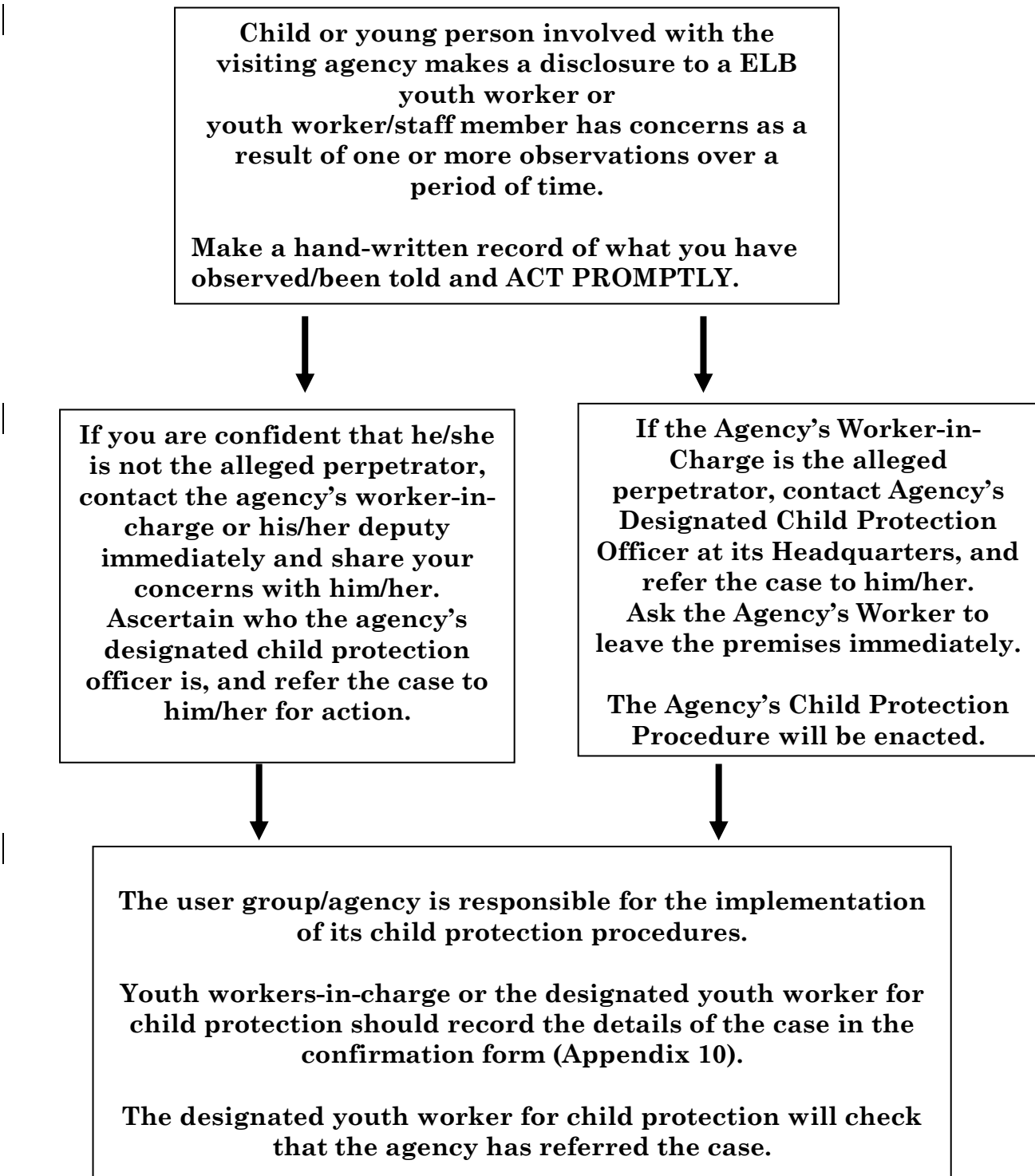
**The voluntary youth club's designated youth worker for child protection will:**

