



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

Thinking Futures is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, safety and well-being of all children and young people who access our services.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy sets out the principles and arrangements we follow to protect children and young people from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm. It applies across our work with children and young people, including online guidance, coaching, education and developmental activities, as well as face-to-face clubs, camps, residentials and other activities.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that children and young people have the right to feel safe, respected, listened to and supported.

Our safeguarding practice is informed by the legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding procedures applicable in England and Wales, as set out within this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all children and young people under the age of 18 who engage with Thinking Futures services, whether activities take place online, face-to-face, at a Thinking Futures activity, at a hired or third-party venue, or as part of a club, camp or residential programme.

The policy applies to anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures who may have contact with children or young people, including employees, self-employed practitioners, contractors, volunteers and other adults involved in the delivery of our activities.

Everyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures is expected to understand and follow this policy, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, remain alert to safeguarding concerns and act promptly where there is a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or young person.

Where activities are delivered through Kidz Like Us, Kidz Like Us operates as a programme of Thinking Futures and is therefore covered by this policy.

Policy statement

Thinking Futures believes that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is a shared responsibility. The welfare and best interests of the child are central to our decision-making and practice.

We are committed to creating environments in which children and young people feel safe, respected, valued and able to be themselves. We will take reasonable steps to prevent harm, remain alert to concerns and respond appropriately where we have reason to believe that a child or young person may be at risk.

We are committed to inclusive and anti-discriminatory safeguarding practice. Every child and young person is entitled to the same fundamental right to protection from harm, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other aspect of their identity or circumstances.

We recognise that some children and young people may experience additional barriers to being heard, understood or protected. This may include children with disabilities, neurodivergent children and young people, those with additional learning or communication needs, those experiencing social, emotional or mental health difficulties, and those whose previous experiences or circumstances may increase their vulnerability.

We recognise that a child's communication, behaviour or presentation may be a means of communicating distress or an unmet need. A safeguarding concern will not be dismissed or attributed solely to a child's disability, diagnosis, neurodivergence, communication style or behaviour.



We will therefore seek to:

- listen to children and young people and take their views, wishes and feelings seriously;
- communicate in ways that are accessible and appropriate to the individual;
- make reasonable adjustments where these enable a child or young person to communicate, participate or seek help;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries and safe working practices;
- recognise, respond to, record and appropriately report safeguarding concerns;
- share safeguarding information appropriately where this is necessary to protect a child;
- work with parents, carers and relevant professionals where appropriate; and
- take immediate action where there is reason to believe that a child or young person is in immediate danger.

Safeguarding is integral to the way Thinking Futures operates and is not limited to responding when harm has already occurred. We aim to create safe, inclusive and supportive environments in which risks are considered, children and young people are listened to, and concerns can be raised and responded to appropriately.



4. Legislative and Safeguarding Framework

Thinking Futures operates in accordance with the safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and procedures relevant to the country in which services are being provided.

As Thinking Futures provides services both online and face-to-face, safeguarding arrangements will take account of the location of the child or young person and the nature of the activity being delivered.

4.1 Safeguarding Framework: Wales

For activities delivered in Wales, including Kidz Like Us clubs and camps, Thinking Futures works with regard to the safeguarding framework established by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, particularly Part 7 (Safeguarding).

Our safeguarding practice is also informed by:

- the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, where applicable;
- Working Together to Safeguard People, including the statutory guidance relating to children at risk;
- the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and relevant All Wales Practice Guides;
- the Welsh Government Code of Safeguarding Practice; and
- other relevant Welsh Government safeguarding guidance.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a child at risk as a child who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm; and
- has needs for care and support.

Although the statutory duty to report under section 130 of the Act applies to the relevant partners specified within the legislation, Thinking Futures recognises its responsibility as a provider working with children to identify and appropriately report safeguarding concerns.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be at risk, Thinking Futures will act in accordance with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and appropriate local safeguarding arrangements.

In applying the Welsh safeguarding framework, we will:

- place the safety and well-being of the child at the centre of safeguarding decisions;
- listen to and take account of the child's views, wishes and feelings;
- make reasonable adjustments to enable children with different communication, developmental or additional needs to participate and communicate concerns;
- recognise that safeguarding concerns may arise through face-to-face or online contact;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality while recognising that information may need to be shared to protect a child;
- record safeguarding concerns accurately and promptly;
- report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding authority where required; and
- contact the police or emergency services where a child is believed to be in immediate danger.

4.2 Safeguarding Framework: England

Where Thinking Futures provides services to children in England, safeguarding practice will be informed by:

- the Children Act 1989;
- the Children Act 2004;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; and
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where relevant to the nature of the service being provided.

For safeguarding purposes, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Thinking Futures recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes providing help and support as soon as problems emerge, protecting children from maltreatment whether inside or outside the home, including online, preventing impairment of children's physical and mental health or development, and ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care.

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child in England, Thinking Futures will follow the appropriate safeguarding and referral arrangements for the local authority area in which the child is located.

Those working with children through Thinking Futures must:

- remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm;
- listen to and take seriously the views, wishes and experiences of children;
- recognise that children may communicate concerns through behaviour or non-verbal means as well as through direct disclosure;
- respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and disclosures;
- make an accurate and timely record;
- share relevant information where necessary to safeguard a child;
- report concerns through the appropriate safeguarding route; and
- contact emergency services where a child is believed to be in immediate danger.

These principles apply to both face-to-face and online work with children and young people.

4.3 Application of Safeguarding Guidance

Thinking Futures recognises that not all statutory guidance referenced within this policy applies directly to every service it provides.

For example, Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory guidance for schools and colleges in England. Thinking Futures is not a school or college; however, relevant principles within the guidance are used to inform good safeguarding practice where appropriate.

Similarly, where Thinking Futures provides activities in Wales that are not required to be registered as childcare provision, we will nevertheless follow the safeguarding principles established by Welsh Government for individuals, groups and organisations providing activities and services for children.

Where legislation, statutory guidance or safeguarding procedures are amended, the most current applicable requirements will take precedence over references to earlier versions contained within this policy.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures who has contact with children and young people has a responsibility to promote their welfare, remain alert to possible safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action where a concern arises.

No individual is expected to investigate suspected abuse or determine whether abuse has occurred. Their responsibility is to recognise, respond, record and report concerns in accordance with this policy.

5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Thinking Futures has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall responsibility for coordinating safeguarding arrangements across its services.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Jones

The DSL is responsible for:

- maintaining an appropriate understanding of current safeguarding legislation, guidance and procedures relevant to Thinking Futures' activities;
- ensuring safeguarding arrangements are appropriate for the services being provided;
- receiving and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- determining the appropriate safeguarding reporting or referral route;
- making or supporting referrals to Children's Services, the police or other appropriate safeguarding authorities;

- maintaining accurate, confidential and secure safeguarding records;
- ensuring safeguarding information is shared appropriately and only where necessary;
- ensuring anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures understands their safeguarding responsibilities;
- ensuring safeguarding considerations are incorporated into activity planning and risk assessment;
- reviewing safeguarding arrangements following significant incidents or concerns; and
- ensuring this policy and associated procedures are reviewed and updated appropriately.
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The DSL is responsible for coordinating the safeguarding response but does not investigate allegations or suspected abuse. Investigation and statutory assessment are the responsibility of the appropriate safeguarding agencies.

5.2 Responsibilities of Those Working with Children and Young People

Anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures must:

- read, understand and follow this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and any associated safeguarding procedures relevant to their role;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people;
- remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm;
- listen to children and young people and take concerns seriously;
- recognise that a child may communicate distress or a safeguarding concern through behaviour, changes in presentation, non-verbal communication or indirect disclosure;
- respond appropriately if a child makes a disclosure;
- record safeguarding concerns factually, accurately and promptly;
- report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Person without unnecessary delay;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality and not discuss safeguarding information with people who do not need to know;
- cooperate appropriately with safeguarding processes; and
- take immediate action where they believe a child is in immediate danger.

A person who has a safeguarding concern must not delay reporting because they are uncertain whether the concern meets a particular threshold. The Designated Safeguarding Person and, where necessary, the appropriate safeguarding authority will determine what further action is required.

5.3 Responsibility to Act

Safeguarding concerns must never be ignored on the assumption that another person will deal with them.

Where a person believes that a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical assistance, they should contact the emergency services by calling 999. The Designated Safeguarding Person should then be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where a person believes that appropriate action has not been taken following a safeguarding concern, they have a responsibility to raise the concern again and, where necessary, report it directly to the appropriate safeguarding authority.

5.4 Concerns About the Designated Safeguarding Person or Another Adult

Where a safeguarding concern or allegation relates to the Designated Safeguarding Person, the concern must not be reported solely to that individual.

The person receiving or identifying the concern should follow the relevant external safeguarding procedure and seek advice or report the matter directly to the appropriate local authority safeguarding service, police or other relevant authority.

Where a concern relates to another person working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures, it must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Person, unless doing so would create a conflict of interest or risk compromising the safeguarding response.

Concerns or allegations about an adult who works with children will be managed in accordance with the relevant national and local safeguarding procedures, including the procedures relating to allegations or concerns about practitioners and those in positions of trust.

No person will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

5.5 Parents and Carers

Thinking Futures seeks to work openly and constructively with parents and carers to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people.

Parents and carers are asked to:

- provide accurate and current contact and emergency information;
- provide relevant information about medical, communication, additional support or safeguarding needs where this is necessary for safe participation;
- inform Thinking Futures of relevant changes that may affect a child's safety or well-being;
- follow arrangements for arrival, collection and authorised collection where applicable; and
- raise concerns about the safety or welfare of a child promptly.

Where a safeguarding concern arises, Thinking Futures will normally seek to work with and inform the child's parent or carer. However, information may be shared with safeguarding authorities without first informing or obtaining consent from a parent or carer where this is necessary to protect a child, where seeking consent could increase risk, or where doing so could interfere with a safeguarding or criminal investigation.

Section 6: Safer Recruitment, Selection and Suitability.

Thinking Futures is committed to ensuring that anyone engaged to work with children and young people is suitable to do so.

Safer recruitment and suitability procedures will be proportionate to the role, the nature and frequency of contact with children, and the level of responsibility involved.

These requirements apply, where relevant, to employees, self-employed practitioners, contractors, volunteers and other individuals engaged by Thinking Futures to work directly with children and young people.

6.1 Pre-Engagement Checks

Before an individual is permitted to undertake a role involving direct contact with children and young people, Thinking Futures will undertake appropriate suitability checks. Depending upon the nature of the role, these may include:

- verification of identity;
- confirmation of relevant qualifications, experience or professional registration where required;
- appropriate references;



6.1 Pre-Engagement Checks

Before an individual is permitted to undertake a role involving direct contact with children and young people, Thinking Futures will undertake appropriate suitability checks. Depending upon the nature of the role, these may include:

- verification of identity;
- confirmation of relevant qualifications, experience or professional registration where required;
- appropriate references;
- confirmation of the individual's right to work in the UK where applicable;
- an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where the role is eligible;
- a barred list check where legally required and permitted;
- consideration of relevant employment or activity history;
- clarification of any information arising through the checking process; and
- confirmation that the individual understands and agrees to comply with Thinking Futures' safeguarding expectations and professional standards.

No individual will undertake work for which a particular safeguarding or suitability check is legally required until the appropriate requirements have been satisfied.

6.2 Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

Thinking Futures will obtain the appropriate level of DBS check for roles that are eligible for such checks.

The level of check required will be determined by the activities undertaken rather than solely by the individual's job title.

Where a role meets the legal definition of regulated activity with children, the appropriate enhanced DBS check, including a check of the children's barred list where permitted and required, will be obtained.

DBS information will be handled confidentially and in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

A criminal record or other information disclosed through a DBS check will not automatically prevent an individual from being engaged. Any information identified will be considered appropriately in relation to the nature of the role, safeguarding responsibilities, circumstances and potential risk to children and young people.

For Kidz Like Us clubs, camps and other face-to-face activities, any adult engaged by Thinking Futures to have regular direct responsibility for, supervise or work directly with children and young people must have the appropriate DBS clearance for their role before undertaking that responsibility.

Visitors, guest speakers and other adults who have not undergone the safeguarding checks required for those engaged to work directly with children must not be given unsupervised responsibility for children or young people. Appropriate supervision and safeguarding arrangements will be maintained throughout their involvement.

6.3 Ongoing Suitability

Safeguarding suitability is an ongoing responsibility and is not established solely through recruitment checks.

Anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures must inform the appropriate person if a change in their circumstances may affect their suitability to work with children or their ability to undertake their role safely.

Thinking Futures reserves the right to review an individual's suitability and take appropriate action where safeguarding information or concerns arise during their engagement.

6.4 Safeguarding Induction

Before working directly with children and young people, individuals will receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role.

This will include, as relevant:

- this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- the identity and contact arrangements for the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- how to recognise and report a safeguarding concern;
- what to do if a child makes a disclosure;
- professional boundaries and expected standards of conduct;
- confidentiality and information sharing;
- arrangements for raising concerns about another adult, including the DSL;
- emergency safeguarding procedures; and
- any additional safeguarding arrangements specific to the activity, venue or group.

Individuals must know how to access safeguarding procedures while undertaking activities and must raise any questions or concerns about their safeguarding responsibilities before working independently with children.

6.5 Visitors and Other Adults

Visitors, parents, carers, venue staff and other adults who are not engaged by Thinking Futures will not be treated as having undergone Thinking Futures' safer recruitment procedures.

Where such individuals are present during activities involving children, appropriate arrangements will be made to manage their access to children and ensure that they are not given unsupervised responsibility for participants unless appropriate safeguarding arrangements have been established.

Any safeguarding concern arising in relation to a visitor or other adult will be reported and managed in accordance with this policy.



7. Safeguarding Training and Awareness

Thinking Futures recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon those working with children and young people having the knowledge, confidence and awareness to recognise concerns and respond appropriately.

Safeguarding training and information will be appropriate to an individual's role, responsibilities and level of contact with children and young people.

7.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training relevant to the services provided by Thinking Futures.

The DSL will maintain an up-to-date understanding of:

- safeguarding legislation, guidance and procedures relevant to England and Wales;
- recognising indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm;
- responding to disclosures and safeguarding concerns;
- safeguarding referral and reporting procedures;
- allegations or concerns involving adults who work with children;
- information sharing, confidentiality and record keeping;
- online safeguarding;
- safeguarding children with additional needs, disabilities and communication differences; and
- safeguarding considerations relevant to face-to-face activities, clubs, camps and residential.

The DSL will keep safeguarding knowledge current through appropriate training, professional development and engagement with updates to national and local safeguarding guidance.



7.2 Safeguarding Training for Others

Anyone engaged by Thinking Futures to work directly with children and young people will receive safeguarding training, induction or information appropriate to their role before undertaking unsupervised responsibilities.

They must understand:

- their responsibility to safeguard children and young people;
- how to recognise possible safeguarding concerns;
- how to respond if a child makes a disclosure;
- how and when to report a concern;
- the role of the DSL;
- what to do where a concern relates to the DSL or another adult;
- expected professional boundaries and standards of conduct;
- relevant confidentiality and information-sharing requirements; and
- safeguarding arrangements specific to the activity they are undertaking.

Additional information or briefing will be provided where an activity presents particular safeguarding considerations.

7.3 Keeping Safeguarding Knowledge Current

Safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility rather than a one-off training requirement.

Thinking Futures will keep safeguarding arrangements under review and will provide updates or additional training where:

- legislation, national guidance or safeguarding procedures change;
- the nature of the services or activities provided changes;
- new safeguarding risks are identified;
- an individual's role or responsibilities change; or
- learning from a safeguarding concern, incident or review identifies a need for further development.

Where safeguarding procedures differ between England and Wales, those involved in service delivery will be expected to understand and follow the procedures applicable to the location and circumstances of the child or young person concerned.



8. Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Other Safeguarding Concerns

Thinking Futures recognises that safeguarding concerns can arise in many different ways and that abuse or harm may occur within or outside the home, within an organisation or community setting, between children, or online.

Anyone working with children and young people must remain alert to changes in behaviour, presentation, communication or circumstances that may indicate that a child is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm.

A child does not need to make a direct verbal disclosure for a safeguarding concern to exist.

8.1 Abuse and Neglect

Safeguarding concerns may include, but are not limited to:

Physical abuse

Physical harm or injury caused to a child, including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm.

Emotional abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that may adversely affect a child's emotional development or well-being. This may include humiliation, intimidation, rejection, threats, persistent criticism, isolation, inappropriate expectations, controlling behaviour or making a child feel frightened, worthless or unloved.

Sexual abuse

Forcing, enticing or involving a child or young person in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and may occur in person or through technology and online environments.

Neglect

A persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, medical, educational or safety needs where this is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

8.2 Other Forms of Harm

Safeguarding concerns may also include:

- domestic abuse and the impact upon children who experience, hear or witness it;
- bullying, including cyberbullying;
- peer-on-peer abuse;
- sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour;
- grooming;
- child sexual exploitation;
- child criminal exploitation;
- trafficking and modern slavery;
- online abuse and exploitation;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- discrimination, harassment and hate-related abuse;
- radicalisation and exposure to extremist influence;
- forced marriage and honour-based abuse;
- female genital mutilation;
- fabricated or induced illness;
- abuse or neglect by a person responsible for providing care;
- self-harm or behaviour indicating a significant risk to a child's safety; and
- any other circumstances in which a child may be experiencing, or be at risk of, abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm.

The presence of one indicator does not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. Equally, the absence of obvious physical signs does not mean that a safeguarding concern should be dismissed.

8.3 Possible Indicators of a Safeguarding Concern

Possible indicators may include:

- unexplained or repeated injuries;
- significant or unexplained changes in behaviour, mood or presentation;
- becoming unusually withdrawn, anxious, fearful or distressed;
- aggression or behaviour that is significantly different from the child's usual presentation;



- age-inappropriate sexualised behaviour, language or knowledge;
- fear of a particular person, place or situation;
- persistent hunger, poor hygiene or inappropriate clothing;
- unexplained possessions, money or gifts;
- changes in friendships, relationships or online behaviour;
- reluctance to go home or unexplained absence;
- deterioration in engagement or participation;
- references to being harmed, frightened, threatened, controlled or unsafe;
- concerning drawings, writing, play or online communication; or
- information provided by another child, parent, professional or other person.

Indicators must always be considered in context.

8.4 Children with Additional Needs and Communication Differences

Thinking Futures recognises that children with disabilities, neurodivergent children, children with additional learning needs, communication differences or social, emotional and mental health needs may experience additional barriers to recognising, communicating or reporting harm.

Adults must be alert to the possibility that:

- distress may be communicated through behaviour rather than words;
- changes in regulation, communication, routines or sensory responses may indicate that something is wrong;
- a child may require additional time or alternative methods to communicate;
- difficulties with identifying or describing emotions may affect how a child explains an experience;
- literal communication or differences in social understanding may affect how information is expressed;
- a child may be more dependent upon adults or others for support;
- communication difficulties may make a child more vulnerable to grooming, coercion or exploitation; and
- signs of harm may incorrectly be attributed to a child's disability, diagnosis, neurodivergence or behaviour.



A safeguarding concern must never be dismissed solely because a child's communication or presentation differs from what might ordinarily be expected. Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate to enable children and young people to communicate concerns and participate in safeguarding conversations.

8.5 Professional Curiosity

Anyone working with children and young people should maintain appropriate professional curiosity where something does not appear right.

This does not mean investigating or questioning a child extensively. It means noticing concerns, considering information in context, listening carefully, recording relevant information and reporting concerns in accordance with this policy.

Practitioners must not wait for proof of abuse before raising a safeguarding concern.

9. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern or Disclosure

Thinking Futures will take all safeguarding concerns and disclosures seriously.

A concern may arise through something a child says, something observed by an adult, information received from another person, changes in a child's behaviour or presentation, or information encountered during online or face-to-face activities.

Anyone who becomes concerned about the safety or welfare of a child must respond promptly and follow the procedures set out within this policy.

9.1 If a Child Makes a Disclosure

If a child or young person discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation or another safeguarding concern, the person receiving the disclosure should:

- remain calm and listen carefully;
- take the child seriously;
- allow the child to speak at their own pace and in their own words;
- avoid expressing shock, disbelief or judgement;



- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to someone;
- acknowledge how the child is feeling without making assumptions about what has happened;
- explain that the information may need to be shared with people whose role is to help keep them safe;
- ask only questions that are necessary to clarify what the child is communicating;
- avoid leading, suggestive or repeated questioning;
- avoid investigating or attempting to establish whether the allegation is true;
- make an accurate record as soon as possible; and
- report the concern promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The child's immediate safety and emotional well-being should be considered throughout.

9.2 What Must Not Be Done

Anyone receiving a safeguarding disclosure must not:

- promise to keep the information secret;
- tell the child that the information will remain confidential;
- interrogate or repeatedly question the child;
- ask leading questions or suggest what may have happened;
- attempt to investigate the allegation;
- confront the person who is alleged to have caused harm;
- contact an alleged perpetrator to seek their explanation;
- ask the child to repeat their disclosure unnecessarily to several people;
- make promises about what will happen next that cannot be guaranteed;
- delay reporting because they are uncertain whether the concern is serious enough; or
- discuss the concern with people who do not need to know.

9.3 Responding to Non-Verbal or Indirect Concerns

A child does not need to make a direct disclosure for safeguarding action to be considered.

Where concerns arise through behaviour, communication, observation, artwork, written work, online interaction, information from another person or a change in the child's presentation, the person identifying the concern should:

- record what they have observed, heard or received;
- distinguish clearly between fact, observation and professional opinion;
- avoid making assumptions or attempting to diagnose the cause;
- consider any communication or reasonable adjustments the child may require; and
- report the concern to the DSL.

Patterns of apparently minor concerns may become significant when considered together. Safeguarding information should therefore be recorded and reported even where the person raising the concern is uncertain about its significance.

9.4 Immediate Danger or Medical Emergency

Where there is reason to believe that a child is in immediate danger, emergency action must not be delayed while waiting to contact the DSL.

The person present should:

- call 999 where police, ambulance or other emergency assistance is required;
- take reasonable and proportionate steps to protect the child and others from immediate harm;
- provide or obtain appropriate first aid or medical assistance where necessary; and
- inform the DSL as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where urgent safeguarding advice or intervention is required but the situation does not require emergency services, the DSL will contact the appropriate Children's Services or safeguarding authority.

9.5 Reporting to the DSL

Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible and without unnecessary delay.

The person raising the concern should provide:

- the child's name and relevant identifying information;
- the date, time and circumstances in which the concern arose;
- a factual description of what was observed or reported;
- the child's own words wherever possible;
- details of any immediate action already taken; and
- any other information directly relevant to the concern.

The DSL will consider the information and determine the appropriate next safeguarding action in accordance with the applicable Wales or England safeguarding procedures.

Where a concern relates to the DSL, the procedures set out in this policy for concerns about the DSL must be followed instead.

9.6 Informing Parents and Carers

Thinking Futures will ordinarily seek to work openly with parents and carers and will usually inform them where a safeguarding concern arises.

However, a parent or carer will not automatically be informed before a safeguarding referral is made.

The DSL will consider whether informing the parent or carer could:

- place the child or another person at increased risk;
- lead to intimidation, coercion or further harm;
- compromise evidence or interfere with a safeguarding or criminal investigation;
- result in the child being removed from contact with safeguarding services; or
- otherwise undermine action required to protect the child.

Where there is uncertainty, advice will be sought from the appropriate safeguarding authority before contacting the parent or carer.

9.7 Supporting the Child

Following a disclosure or safeguarding concern, Thinking Futures will continue to treat the child with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

The child should not be made to feel responsible for subsequent safeguarding action and should not be repeatedly questioned about what they have disclosed.

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to enable the child to continue participating safely in Thinking Futures activities while safeguarding action is being considered or undertaken.

Information about the concern will only be shared with those who need it for safeguarding purposes.

10. Recording and Managing Safeguarding Information

Thinking Futures will maintain clear, accurate and appropriately secure records of safeguarding concerns and actions.

Safeguarding records are separate from ordinary teaching, coaching, guidance, attendance or programme notes and will be treated as confidential safeguarding information.

10.1 Recording a Safeguarding Concern

A written record should be made as soon as reasonably possible after a safeguarding concern, disclosure or incident arises.