- **ensure the staff member making the report has recorded details;**
- **contact PSNI or social services;**
- **contact the parent(s), unless the parent(s) are the alleged perpetrator, and inform them that a referral has been made, or is about to be made;**
- **notify chairperson of management committee that an allegation has been made and what action has been taken (it is important that as few people as absolutely possible know about the details of the case);**
- **maintain records, complete the referral form and send to social services.**



## APPENDIX 15.6

### **PROCEDURES FOR EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD WORKERS IN WHOSE PREMISES ANOTHER AGENCY IS ACCOMMODATED (E.G. PRINCE'S TRUST VOLUNTEERS, ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS)**



## APPENDIX 15.7

### **PROCEDURES FOR YOUTH WORKERS IN CONTROLLED PART-TIME YOUTH CLUBS**

**Youth worker/staff member has concerns as a result of one or more observations over a period of time.**

**Make a hand-written record of what you have observed/been told and ACT PROMPTLY.**



**Is the club based in and line-managed by a school?**



**YES**

**Follow procedures in Appendix 15.1.**



**NO**



- **report to youth worker-in-charge;**
- **he/she will contact the ELB's designated youth officer, who will take charge of the case;**
- **if unavailable, contact the designated youth worker for child protection in the nearest full-time youth centre;**
- **if also unavailable, contact the ELB's designated officer for child protection or social services (Appendix 13) for advice on how to proceed;**
- **record the details of the case on the referral form (Appendix 9);**
- **unless the parent(s) are the alleged perpetrator, contact them and inform them that a referral has been made, or is about to be made;**
- **give recordings to the area youth officer at the earliest opportunity. He/she will ensure that the ELB's designated youth officer, child protection, receives the recordings, and will liaise with social services and/or PSNI regarding the case.**

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**USING IMAGES OF CHILDREN – YOUTH SERVICE**

To \_\_\_\_\_ Name of parent or guardian

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Child

Home address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The education and library board youth service / \_\_\_\_\_ youth club would like to take photographs/make a video of your child/ren for promotional purposes. These images may appear in the local press, our printed publications, on video, on our website or in all these media forms. To comply with data protection legislation and our child protection policy, we need your permission before we take any image of your child/ren. Please answer the questions below, sign and date the form and return it to  
(designated youth worker for child protection/ youth officer) at the address below.

**Conditions of Use**

We will not include details or full names (first name and surname) of any child in an image without good reason. For example, we may include full name of a competition prize winner if we have their consent.

We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.

We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.

**To the parent/guardian**

(Please circle your answer)

- |    |  |                 |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | May we use your child's image in our printed promotional publications? | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 2. | May we use your child's image in the local press?                      | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 3. | May we use your child's image on our website?                          | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 4. | May we record your child's image on our promotional videos?            | <b>Yes / No</b> |

I have read the conditions of use and consent to my child's image being used.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your name in block capitals \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 17**

**EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD YOUTH SERVICE**

**USING IMAGES OF CHILDREN – SCHOOL GROUPS (EG XL)**

To \_\_\_\_\_ Name of parent or guardian

Ref \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Child

Home address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The education and library board would like to take photographs/make a video of children for promotional purposes. These images may appear in the local press, our printed publications, on video, on our website or in all these media forms. To comply with data protection legislation and our child protection policy we need parental permission before we take any image of these children. If photographs or recordings of school groups are organised and individual children cannot be identified, head teachers are asked to ensure that all parents of children concerned give their consent for these images to be taken and used as detailed below. Please answer the question below, sign and date the form and return it to (principal) at the address below.

**Conditions of Use**

- we will not include details or full names (first name and surname) of any child in an image without good reason. For example, we may include the full name of a competition prize winner if we have their consent;
- we will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers;
- we will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately;
- We may use group or class images with very general labels such as 'Community Project group'.

**I have checked which parents are happy for their children's images to be used in local press, printed promotional publications, on the website or on promotional videos.**

Please circle your answer

**Yes / No**

I have read the conditions of use and consent to my child's image being used.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name in Block Capitals \_\_\_\_\_