The record should include, where relevant:

- the child's name and identifying details;
- the date, time and location of the concern, disclosure or incident;
- the date and time the record was made;
- the name of the person making the record;
- the circumstances in which the concern arose;
- a factual account of what was seen, heard or reported;
- the child's own words wherever possible;
- relevant observations about the child's presentation or behaviour;

- details of any witnesses or other people involved;
- any immediate action taken;
- who the concern was reported to and when;
- advice received from safeguarding agencies, where applicable;
- referrals or other action taken; and
- any agreed follow-up action.

Where an injury or physical mark forms part of the concern, its location and appearance should be recorded factually. The child should not be asked to remove clothing or undergo an examination for the purpose of creating a safeguarding record.

10.2 Factual and Accurate Recording

Safeguarding records must distinguish clearly between:

- what the child or another person has said;
- what has been directly observed;
- information received from another source; and
- professional judgement or opinion.

Where possible, the exact words used by a child should be recorded rather than paraphrased.

Records should not contain speculation, unnecessary personal commentary or conclusions about whether abuse has occurred.

If a record needs to be corrected, the original information should remain identifiable and the amendment should be dated and attributable. Safeguarding records must not be altered in a way that obscures the original record.

10.3 Reporting and Decision-Making Records

The DSL will record safeguarding decisions and actions, including:

- whether further information or safeguarding advice was sought;
- whether a referral was made;
- the agency or professional contacted;
- the date and time of contact;
- advice or instructions received;
- the rationale for significant safeguarding decisions, including a decision not to refer where appropriate; and
- any follow-up action required.

Where concerns continue or additional information becomes available, this should be added to the safeguarding record so that a chronology can be established.

10.4 Storage and Access

Safeguarding information will be stored securely with access restricted to those who require the information for safeguarding purposes.

Safeguarding records will, as far as reasonably practicable, be maintained separately from routine participant, teaching, coaching or administrative records. Electronic safeguarding records will be appropriately protected against unauthorised access, loss or disclosure. Any physical safeguarding documentation will be stored securely.

Safeguarding information must not be stored unnecessarily on personal devices or shared through informal communication channels where a more secure method is available.

10.5 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding information is confidential but safeguarding concerns cannot be kept secret where sharing information is necessary to protect a child.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and only to the extent necessary and proportionate for the safeguarding purpose.

Where appropriate, Thinking Futures will explain to children, young people and parents or carers how safeguarding information may be used and shared. However, consent is not always required before information can be shared for safeguarding purposes.

The protection and welfare of the child will take priority where withholding information could place a child or another person at risk.

10.6 Safeguarding Information and Data Protection

Personal information processed for safeguarding purposes will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

Data protection requirements do not prevent the appropriate sharing of information for the purpose of safeguarding a child.

Only information relevant to the safeguarding purpose will be recorded, retained and shared.

10.7 Retention and Disposal

Safeguarding records will be retained for an appropriate period having regard to the nature of the concern, applicable legal and safeguarding requirements and the potential need for information to be available in relation to future safeguarding enquiries.

Records will not be destroyed solely because a child ceases to participate in Thinking Futures services.

When safeguarding information is no longer required and it is appropriate for it to be disposed of, this will be undertaken securely and confidentially.

10.8 Transfer or Sharing of Safeguarding Information

Where Thinking Futures becomes aware that safeguarding information may be relevant to another organisation or statutory safeguarding agency responsible for protecting or supporting the child, relevant information may be shared where it is necessary and proportionate to safeguard the child.

Any transfer or disclosure of safeguarding information will be recorded, including what information was shared, with whom, when and for what safeguarding purpose.

11. Reporting and Referring Safeguarding Concerns

Thinking Futures recognises that its role is to identify, respond to, record and appropriately report safeguarding concerns. It is not the role of Thinking Futures or its practitioners to investigate suspected abuse or determine whether abuse has occurred.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm, appropriate safeguarding action will be taken without unnecessary delay.

11.1 Initial Consideration by the DSL

When a safeguarding concern is reported, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the concern;
- the child's immediate safety;
- what the child has said or communicated;
- any known relevant history or previous concerns;
- whether there is a pattern of concerns;
- the child's age, developmental level and communication needs;
- whether other children or individuals may also be at risk;
- whether urgent medical or police assistance is required; and
- the appropriate safeguarding procedure and reporting route.



The DSL may seek safeguarding advice from the relevant local authority or other appropriate safeguarding service where there is uncertainty about the appropriate response.

Seeking advice must not unnecessarily delay action required to protect a child.

11.2 Immediate Risk

Where a child is believed to be in immediate danger or a serious offence may be occurring, **999** should be called.

Urgent medical assistance must also be obtained where required.

Where appropriate, the relevant Children's Services or safeguarding authority will also be informed.

11.3 Concerns Relating to a Child in Wales

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child in Wales, Thinking Futures will act in accordance with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and relevant local safeguarding arrangements.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and has needs for care and support, the concern will be reported to the appropriate local authority Children's Services in accordance with the applicable safeguarding procedures.

Where the appropriate course of action is uncertain, safeguarding advice will be sought rather than delaying or dismissing the concern.

11.4 Concerns Relating to a Child in England

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child in England, Thinking Futures will follow the appropriate referral arrangements for the local authority area in which the child is located.

Where there is concern that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, or otherwise requires statutory safeguarding intervention, a referral will be made to the relevant local authority Children's Social Care service.

The police will be contacted where there is an immediate risk of harm or where police assistance is otherwise urgently required.

11.5 Online Work and Children in Different Locations

Where a safeguarding concern arises during online work, the child's physical location will be considered when determining the appropriate safeguarding authority.

Where reasonably practicable, Thinking Futures will maintain sufficient current information to enable appropriate safeguarding action to be taken during online work, including relevant parent or carer contact information and the child's location or home local authority where this is necessary for safeguarding purposes.

If a child appears to be in immediate danger during an online session and their location is known, emergency services will be contacted.

Where the child is outside England or Wales, the DSL will identify and contact the appropriate safeguarding or emergency service for the child's location where action is necessary to protect the child.

11.6 Parental Consent and Safeguarding Referrals

Parental or carer consent is not a prerequisite for making a safeguarding referral where there is a reasonable concern about a child's safety or welfare.

Parents and carers will normally be informed of safeguarding concerns and referrals where it is appropriate and safe to do so.

However, a referral or request for safeguarding advice may be made without first informing a parent or carer where doing so could:

- place the child or another person at greater risk;

- lead to intimidation, coercion or further harm;
- result in evidence being lost or compromised;
- interfere with a safeguarding or criminal investigation; or
- otherwise undermine action required to protect the child.

Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the safeguarding authority about whether and when a parent or carer should be informed.

11.7 Recording Referrals and Outcomes

All safeguarding referrals and significant safeguarding advice will be recorded.

The record should include:

- the reason for the referral or request for advice;
- the agency contacted;
- the date and time of contact;
- the name or role of the person spoken to, where available;
- information provided;
- advice or decisions communicated;
- actions agreed;
- any reference number provided; and
- required follow-up.

Where a referral is not accepted or no further statutory action is proposed, Thinking Futures will consider whether any safeguarding or welfare concerns remain and what further action, monitoring or support may be appropriate.

11.8 Escalating Concern

Thinking Futures will not assume that a safeguarding concern has been resolved solely because it has been reported to another agency.

Where significant concerns remain about a child's safety, or where the response received does not appear to address the identified risk, the DSL will seek further advice and, where appropriate, escalate the concern through the relevant safeguarding procedures.

Anyone working with Thinking Futures who believes that a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately addressed must raise this with the DSL.

Where the concern relates to the DSL, or the individual reasonably believes that raising it with the DSL would be inappropriate, they should use the external safeguarding contacts identified in this policy.

12. Concerns and Allegations About Adults Working With Children

Thinking Futures takes seriously any concern or allegation about the conduct or suitability of a person who works with or has responsibility for children and young people.

This includes concerns relating to employees, self-employed practitioners, contractors, volunteers and other adults working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures.

Concerns will be managed promptly, fairly and in accordance with the safeguarding procedures applicable in the country in which the concern arises.

12.1 When These Procedures Apply

Safeguarding action will be considered where information suggests that a person who works with children may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm;
- behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children; or
- behaved in their personal life in a way that may indicate a transferable risk to children with whom they work.

A concern does not need to relate to conduct occurring during a Thinking Futures activity. Information about behaviour outside work may require safeguarding action where it raises concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children.



12.2 Reporting a Concern About an Adult

Any safeguarding concern or allegation about an adult working with children must be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The person receiving or identifying the concern should:

- take the concern seriously;
- make a factual written record as soon as possible;
- record the words used by the person raising the concern wherever possible;
- avoid investigating or attempting to establish whether the allegation is true;
- avoid confronting or questioning the person who is the subject of the allegation;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality; and
- report the matter promptly through the appropriate safeguarding route.

Where a child may also have experienced or be at risk of harm, their immediate safeguarding needs must be considered separately and without delay.

12.3 Concerns About the DSL

Where the concern or allegation relates to the DSL, it must not be referred solely to the DSL for consideration.

The concern should be reported directly through the appropriate external safeguarding route identified in the Safeguarding Contacts appendix to this policy.

Where the concern arises in Wales, advice or a report should be made to the appropriate **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** or **Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DoS)** in accordance with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

Where the concern arises in England, the relevant local authority arrangements for managing allegations against people who work with children, commonly through the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), should be followed.

Where a child is in immediate danger, the police must be contacted by calling **999**.

12.4 Wales: Section 5 Safeguarding Procedures

Concerns or allegations relating to a practitioner or person in a position of trust in Wales will be considered in accordance with Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures: Safeguarding Allegations/Concerns about Practitioners and Those in Positions of Trust.

These procedures may apply to individuals whose paid, unpaid, employed or self-employed work brings them into direct or indirect contact with children.

Thinking Futures will seek advice from and cooperate with the relevant LADO/DoS and other safeguarding agencies as required.

Where the Section 5 threshold may be met, Thinking Futures will not undertake an internal investigation that could compromise the statutory safeguarding process.

12.5 England: Allegations Against People Who Work With Children

Where a concern arises in England, Thinking Futures will follow the relevant local authority procedures for allegations against people who work with children, informed by Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The appropriate local authority designated officer or team will be informed where the relevant safeguarding threshold is met.

Thinking Futures will cooperate with Children's Social Care, the police, the local authority designated officer and other relevant agencies as required.

12.6 Immediate Safeguarding Measures

Where a concern or allegation is raised, Thinking Futures will consider whether immediate measures are necessary to protect the child concerned or other children.

Any measures taken will be proportionate to the circumstances and will not be treated as a determination that an allegation is true.

Where the concern relates to another person engaged by Thinking Futures, measures may include changing or restricting their duties, preventing unsupervised contact with children or temporarily removing them from activities while safeguarding advice is sought.

The advice of the appropriate safeguarding authority will be sought where necessary before decisions are made that could affect a safeguarding or criminal investigation.

12.7 Complaints, Poor Practice and Safeguarding Allegations

Thinking Futures recognises the distinction between:

- a complaint about the quality or delivery of a service;
- a concern about an individual's practice or professional conduct; and
- a safeguarding allegation or concern indicating possible harm, risk of harm or unsuitability to work with children.

A concern will not be treated solely as a complaint where the information indicates that safeguarding procedures may apply.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a matter meets the safeguarding threshold, advice will be sought from the appropriate safeguarding authority.

12.8 Confidentiality, Fairness and Support

Information concerning an allegation will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, legal or procedural purposes.

Thinking Futures will seek to protect children while also ensuring that allegations are handled fairly and without unnecessary judgement or disclosure.

The person who is the subject of an allegation will not automatically be provided with all information at the point the concern is raised where doing so could place a child at risk or interfere with safeguarding or criminal enquiries.

Information provided to the individual and the timing of that information will take account of advice from the police, Children's Services, LADO/DoS or other relevant safeguarding authority.

12.9 Recording and Outcomes

Thinking Futures will maintain an appropriate confidential record of safeguarding concerns or allegations about adults, including:

- the nature of the concern or allegation;
- when and how it was received;
- immediate safeguarding action taken;
- referrals or advice sought;
- decisions and their rationale;
- information received from safeguarding authorities; and
- the outcome where this is known.

Where required, Thinking Futures will cooperate with any referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, professional regulator or other relevant body.

13. Professional Boundaries and Safer Working Practice

Thinking Futures expects anyone working with children and young people to maintain clear, appropriate and professional boundaries at all times.

Relationships with children and young people should be warm, respectful and supportive while remaining appropriate to the adult's professional role.

Adults must never use their position of trust, authority or influence to establish an inappropriate relationship with a child or young person.

13.1 Appropriate Relationships and Conduct

Adults working with children and young people must:

- treat children with dignity, respect and fairness;
- use language and behaviour appropriate to the child's age and circumstances;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- avoid behaviour that could reasonably be considered intimidating, humiliating, discriminatory, sexualised or otherwise inappropriate;
- avoid favouritism or creating relationships that could reasonably be perceived as exclusive or inappropriate;

- respect children's personal and physical boundaries;
- respond appropriately where a child appears uncomfortable with an interaction; and
- model respectful and appropriate behaviour.

Adults must not develop sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationships with children or young people with whom they work.

13.2 One-to-One Situations

Thinking Futures recognises that one-to-one interaction may legitimately occur as part of guidance, coaching, teaching, pastoral support or participation in clubs and activities.

One-to-one work should be conducted in a manner that is appropriate, transparent and capable of being accounted for.

Where reasonably practicable:

- parents or carers should be aware of planned one-to-one work with a child;
- face-to-face one-to-one conversations should take place in an appropriate location;
- during group activities, adults should avoid unnecessarily isolating themselves with a child in a space that cannot be observed or accessed by others;
- doors should remain open or appropriate visibility should be maintained where this can be achieved without compromising the child's dignity or confidentiality; and
- unnecessary or prolonged one-to-one situations should be avoided during clubs, camps and group activities.

The need for safeguarding transparency should be balanced with a child's legitimate need for privacy when discussing personal or sensitive matters.

13.3 Physical Contact

Physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the circumstances, proportionate and respectful of the child's wishes, dignity and personal boundaries.

Appropriate physical contact may occasionally be necessary, for example:

- to provide first aid;
- to prevent immediate injury;
- to assist safely with an activity;
- where a child initiates appropriate social contact and the adult considers it suitable to respond; or
- where reassurance is appropriate and welcomed by the child.

Adults should consider the child's communication, sensory and personal preferences and should not assume that physical contact is welcomed.

Physical contact must never be sexual, punitive, intimidating or used to establish inappropriate closeness.

Any unusual or significant physical intervention should be recorded where appropriate.

13.4 Personal Care and Toilets

Children and young people should be supported to use toilet facilities independently wherever they are able to do so.

Adults must respect children's privacy and dignity and should not enter a toilet or changing space being used by a child unless:

- there is an immediate safety concern;
- the child requires agreed assistance;
- an emergency has arisen; or
- another legitimate safeguarding reason makes entry necessary.

Where assistance with personal care is anticipated as part of a child's participation, appropriate arrangements should be discussed and agreed with the

parent or carer in advance and, where appropriate, with the child.

Thinking Futures will consider whether it can safely and appropriately meet any personal-care requirement before agreeing arrangements.

13.5 Communication With Children and Young People

Communication with children should relate to the legitimate purpose of the service being provided.

Where practicable, administrative communication concerning younger participants, including arrangements for clubs, camps and appointments, should normally take place through a parent or carer.

Adults must not:

- engage in inappropriate private or secret communication with a child;
- send sexual, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate material;
- encourage a child to conceal communication from their parent, carer or another appropriate adult;
- use disappearing-message functions for professional communication with children where this would prevent appropriate accountability; or
- use communication with a child to establish an inappropriate personal relationship.

Where direct communication with an older young person is appropriate to the service being provided, appropriate professional boundaries and records must be maintained.

13.6 Social Media and Online Boundaries

Adults working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures must maintain appropriate professional boundaries on social media.

Personal social-media accounts should not ordinarily be used to establish or maintain relationships with children encountered through Thinking Futures activities.

Adults must not:

- seek out or follow children's personal social-media accounts for non-professional purposes;
- invite children to connect with their personal social-media accounts;
- engage in private social-media conversations that are unrelated to legitimate service delivery; or
- publish information, images or content about a child without appropriate authority or consent.

Separate provisions relating to online safeguarding, photography and digital media are set out elsewhere in this policy.

13.7 Gifts, Favouritism and Financial Boundaries

Small tokens, prizes or rewards provided openly as part of an activity or programme may be appropriate.

Adults should not give individual children significant personal gifts or provide money, loans or other financial benefits.

Adults should exercise caution when accepting gifts from children or families and should not accept anything that could reasonably create an obligation, inappropriate relationship or perception of favouritism.

13.8 Transport

Adults should not ordinarily transport a child alone in a private vehicle as part of Thinking Futures activities unless this has been specifically agreed and appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Where transport forms part of an organised activity, appropriate consent, insurance, risk assessment and safeguarding arrangements must be established. Emergency circumstances will be considered individually with the child's immediate safety taking priority.

Adults must not:

- seek out or follow children's personal social-media accounts for non-professional purposes;
- invite children to connect with their personal social-media accounts;
- engage in private social-media conversations that are unrelated to legitimate service delivery; or
- publish information, images or content about a child without appropriate authority or consent.

Separate provisions relating to online safeguarding, photography and digital media are set out elsewhere in this policy.

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Where transport forms part of an organised activity, appropriate consent, insurance, risk assessment and safeguarding arrangements must be established.

Emergency circumstances will be considered individually with the child's immediate safety taking priority.

13.9 Photographs and Personal Devices

Photographs or recordings of children must only be taken for legitimate purposes and in accordance with Thinking Futures' photography, consent and data protection arrangements.

Personal devices should not be used to take or retain photographs or recordings of children unless their use has been specifically authorised for a legitimate purpose and appropriate arrangements are in place for the secure transfer and deletion of the material.

Children and young people will not be required to participate in photography or recording as a condition of taking part in an activity.

13.10 Working Outside Normal Activities

Adults must maintain the same professional boundaries if they encounter a child or family outside Thinking Futures activities.

Any pre-existing personal, family or community relationship that could create a conflict of interest or affect professional boundaries should be appropriately disclosed and managed.

Adults must not use information or access obtained through Thinking Futures to pursue an inappropriate relationship with a child or family.

13.11 Concerns About Professional Boundaries

Anyone who becomes concerned that their own behaviour, or the behaviour of another adult, may have crossed or could be perceived as having crossed an appropriate professional boundary should raise the matter promptly with the DSL.

Seeking advice about an uncertain situation is encouraged and will not in itself be treated as evidence of wrongdoing.

Where a boundary concern indicates possible harm, risk of harm or unsuitability to work with children, the safeguarding procedures relating to concerns and allegations about adults will be followed.



14. Behaviour, Emotional Distress and Physical Intervention

Thinking Futures recognises that behaviour is a form of communication and that children and young people may express distress, anxiety, overwhelm, frustration, fear or unmet needs through their behaviour.

Our approach is supportive, proportionate and informed by the individual needs of the child. We aim to understand what may be contributing to behaviour, reduce unnecessary demands or triggers where possible and support children to regulate and participate safely.

Children will not be punished, humiliated or excluded simply for communicating distress differently.

At the same time, Thinking Futures has a responsibility to maintain the safety and well-being of all children, young people and adults participating in its activities.

14.1 Supporting Regulation and Well-being

Where a child appears distressed, overwhelmed or dysregulated, adults should, where appropriate:

- remain calm and communicate clearly;
- reduce unnecessary verbal demands;
- allow additional processing time;
- offer appropriate choices;
- provide access to a quieter or lower-stimulation space where available;
- consider sensory, communication or environmental factors;
- allow appropriate movement or regulation strategies;
- avoid unnecessary confrontation or power struggles;
- consider whether the child requires food, drink, rest, medical attention or another form of practical support;
- listen to the child and seek to understand what they need; and
- seek additional support where the situation cannot be safely managed.

Reasonable adjustments should be considered in accordance with the child's individual needs.

14.2 Individual Needs and Planning

Parents and carers will be encouraged to provide relevant information about a child's communication, sensory, emotional, medical or support needs where this may assist Thinking Futures in providing a safe and appropriate environment.

Where a child is known to require particular support to participate safely, appropriate arrangements may be agreed in advance with the child and their parent or carer.

This may include:

- preferred communication approaches;
- known triggers or sources of distress;
- sensory preferences;
- strategies the child finds helpful;
- use of quiet or regulation spaces;
- relevant medical or additional support information; and
- arrangements for contacting a parent or carer where additional support is required.

Information should focus on supporting the individual child rather than making assumptions based solely upon a diagnosis or label.

14.3 Behaviour Affecting the Safety of Others

Where behaviour presents a risk to the child, another child or an adult, the immediate priority will be to reduce the risk of harm.

Adults should use the least restrictive and most proportionate response available.

This may include:

- creating additional physical space;
- moving other children away from an immediate risk;
- reducing stimulation or demands;
- removing unsafe objects where this can be done safely;
- using calm verbal guidance;
- offering the child an opportunity to move to a quieter area;
- seeking assistance from another adult;
- contacting a parent or carer; or

- contacting emergency services where there is an immediate and serious risk that cannot otherwise be safely managed.

A child experiencing distress should not automatically be treated as deliberately disruptive or defiant.

14.4 Physical Intervention

Thinking Futures does not use physical intervention as a punishment, behaviour-management sanction or means of securing compliance.

Physical intervention should only be considered where it is necessary to prevent an immediate risk of injury or serious harm and where less restrictive approaches are not sufficient or practicable in the circumstances.

Any physical intervention must:

- be necessary in the circumstances;
- be proportionate to the immediate risk;
- use the minimum level of intervention reasonably required;
- last for no longer than necessary;
- avoid deliberately causing pain;
- protect the child's dignity as far as possible; and
- cease as soon as the immediate risk has passed.

Adults must never use physical intervention in anger, as retaliation or as punishment.

Nothing within this policy requires an adult to place themselves at unreasonable risk of injury.

14.5 Following a Significant Incident

Following a significant behavioural or safety incident:

- the immediate physical and emotional welfare of everyone involved will be considered;
- first aid or medical assistance will be provided where required;
- parents or carers will be informed where appropriate;

- the incident will be recorded accurately;
- any safeguarding implications will be considered;
- the child should be given an appropriate opportunity to communicate their experience when calm and able to do so;
- relevant support arrangements and risk assessments will be reviewed; and
- consideration will be given to whether changes could reduce the likelihood or impact of a similar incident.

Where physical intervention has been used, this must be recorded and the DSL informed.

14.6 Continued Participation and Safety

Thinking Futures will seek to make reasonable adjustments and work collaboratively with children, young people and their families to support safe participation.

There may, however, be circumstances in which a child's needs or the level of risk cannot safely be met within a particular activity or with the resources reasonably available.

Where this occurs, Thinking Futures will discuss the situation with the child and parent or carer where appropriate and consider whether additional adjustments, support or alternative arrangements could enable safe participation.

Any decision to restrict, pause or end participation on safety grounds will be based upon an individual assessment of circumstances and risk rather than solely upon a diagnosis, disability, neurodivergence or additional need.

14.7 Safeguarding and Behaviour

Behaviour may itself provide information about a child's safety or well-being.

Where behaviour, a significant change in behaviour, or information arising during an incident gives rise to a safeguarding concern, this must be recorded and reported in accordance with the safeguarding procedures set out within this policy.

Adults should remain alert to the possibility that behaviour may reflect experiences occurring outside the activity and must not assume that distress is solely related to the child's diagnosis, additional needs or the immediate situation.

15. Peer-on-Peer Safeguarding, Bullying and Harmful Behaviour

Thinking Futures recognises that children and young people can experience harm from other children and that safeguarding concerns may arise within friendships, peer groups, activities, relationships or online interactions.

All concerns about harmful behaviour between children will be taken seriously and considered in the context of the children's ages, developmental needs, individual circumstances, the nature of the behaviour and the impact upon those involved.

Harmful behaviour will not be dismissed as "banter", "just having fun", "part of growing up" or an inevitable part of being in a group.

15.1 Forms of Peer-on-Peer Harm

Peer-on-peer safeguarding concerns may include:

- physical violence or aggression;
- bullying, including repeated verbal, emotional or social bullying;
- cyberbullying;
- intimidation, threats or coercion;
- discriminatory or hate-related behaviour;
- sexual harassment;
- harmful or inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- unwanted sexualised comments or contact;
- sharing sexual images or content;
- pressure to send or create sexual images;
- controlling or abusive behaviour within relationships;
- exploitation;
- deliberately excluding or targeting another child in a manner that causes significant harm;
- encouraging another child to engage in dangerous or harmful behaviour; and
- harmful behaviour occurring through social media, messaging, gaming or other digital platforms.

This list is not exhaustive.

15.2 Distinguishing Conflict From Safeguarding Harm

Not every disagreement, argument, friendship difficulty or instance of inappropriate behaviour between children constitutes a safeguarding concern.

Children and young people are developing social, emotional and relationship skills and may require support to resolve disagreements, understand boundaries or repair relationships.

Thinking Futures will consider factors including:

- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour;
- the ages and developmental understanding of those involved;
- whether the behaviour was intentional, coercive or threatening;
- whether there is an imbalance of power;
- whether the behaviour is repeated or escalating;
- the impact upon the child experiencing the behaviour;
- whether consent and personal boundaries have been respected;
- whether disability, vulnerability or additional needs have been exploited; and
- whether there is reason to believe that either child may be experiencing harm elsewhere.

Where the behaviour indicates actual or potential harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed.

15.3 Responding to Peer-on-Peer Concerns

Where harmful behaviour between children is identified, the immediate priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

Adults should:

- intervene where necessary to prevent immediate harm;
- listen to children separately where appropriate;
- avoid requiring children to resolve serious safeguarding concerns between themselves;
- avoid conducting an investigation beyond what is necessary to establish immediate safety and safeguarding information;
- record significant concerns accurately;
- report safeguarding concerns to the DSL;

- consider whether parents or carers should be informed;
- consider whether external safeguarding advice or referral is required; and
- consider what support or adjustments may be required for continued safe participation.

Where there is immediate danger or serious injury, emergency procedures will be followed.

15.4 Supporting All Children Involved

Thinking Futures recognises that a child who has experienced harmful behaviour may require safeguarding and support.

We also recognise that a child displaying harmful behaviour may themselves have unmet needs, additional vulnerabilities or experiences of harm that require consideration.

Supporting a child who has displayed harmful behaviour does not minimise the impact upon the child who experienced it.

Safeguarding decisions will therefore consider the needs and safety of all children involved, while ensuring that the child who has experienced harm is appropriately protected.

15.5 Bullying

Thinking Futures does not tolerate bullying.

Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, social, discriminatory or online and may involve repeated behaviour or the deliberate use of power to cause distress, fear, humiliation or exclusion.

Where bullying occurs, Thinking Futures will take proportionate action to:

- stop the behaviour;
- support the child experiencing bullying;
- understand and address the behaviour of the child responsible;
- involve parents or carers where appropriate;
- consider reasonable adjustments or changes to group arrangements;
- monitor the situation; and
- consider whether the behaviour meets the threshold for safeguarding action.

15.6 Discriminatory Behaviour

Discriminatory language, harassment or harmful behaviour relating to disability, neurodivergence, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or another aspect of a person's identity will be challenged appropriately.

Children may sometimes repeat language they have heard without fully understanding its meaning or impact. Responses will therefore consider age, understanding, context and intent while making clear that discriminatory harm is not acceptable.

Where discriminatory behaviour is persistent, targeted, threatening or otherwise raises safeguarding concerns, it will be addressed through safeguarding procedures.

15.7 Sexual Behaviour Between Children

Thinking Futures recognises that children may display a range of behaviours as they develop. However, sexual behaviour may become a safeguarding concern where it is inappropriate for the child's age or development, unwanted, coercive, harmful, exploitative or involves a significant imbalance of power.

Any concern involving sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercion, sexual images or potentially harmful sexual behaviour will be taken seriously and referred to the DSL.

Adults must not attempt to investigate serious sexual allegations themselves.

The DSL will consider whether safeguarding advice, Children's Services or police involvement is required and will follow the safeguarding procedures applicable to the child's location.

15.8 Online Behaviour Between Participants

Safeguarding expectations extend to online behaviour where there is a connection with Thinking Futures activities or where information comes to our attention that indicates a child may be at risk.

Thinking Futures cannot monitor children's private online activity outside its services. However, where we become aware of online bullying, exploitation, threats, inappropriate image sharing or other harmful behaviour affecting participants, the concern will be considered and appropriate safeguarding action taken.

Children and young people will be encouraged to seek help where something that happens online makes them feel unsafe, frightened, pressured or uncomfortable.

16. Online Safety and Digital Communication

Thinking Futures recognises that technology provides valuable opportunities for guidance, coaching, education, communication and participation, while also presenting safeguarding risks.

The same safeguarding principles and professional boundaries that apply to face-to-face work apply to online interactions with children and young people.

Online safeguarding concerns may include inappropriate contact, grooming, exploitation, bullying, harassment, exposure to harmful or age-inappropriate content, sharing of personal information, sexual imagery, coercion, impersonation and other forms of online harm.

16.1 Online Sessions

Online sessions with children and young people will be conducted through appropriate platforms and in a professional manner.

Those delivering online sessions must:

- use an appropriate account and profile for professional activity;
- maintain professional language, behaviour and boundaries;
- conduct sessions from an appropriate environment;
- take reasonable steps to protect the privacy of other people who may be present;
- use appropriate platform privacy and security settings;
- avoid sharing unnecessary personal information;
- be alert to safeguarding concerns arising through conversation, behaviour, background activity or material visible during the session; and

- follow Thinking Futures' safeguarding procedures where a concern arises.

Children and young people should be encouraged to participate from an environment in which they feel safe and able to engage appropriately.

16.2 Parent and Carer Awareness

Where Thinking Futures works online with a child, parents or carers should ordinarily be aware of the nature and arrangements of the service being provided. The extent of direct parental involvement will take account of the child's age, the nature of the service and the circumstances of the work.

Thinking Futures will maintain appropriate emergency and parent or carer contact information for children receiving online services where this is necessary to enable an effective safeguarding response.

16.3 Direct Digital Communication

Digital communication with children and young people must have a legitimate professional purpose and maintain appropriate boundaries.

Where practicable, administrative arrangements for younger children should be communicated through a parent or carer.

Where direct communication with a young person is appropriate, adults must:

- use appropriate professional communication channels;
- keep communication relevant to the service being provided;
- communicate at appropriate times;
- maintain professional language and boundaries;
- retain appropriate records where necessary; and
- avoid creating private, secretive or dependent relationships.

Personal or disappearing-message functions should not be used where doing so would undermine appropriate safeguarding accountability.

16.4 Recording Online Sessions

Online sessions will not routinely be recorded unless there is a legitimate reason to do so.

Where a session is to be recorded:

- the purpose of the recording must be clear;
- appropriate consent or other lawful authority must be established;
- participants must be informed that recording is taking place;
- the recording must be stored securely;
- access must be appropriately restricted; and
- the recording must be retained and deleted in accordance with applicable data protection arrangements.

A child or young person must not be secretly recorded during an online session.

16.5 Screen Sharing and Digital Content

Adults must take reasonable care when sharing screens, files, websites, videos or other digital content with children.

Before screen sharing, adults should take reasonable steps to prevent unrelated personal information, private messages, confidential information or inappropriate content from being displayed.

Materials used during online activities should be appropriate to the age, developmental needs and purpose of the session.

16.6 Safeguarding Concerns During an Online Session

Where a safeguarding concern arises during an online session, the adult should respond in accordance with the safeguarding procedures set out within this policy.

Where a child appears to be in immediate danger, the priority is to obtain appropriate emergency assistance.

Where possible, relevant information about the child's current location should be established without unnecessarily alarming or interrogating the child.

Emergency services or the appropriate safeguarding authority should be contacted where required.

The concern and actions taken must be recorded and reported to the DSL.

16.7 Inappropriate or Concerning Online Content

Where a child shares, displays or sends material that raises a safeguarding concern, adults must not unnecessarily copy, download, forward or retain the material.

Where the concern involves sexual imagery of a child, adults must not request, intentionally view, copy, print, forward or save the image for the purpose of investigating the concern.

The matter should be reported promptly to the DSL, who will seek appropriate safeguarding advice and follow the relevant reporting procedures.

16.8 Online Contact Between Participants

Thinking Futures may provide opportunities for young people to meet and develop friendships through its activities. However, Thinking Futures cannot supervise private digital communication between participants outside organised activities.

Children and young people will be encouraged to use technology respectfully and to seek help if another participant contacts them in a way that makes them feel unsafe, pressured, threatened or uncomfortable.

Where Thinking Futures becomes aware of online behaviour between participants that raises a safeguarding concern, the matter will be considered in accordance with the peer-on-peer safeguarding procedures within this policy.

16.9 Social Media

Thinking Futures may use organisational social-media channels to communicate information about its activities.

Adults working with Thinking Futures must maintain appropriate separation between professional activity and their personal social-media presence.

Children's personal information, photographs, recordings or work will only be published in accordance with appropriate consent, privacy and data protection arrangements.

Safeguarding concerns received through social media or other digital channels will be responded to in the same way as concerns received through other means.

16.10 Emerging Technology and Artificial Intelligence

Thinking Futures recognises that digital technologies continue to develop and may create new safeguarding risks.

Where artificial intelligence or other emerging technologies are used within activities, consideration will be given to:

- age appropriateness;
- privacy and personal information;
- the content children may encounter or generate;
- the potential creation or manipulation of images or other media;
- misinformation and inappropriate content;
- appropriate adult oversight; and
- relevant platform terms, age requirements and safety controls.

Children and young people will be encouraged not to enter sensitive personal information about themselves or others into digital or artificial intelligence services unless its use has been specifically considered and is appropriate for the activity.

17. Photography, Video, Media and Children's Work

Thinking Futures may use photographs, video, audio recordings or examples of children's work to celebrate participation, document activities, communicate with families or promote its services.

The safeguarding, dignity, privacy and wishes of children and young people will take priority when images, recordings or their work are created or used.

Participation in a Thinking Futures service, club, camp or activity will not be conditional upon agreeing to promotional photography or recording.

17.1 Consent

Appropriate consent will be obtained before identifiable photographs, video or audio recordings of children are used for promotional or publicity purposes.

Parents or carers will be provided with clear information about how images or recordings may be used, which may include:

- Thinking Futures or Kidz Like Us websites;
- organisational social-media accounts;
- printed promotional materials;
- information provided to families;
- displays;
- newsletters or programme materials; and
- other specifically identified promotional purposes.

Consent choices will be respected and appropriately recorded.

Parents and carers may withdraw consent for future use in accordance with the applicable consent and data protection arrangements.

17.2 The Child's Wishes

Parental or carer consent does not remove the need to respect the wishes of the child or young person.

Where a child indicates that they do not wish to be photographed, filmed or recorded, this will be respected wherever reasonably practicable, even where prior parental consent has been provided.

Children will not be pressured, embarrassed or disadvantaged for choosing not to participate in photography or recording.

Where appropriate, children will be reminded when photography or filming is taking place and given an opportunity not to participate.

17.3 Taking Photographs and Recordings

Photographs and recordings should:

- have a legitimate and appropriate purpose;
- present children respectfully and positively;
- avoid unnecessarily intrusive or intimate situations;

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not be taken in toilets, changing areas or other circumstances in which children have a reasonable expectation of privacy;

- avoid revealing unnecessary personal or identifying information; and

17.3 Taking Photographs and Recordings

Photographs and recordings should:

- have a legitimate and appropriate purpose;
- present children respectfully and positively;
- avoid unnecessarily intrusive or intimate situations;
- not be taken in toilets, changing areas or other circumstances in which children have a reasonable expectation of privacy;
- avoid revealing unnecessary personal or identifying information; and
- be taken in accordance with Thinking Futures' safeguarding and data protection arrangements.

Adults must not take photographs or recordings of children for their own personal use.

17.4 Personal Devices

Where possible, photographs and recordings for Thinking Futures purposes should be taken using an organisational or designated device.

Where the use of a personal device has been specifically authorised for a legitimate Thinking Futures purpose, images or recordings must be transferred promptly to the appropriate secure organisational storage and deleted from the personal device, including any automatically synchronised personal cloud storage where applicable.

Personal devices must never be used to retain collections of children's images for private or unauthorised purposes.

17.5 Identification and Personal Information

Thinking Futures will avoid unnecessarily publishing information that could increase safeguarding or privacy risks.

A child's full name will not ordinarily be published alongside their photograph on public-facing promotional material unless there is a specific, appropriate reason and suitable consent has been obtained.

Particular care will be taken before publishing information that could identify:

- where a child lives;
- their regular routines or movements;
- school or other regular locations;
- personal contact details;
- sensitive personal information; or
- information that could otherwise increase risk to the child.

17.6 Children's Work

Thinking Futures may display or share artwork, projects, writing, photographs of creations or other work produced by children and young people.

Where children's work is shared publicly:

- the child's wishes will be considered;
- unnecessary identifying information will be avoided;
- personal or sensitive information contained within the work will not be published without appropriate consideration;
- appropriate consent will be obtained where the child can be identified; and
- safeguarding concerns contained within a piece of work will be responded to in accordance with this policy rather than treated solely as creative content.

17.7 Parents, Carers and Visitors Taking Photographs

Thinking Futures recognises that parents and carers may wish to take photographs at appropriate events or activities.

Where photography by families or visitors is permitted, expectations will be communicated according to the nature of the event.

Thinking Futures may restrict photography or filming where this is necessary to protect the privacy, safety or wishes of participating children.

Parents, carers and visitors must not photograph or record children in circumstances where Thinking Futures has stated that photography is not permitted.

17.8 Publication and Social Media

Before publishing photographs or recordings of children through websites, social media or other public channels, Thinking Futures will consider:

- whether appropriate consent is in place;
- whether the child remains comfortable with the use where appropriate;
- whether the content could embarrass, stigmatise or disadvantage the child;
- whether unnecessary identifying information is included;
- whether the content reveals a child's location or routine in a way that could create risk; and
- whether publication remains consistent with the purpose for which the material was obtained.

Images and recordings will not be used in a manner that materially differs from the purpose communicated when consent was obtained without further consideration and, where required, additional consent.

17.9 Safeguarding Concerns Relating to Images

Any concern about inappropriate photography, filming, image sharing or use of children's images must be reported to the DSL.

Where an image may constitute illegal sexual imagery of a child, adults must not intentionally copy, forward, download or distribute the image in an attempt to investigate the concern. Appropriate safeguarding and, where necessary, police advice will be sought.

17.10 Retention and Deletion

Photographs and recordings will not be retained indefinitely simply because consent was originally provided.

Thinking Futures will periodically review stored media and securely delete material that is no longer required for the purpose for which it was obtained, subject to any legitimate legal or safeguarding reason for retention.

18. Safeguarding at Clubs, Camps, Residentials and Face-to-Face Activities

Thinking Futures will take reasonable and proportionate steps to provide a safe environment for children and young people attending clubs, camps, residentials and other face-to-face activities.

Safeguarding arrangements will take account of the age and needs of participants, the nature of the activity, the venue, staffing arrangements and any identified individual or environmental risks.

Appropriate activity and venue risk assessments will be completed and reviewed where necessary.

18.1 Registration and Emergency Information

Before participating in an activity, Thinking Futures will obtain information appropriate to the nature of the provision.

This may include:

- the child's full name and date of birth;
- parent or carer details;
- emergency contact information;
- relevant medical information;
- allergies and dietary requirements;
- additional learning, communication or accessibility needs;
- relevant emotional, sensory or behavioural support information;
- information required to make reasonable adjustments;
- authorised collection arrangements where applicable;
- relevant consent information; and
- any other information reasonably required to support safe participation.

Parents and carers are responsible for providing accurate information and informing Thinking Futures of relevant changes.

Information will be collected and managed in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

18.2 Arrival and Registration

An attendance register will be maintained for organised clubs, camps and similar activities.

Arrangements will be established for children to arrive and be received safely.

Where appropriate to the child's age and activity:

- attendance will be recorded;
- children will be directed to the appropriate activity area;
- relevant information from parents or carers will be communicated to those who need to know;
- unexpected absence may be followed up where there is reason for concern; and
- children will not be considered under Thinking Futures' supervision until the agreed arrival or handover arrangements have taken place.

Specific arrival arrangements will be communicated to parents and carers where required.

18.3 Collection and Leaving an Activity

Thinking Futures will establish appropriate arrangements for children leaving organised activities.

For younger participants, children will normally be released to a parent, carer or other person authorised to collect them.

A child will not be released to an unauthorised person where collection arrangements require authorisation.

Where a parent or carer wishes a young person to leave independently, this must be agreed in advance where appropriate to the child's age, circumstances and nature of the activity.

Where there is uncertainty about collection arrangements, the child will remain appropriately supervised while clarification is sought.

18.4 Late or Uncollected Children

Where a child is not collected as expected:

- the child will remain appropriately supervised;
- attempts will be made to contact the parent, carer or authorised emergency contacts;
- the child will not ordinarily be transported home by an adult working with Thinking Futures unless an appropriate arrangement has specifically been established;
- the child will not be left alone or sent home without appropriate authority; and
- safeguarding advice or police assistance will be sought where the child remains uncollected and the circumstances give rise to concern.

A separate uncollected-child procedure may be used for activities where collection arrangements apply.

18.5 Supervision

Thinking Futures will establish supervision arrangements appropriate to the activity, participants and environment.

Supervision decisions will consider:

- the number and ages of participants;
- individual support and communication needs;
- the nature of activities;
- the layout and accessibility of the venue;
- the experience and responsibilities of adults present;
- identified risks; and
- the ability to respond effectively if an emergency or safeguarding incident occurs.

Children should know how to identify an appropriate adult and seek help during activities.

Adults should remain aware of where participants are without imposing unnecessary restrictions inconsistent with their age and independence.



18.6 Movement Around the Venue

Where activities use different rooms, zones or outdoor areas, appropriate boundaries and expectations will be explained to participants.

Children should not leave the agreed activity area or venue without appropriate permission.

Where a child needs time away from a group, access to an appropriate quiet or regulation space should be supported where possible without unnecessarily isolating the child or compromising safeguarding arrangements.

18.7 Toilets and Personal Privacy

Children will be informed of the toilet facilities available to them and supported to use them independently wherever possible.

Adults will respect children's privacy and will not ordinarily enter toilet facilities while a child is using them except where assistance has been agreed, an immediate safety concern arises or an emergency makes this necessary.

Where facilities are shared with members of the public or other venue users, the associated safeguarding risks will be considered as part of venue arrangements.

18.8 Visitors and Access to Children

Thinking Futures will take reasonable steps to manage access to children during organised activities.

Visitors, guest speakers, parents, carers, venue staff or other adults who have not undergone the safeguarding checks required for those working directly with participants must not be given unsupervised responsibility for children.

Where appropriate, visitors will be identified to those delivering the activity and informed of relevant safeguarding expectations.

18.9 Missing Child

If a child cannot be located during an activity, the matter will be treated seriously and acted upon promptly.

Immediate action will include:

- confirming when and where the child was last seen;
- checking the immediate venue and agreed activity areas;
- ensuring the safety and supervision of the remaining children;
- informing the DSL or person responsible for the activity;
- contacting the parent or carer where appropriate; and
- contacting the police promptly where the child cannot be located or circumstances indicate that they may be at risk.

Search activity must not result in the remaining children being left inadequately supervised.

18.10 Medical Needs and First Aid

Thinking Futures will obtain relevant medical and emergency information appropriate to the activity.

Appropriate first-aid arrangements will be available for face-to-face activities.

Where a child becomes ill or is injured:

- appropriate first aid will be provided within the competence of the person responding;
- emergency medical assistance will be obtained where necessary;
- parents or carers will be contacted as appropriate;
- relevant accidents or incidents will be recorded; and
- safeguarding implications will be considered where the circumstances of an injury or illness give rise to concern.

Medication arrangements, where required, will be agreed appropriately with parents or carers and documented.

18.11 Food, Allergies and Dietary Requirements

Where Thinking Futures provides food or refreshments, reasonable steps will be taken to identify relevant allergies and dietary requirements.

Parents and carers must provide accurate information about known allergies, medical dietary requirements and any emergency arrangements required.

Food-related activities will be appropriately planned and supervised.

No child will be pressured to eat or taste food as part of an activity.

Where food exploration or tasting forms part of an activity, participation will be voluntary and individual sensory and dietary preferences will be respected.

18.12 Venue and Activity Safety

Venues and activities will be considered for their suitability and associated risks. This may include consideration of:

- access and exit arrangements;
- fire and emergency procedures;
- first-aid provision;
- toilets;
- shared access with members of the public;
- activity equipment;
- trip, slip or other physical hazards;
- food preparation;
- accessibility;
- outdoor areas;
- security; and
- arrangements for emergencies.

Children and young people will receive appropriate safety information without creating an unnecessarily restrictive environment.

18.13 Fire, Evacuation and Other Emergencies

Those responsible for delivering activities will familiarise themselves with relevant venue emergency arrangements.

Participants will be provided with age-appropriate information about what to do in an emergency.

An attendance register should be available to support an effective headcount following evacuation.

In an emergency, the immediate safety of children and young people will take priority.

18.14 Accidents and Incidents

Significant accidents, injuries, behavioural incidents and other safety events will be appropriately recorded.

The DSL will be informed where an incident:

- raises a safeguarding concern;
- involves significant injury or risk;
- involves physical intervention;
- involves potentially harmful behaviour between children;
- indicates that existing safeguarding arrangements may be insufficient; or
- otherwise requires safeguarding consideration.

Incidents will be reviewed where appropriate to identify whether changes to risk assessments, procedures or support arrangements are required.

18.15 Residential Activities

Where Thinking Futures provides a residential activity, additional safeguarding arrangements will be established to reflect the increased level of responsibility involved.

These will include, as applicable:

- sleeping arrangements;
- overnight supervision;

- privacy and changing arrangements;
- access to bedrooms or sleeping areas;
- medication and medical needs;
- emergency contact arrangements;
- boundaries between adults and children;
- arrangements for children who become distressed during the night;
- security and access to the accommodation;
- free time and movement around the site; and
- procedures for emergencies or missing children.

Residential arrangements will be risk assessed and communicated appropriately to participants, parents, carers and those responsible for delivery.

18.16 Activity-Specific Procedures

Thinking Futures may establish additional safeguarding and safe-working procedures for particular programmes, venues or activities.

These procedures must be consistent with this policy and may include more detailed arrangements relating to supervision, collection, emergencies, visitors, venue access and individual participant needs.

19. Trips, Off-Site Activities and Transport

Thinking Futures recognises that trips, visits and off-site activities can provide valuable educational, developmental and social opportunities for children and young people.

Where Thinking Futures organises an off-site activity, appropriate safeguarding and safety arrangements will be established before the activity takes place.

19.1 Planning and Risk Assessment

Trips and off-site activities will be planned with consideration of:

- the age and needs of participating children;
- the nature and location of the activity;
- appropriate supervision;
- travel arrangements;
- accessibility and reasonable adjustments;

- relevant medical needs and allergies;
- emergency arrangements;
- access to first aid;
- public access to the location;
- toilets and changing facilities where relevant;
- communication arrangements;
- weather and environmental conditions where applicable; and
- any activity-specific safeguarding or safety risks.

The level of planning and risk assessment will be proportionate to the nature of the activity.

19.2 Parent or Carer Information and Consent

Parents or carers will be provided with appropriate information about planned trips and off-site activities.

Specific consent will be obtained where this is appropriate to the nature of the activity and existing consent arrangements.

Relevant emergency, medical and contact information will be accessible to those responsible for the activity.

19.3 Supervision and Headcounts

Appropriate supervision arrangements will be established according to the activity, environment and needs of the participating children.

A register of participants will be maintained and headcounts undertaken at appropriate points, including where groups move between locations.

Children and young people will be provided with clear information about:

- expected boundaries;
- meeting points where relevant;
- how to identify and contact an appropriate adult;
- what to do if they become separated from the group; and
- any specific safety requirements associated with the activity.

19.4 Public Places

Where activities take place in locations accessible to the public, adults will remain alert to safeguarding risks arising from interaction with members of the public.

Children should know which adults are responsible for the group and how to seek assistance.

Appropriate boundaries will be established without unnecessarily restricting children's participation or independence.

19.5 Transport

Where Thinking Futures arranges transport, appropriate consideration will be given to:

- the suitability and legality of the transport arrangements;
- appropriate insurance;
- driver suitability;
- seatbelts and other legal safety requirements;
- supervision;
- collection and drop-off arrangements;
- emergency procedures; and
- the individual needs of participating children.

19.6 Use of Private Vehicles

Adults working with Thinking Futures should not ordinarily transport a child alone in a private vehicle as part of Thinking Futures activities.

Where the use of a private vehicle is necessary and has been specifically agreed, appropriate arrangements must be in place, including:

- appropriate consent;
- a valid driving licence;
- appropriate vehicle insurance;
- a roadworthy vehicle;
- appropriate seatbelts and legally required child restraints; and
- clear arrangements regarding the journey and responsibility for the child.

Where reasonably practicable, situations in which one adult transports one child alone should be avoided.

Nothing within this section prevents reasonable action being taken in a genuine emergency where this is necessary to protect a child from immediate harm.

19.7 Children Travelling Independently

Where an older young person is permitted to travel to or from an activity independently, this should be appropriately agreed with the parent or carer in advance.

Thinking Futures' responsibility for supervision will begin and end at the points communicated for the particular activity.

Where an unexpected concern arises about a young person's journey or failure to arrive, reasonable action will be taken having regard to the circumstances and any known safeguarding risk.

19.8 Missing or Separated Child During an Off-Site Activity

If a child becomes separated from the group or cannot be located, the Missing Child Procedure will be followed.

The immediate response will take account of the environment and level of risk and may include:

- checking the immediate area and agreed meeting point;
- contacting the child where appropriate;
- maintaining adequate supervision of the remaining group;
- alerting venue staff or security;
- contacting the parent or carer; and
- contacting the police promptly where the child cannot be located or may be at risk.

19.9 Safeguarding Concerns During Trips

The same safeguarding procedures apply during trips and off-site activities as during activities at Thinking Futures' usual venues.

Any disclosure, concern, incident or allegation must be responded to, recorded and reported in accordance with this policy.

20. Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns About Safeguarding Practice

Thinking Futures is committed to a culture in which safeguarding concerns can be raised openly and taken seriously.

Anyone working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures has a responsibility to raise concerns where they believe that:

- a child or young person may be at risk;
- safeguarding procedures are not being followed;
- unsafe or inappropriate practice is occurring;
- a safeguarding concern has been ignored, minimised or inadequately addressed;
- another adult's conduct may present a risk to children;
- information relevant to safeguarding has been concealed; or
- they have been asked to act in a way that conflicts with this policy or appropriate safeguarding practice.

No person should assume that somebody else will raise the concern.

20.1 Raising a Concern

Safeguarding concerns about practice should ordinarily be raised promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The person raising the concern should provide factual information about:

- what they have observed, heard or been told;
- when and where the concern arose;
- who was involved;
- any immediate safeguarding risk; and
- any action already taken.

Concerns should be recorded appropriately and treated with suitable confidentiality.

20.2 Concerns About the DSL

Where the concern relates to the DSL, or where there is a reasonable concern that reporting the matter to the DSL could compromise the safeguarding response, the individual should use the appropriate external safeguarding route.

Relevant external safeguarding contacts will be identified in the Safeguarding Contacts appendix to this policy.

Where a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted by calling **999**.

20.3 Escalating an Unresolved Concern

Where an individual believes that a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately addressed, they should raise the matter again.

Where necessary, safeguarding advice or a report may be made directly to the appropriate local authority Children's Services, LADO/Designated Officer, police or other relevant safeguarding authority.

The welfare of the child must take priority over concerns about organisational reputation, relationships or potential embarrassment.

20.4 Protection for Those Raising Concerns

Thinking Futures will not tolerate retaliation or unfair treatment against a person who raises a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

A person raising a concern is not required to prove that abuse or misconduct has occurred. They must have an honest and reasonable basis for raising the concern.

Deliberately false or malicious allegations are distinct from genuine concerns that are raised in good faith but are subsequently found to be unsubstantiated.

20.5 Confidentiality

Information about safeguarding or whistleblowing concerns will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, legal or procedural purposes.

Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where information must be shared to protect a child, enable an appropriate safeguarding response or comply with legal obligations.

21. Complaints and Safeguarding Concerns

Thinking Futures welcomes feedback and takes concerns and complaints about its services seriously.

A complaint may relate to the quality of a service, communication, an activity, a decision, the conduct of an adult or another aspect of a child's or family's experience.

Where information provided through a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, the safeguarding concern will take priority and will be addressed in accordance with this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

21.1 Identifying Safeguarding Concerns Within Complaints

A concern should not be treated solely as a complaint where the information indicates that:

- a child may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm;
- an adult working with children may present a safeguarding or suitability concern;
- harmful behaviour between children may have occurred;
- safeguarding procedures may not have been followed;
- a child may have been placed at unnecessary or inappropriate risk; or
- information has otherwise been disclosed that requires safeguarding consideration.

Where there is uncertainty about whether a matter is a complaint, safeguarding concern or both, the DSL will consider the safeguarding implications and seek external advice where necessary.

21.2 Safeguarding Takes Priority

Thinking Futures will not delay necessary safeguarding action while attempting to resolve a complaint informally.

Where appropriate, the ordinary complaints process may be paused, modified or considered alongside safeguarding procedures to avoid interfering with enquiries by Children's Services, the police, a LADO/Designated Officer or another relevant authority.

21.3 Complaints About Safeguarding Decisions

Parents, carers, children and young people may raise concerns about the way a safeguarding matter has been handled.

Thinking Futures will listen to such concerns and review its own practice where appropriate.

However, a complaint will not prevent Thinking Futures from making or maintaining a safeguarding referral where there is a reasonable basis for believing that this is necessary to protect a child.

Information may also need to remain confidential where disclosure could place a child at risk, breach another person's privacy or interfere with an external safeguarding process.

21.4 Complaints About the DSL

Where a complaint about the DSL includes an allegation or concern about their conduct towards a child, suitability to work with children or handling of a matter in a way that may place a child at risk, it must not be dealt with solely as an ordinary complaint.

The external safeguarding arrangements set out within Section 12 and the Safeguarding Contacts appendix will apply.

21.5 Recording

Complaints that include safeguarding concerns will be recorded appropriately.

Safeguarding information will be managed in accordance with the recording, confidentiality and information-sharing requirements set out within this policy.

22. Working with Children, Young People, Parents and Carers

Thinking Futures recognises that effective safeguarding involves working in partnership with children, young people, parents and carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Children and young people should be treated as active participants in decisions affecting them and should be supported to understand how they can seek help, express concerns and communicate when something does not feel right.

22.1 Children's Voice

Thinking Futures will seek to listen to and take account of children's views, wishes and feelings in matters affecting their safety and participation.

Children and young people will be encouraged to:

- express their views and preferences;
- communicate when they are worried, uncomfortable or feel unsafe;
- ask questions;
- say when they do not understand something;
- identify support that helps them;
- say no to optional activities, physical contact, photography or other participation where appropriate; and
- speak to an appropriate adult if they are concerned about themselves or somebody else.

Listening to a child does not mean that Thinking Futures can always act in accordance with their wishes. Where safeguarding action is necessary, the child's safety and welfare will remain central to decision-making.



22.2 Accessible Safeguarding

Thinking Futures recognises that children communicate in different ways and that verbal disclosure is only one way in which a safeguarding concern may become apparent.

Reasonable steps will be taken to make safeguarding information and opportunities to seek help accessible to individual children.

This may include:

- clear and straightforward language;
- visual information;
- additional processing time;
- written or alternative communication;
- opportunities to communicate privately where appropriate;
- checking understanding rather than assuming it;
- recognising changes in behaviour or presentation; and
- considering sensory, communication and developmental needs.

A child will not be disadvantaged because they find it difficult to explain a concern verbally.

22.3 Helping Children Know How to Seek Help

For organised face-to-face activities, children and young people should be provided with age-appropriate information about:

- which adults are responsible for supporting them;
- who they can speak to if they are worried;
- how to report something that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable;
- what to do if they need help during an activity; and
- how to raise a concern about the behaviour of another child or adult.

Information should be communicated in a manner appropriate to the particular activity and participants.

Children will not be expected to understand formal safeguarding terminology in order to have their concerns taken seriously.

22.4 Partnership with Parents and Carers

Thinking Futures aims to maintain open and constructive relationships with parents and carers.

Parents and carers will be encouraged to:

- provide information relevant to their child's safety, welfare and participation;
- communicate relevant changes in circumstances;
- provide accurate emergency and medical information;
- discuss reasonable adjustments or support strategies;
- raise questions or concerns;
- inform Thinking Futures of safeguarding information relevant to an activity where appropriate; and
- work collaboratively where additional support or safety planning is required.

Thinking Futures will communicate relevant information about activities, expectations and safeguarding arrangements to parents and carers where appropriate.

22.5 Respecting Family Privacy

Thinking Futures does not require families to disclose information that is unnecessary for the safe and appropriate provision of its services.

Where sensitive information is shared, it will be treated respectfully and managed in accordance with the confidentiality, safeguarding and data protection provisions within this policy.

Information will only be shared where there is an appropriate reason to do so.

22.6 When Safeguarding Overrides Normal Parental Involvement

Parents and carers will normally be involved in matters affecting their child. However, Thinking Futures may seek safeguarding advice, share information or make a referral without first informing or obtaining consent from a parent or carer where this is necessary or appropriate to protect a child.



This may include circumstances where informing a parent or carer could:

- increase the risk to the child;
- place another person at risk;
- lead to intimidation or coercion;
- result in evidence being destroyed;
- interfere with a police or safeguarding enquiry; or
- otherwise undermine the protection of the child.

The reasons for such decisions will be appropriately recorded.

22.7 Feedback and Participation

Thinking Futures values feedback from children, young people and families about their experiences.

Where appropriate to the service, children and young people will be given opportunities to contribute to the development of activities, environments and arrangements that affect them.

Feedback may be obtained through conversation, activities, accessible feedback methods, reviews or other appropriate means.

Safeguarding concerns disclosed through feedback will be responded to through safeguarding procedures rather than treated solely as general feedback.

22.8 Respect, Dignity and Choice

Children and young people will be treated with dignity and respect.

Thinking Futures will seek to provide meaningful choice wherever this is compatible with safety and the purpose of the activity.

A child's decision not to participate in an optional activity will not ordinarily be treated as misconduct.

Adults should seek to understand the reason for reluctance or withdrawal and consider whether anxiety, sensory needs, communication difficulties, previous experiences or other concerns may be affecting participation.

23. Policy Governance, Monitoring and Review

Thinking Futures is responsible for ensuring that this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy remains appropriate to the nature of its services and reflects relevant safeguarding requirements and good practice.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation and review of this policy.

23.1 Monitoring Safeguarding Practice

Safeguarding arrangements will be monitored through appropriate consideration of:

- safeguarding concerns and referrals;
- accidents, incidents and near misses;
- allegations or concerns about adults;
- concerns involving behaviour between children;
- complaints with safeguarding implications;
- feedback from children, young people, parents and carers;
- issues identified through risk assessments;
- changes in the nature or delivery of services; and
- learning arising from safeguarding incidents or external guidance.

The purpose of monitoring is to identify opportunities to strengthen safeguarding practice and reduce foreseeable risks.

23.2 Policy Review

This policy will be formally reviewed at least annually.

It may also be reviewed earlier where:

- relevant legislation, statutory guidance or safeguarding procedures change;
- Thinking Futures introduces a new type of service or activity;
- there is a significant change in the age, needs or circumstances of participants;
- a safeguarding incident, allegation, complaint or near miss identifies a need for change;
- learning from an external safeguarding review is relevant to Thinking Futures;



- changes are made to local safeguarding arrangements; or
- the DSL otherwise considers that revision is necessary.

Minor operational updates may be made between formal reviews where these do not materially alter the safeguarding principles of the policy.

23.3 Keeping Safeguarding Information Current

Thinking Futures will take reasonable steps to remain aware of developments in safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and procedures relevant to its activities.

Where national or local safeguarding requirements change, current legal and safeguarding requirements will take precedence over any outdated wording within this policy pending formal revision.

23.4 Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside relevant Thinking Futures policies, procedures and operational documents, which may include:

- activity and venue risk assessments;
- safe-working procedures for individual programmes;
- Missing Child Procedure;
- Uncollected Child Procedure;
- behaviour and safety arrangements;
- first-aid and medical procedures;
- photography and media consent arrangements;
- data protection and privacy information;
- complaints procedures;
- incident and safeguarding concern forms;
- safeguarding induction materials; and
- emergency procedures.

Programme-specific procedures may provide additional detail but must remain consistent with the safeguarding principles contained within this policy.

23.5 Availability of the Policy

This policy will be made available to those working with or on behalf of Thinking Futures and to parents, carers, children and young people where appropriate.

Relevant safeguarding information will be communicated in accessible and proportionate ways rather than relying solely upon individuals reading the full policy.

23.6 Version Control

Thinking Futures will maintain a record of the current version of this policy.

The policy will identify:

Policy owner: Thinking Futures

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Jones

Approved by: Thinking Futures

Date approved: 01 September 2026

Effective from: 01 September 2026

Next scheduled review: 01 September 2027

Version: 3

Where substantial changes are made, the version number and review date will be updated accordingly.



Appendix 1: Safeguarding Contacts and Reporting Routes

This appendix provides key contacts and reporting routes to support the Thinking Futures Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The appropriate safeguarding authority will depend upon the location of the child and, where relevant, where the safeguarding concern occurred.

Contact information should be checked periodically as part of the annual safeguarding policy review.

A1.1 Thinking Futures Safeguarding Contact

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Sarah Jones

Telephone: 07941062749

Email: sarah@thinking-futures.com

Safeguarding concerns arising through Thinking Futures should normally be reported to the DSL without unnecessary delay.

Where a child is in immediate danger, emergency action must not be delayed while attempting to contact the DSL.

A1.2 Emergency Contacts

Immediate danger or emergency

Police, ambulance or other emergency service: **999**

Police non-emergency

Police: **101**

If there is an immediate risk of serious harm, call **999**.



A1.3 Safeguarding a Child in the Vale of Glamorgan

For concerns relating to a child in the Vale of Glamorgan:

Vale Family Compass / Children's Services

Telephone: 0808 281 6727

Select the appropriate Children's Services option where prompted.

Email: Familycompass@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Vale Family Compass provides the single front door for access to Family Information, Early Help and Intake Children's Services within the Vale of Glamorgan.

Where making a formal safeguarding report, the person contacting Children's Services should make clear that they wish to report a safeguarding concern about a child, rather than simply seek general advice.

Out of Office Hours

Emergency Duty Team

Telephone: **029 20 788570**

This service should be used outside normal office hours where a safeguarding concern cannot safely wait until the next working day.

Where a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

A1.4 Making a Safeguarding Report in Wales

Where there is concern that a child may be at risk of abuse, neglect or other harm, the relevant local authority Children's Social Services should be contacted in accordance with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The appropriate local authority may not always be the Vale of Glamorgan.

Where the safeguarding concern occurred in another Welsh local authority area, the relevant Children's Social Services department for that area should normally be contacted.

If there is uncertainty about which authority should receive the report, advice should be sought from Children's Social Services.

A safeguarding report should not be delayed solely because every piece of information is not available.

Where a report is initially made by telephone, the reporting requirements of the relevant local authority and Wales Safeguarding Procedures should be followed, including written confirmation where required.

The DSL will record:

- the date and time of the report;
- the authority or agency contacted;
- the person spoken to where available;
- information provided;
- advice received;
- actions agreed;
- any reference number provided; and
- required follow-up action.

A1.5 Concerns or Allegations About an Adult Working With Children

Concerns about the conduct or suitability of a person working with children must be addressed in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

In Wales, allegations and concerns about practitioners and people in positions of trust are managed under Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

This includes concerns about people working with children in paid, unpaid, employed, self-employed or voluntary capacities where the relevant criteria are met.

The appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) / Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DoS) arrangements should be contacted for advice where required.

For activities within the Vale of Glamorgan, the relevant Vale of Glamorgan safeguarding arrangements will be used.

A1.6 Safeguarding Concern About the Thinking Futures DSL

Where a safeguarding concern or allegation relates to the Thinking Futures Designated Safeguarding Lead, Sarah Jones, the concern must not be referred to Sarah Jones for investigation or decision-making.

The person receiving or identifying the concern should contact the appropriate external safeguarding authority directly.

For activities in Wales, this will normally be the relevant:

- Local Authority Designated Officer / Designated Officer for Safeguarding where the concern relates to conduct or suitability to work with children;
- Children's Social Services where a child may be at risk of harm; and/or
- police where a criminal offence may have occurred or there is an immediate safeguarding risk.

For Kidz Like Us activities within the Vale of Glamorgan, the Vale of Glamorgan safeguarding arrangements will apply.

No person requires the permission of Thinking Futures or the DSL before making an external safeguarding report where they have a genuine concern about the safety or welfare of a child.

A1.7 Children Located Elsewhere in Wales

Where a child is located elsewhere in Wales, Thinking Futures will identify and contact the appropriate local authority Children's Social Services department.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures should be used to identify the appropriate safeguarding process.

Where there is immediate danger, call **999**.

A1.8 Children Located in England

Where a safeguarding concern relates to a child in England, the Children's Social Care department of the appropriate English local authority should be contacted.

Where the concern relates to an adult who works with children, the relevant local authority LADO or designated officer arrangements should be followed.

As Thinking Futures may work remotely with children in different locations, the DSL will identify the appropriate local authority according to the child's location and circumstances.

Where there is immediate danger, call **999**.

A1.9 Children Located Outside England and Wales

Where Thinking Futures provides online services to a child located outside England and Wales, safeguarding action will take account of the child's physical location.

Thinking Futures will seek to identify the appropriate safeguarding, child protection or emergency authority within that jurisdiction.

Where possible, sufficient current information will be maintained to enable an appropriate safeguarding response in an emergency.

Thinking Futures will not assume that UK safeguarding referral arrangements have jurisdiction in another country.

A1.10 Safeguarding Advice

Where the DSL or another person is uncertain whether information reaches the threshold for a safeguarding referral, appropriate safeguarding advice may be sought.

Seeking advice must not delay emergency action or a necessary safeguarding report.

A record should be made of significant safeguarding advice sought and the resulting decision.

A1.11 Reviewing Contact Information

The DSL will review the contact information within this appendix:

- as part of the annual safeguarding policy review;
- following notification of changes to local safeguarding arrangements;
- before commencing activities in a new local authority area where appropriate; and
- where a contact number, email address or reporting route is found to have changed.

The current safeguarding authority's published information should be checked where there is any uncertainty about a contact route.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

CONFIDENTIAL SAFEGUARDING RECORD

This form should be completed as soon as possible following a safeguarding concern, disclosure, observation or incident.

Record facts accurately. Where possible, use the child or young person's exact words. Do not investigate, diagnose or make assumptions.

If a child is in immediate danger, take appropriate emergency action first, including calling 999 where necessary.

A2.1 Child or Young Person

Full name:

Date of birth / age:

Programme / activity:

Date of activity/session:

Parent/carer details if relevant:



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.2 Person Making This Record

Name:

Telephone/email if required:

Role:

Date of activity/session:

Parent/carers details if relevant:

Date record completed:

Time record completed:

A2.3 Nature of the Concern

Tick all that apply:

- ☐ Child or young person made a disclosure
- ☐ Adult observed something concerning
- ☐ Change in behaviour or presentation
- ☐ Physical injury or mark
- ☐ Information received from parent/carers
- ☐ Information received from another child
- ☐ Information received from another adult/professional
- ☐ Online/digital concern
- ☐ Peer-on-peer concern
- ☐ Concern about an adult working with children
- ☐ Neglect or unmet basic needs
- ☐ Sexual safety concern
- ☐ Emotional or psychological harm
- ☐ Physical harm
- ☐ Exploitation or grooming concern
- ☐ Immediate safety concern
- ☐ Other

If other, briefly specify:

.....



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.4 What Happened?

Date of concern/disclosure/observation:

Approximate time:

Location / online platform:

Who was present?

Factual account

Describe what you saw, heard or were told.

Where the child or young person spoke to you, record their exact words wherever possible.

Clearly distinguish between:

- what the child said;
- what you personally observed;
- information provided by somebody else; and
- your own professional concern or interpretation.

Continue on a separate sheet, if required.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

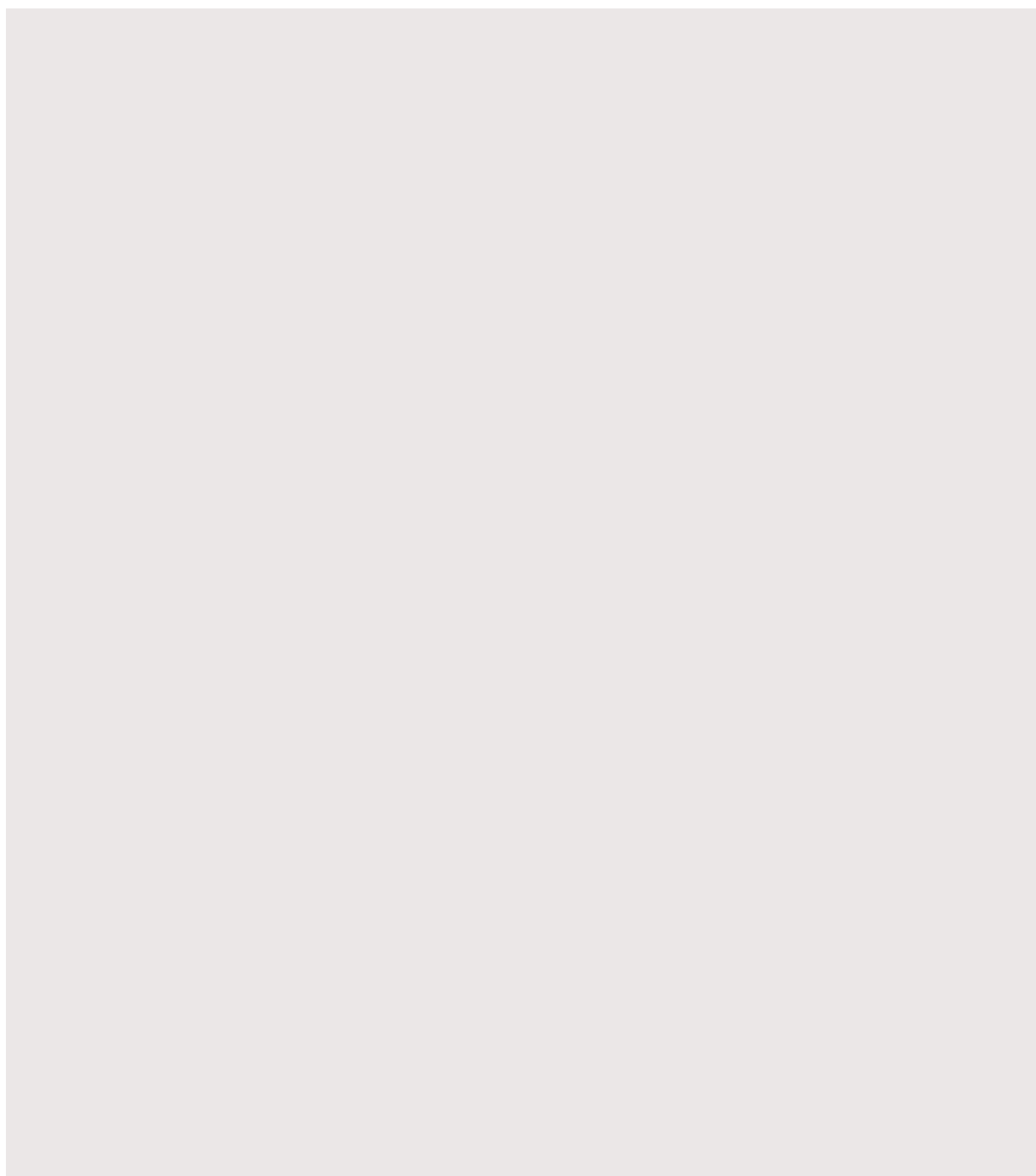
Continuation sheet

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.5 Child or Young Person's Own Words

Where relevant, record important words or phrases used by the child as accurately as possible.

Use quotation marks where recording their exact words.



Do not ask the child to repeat their account simply for the purpose of completing this form. Use a continuation sheet, if required,



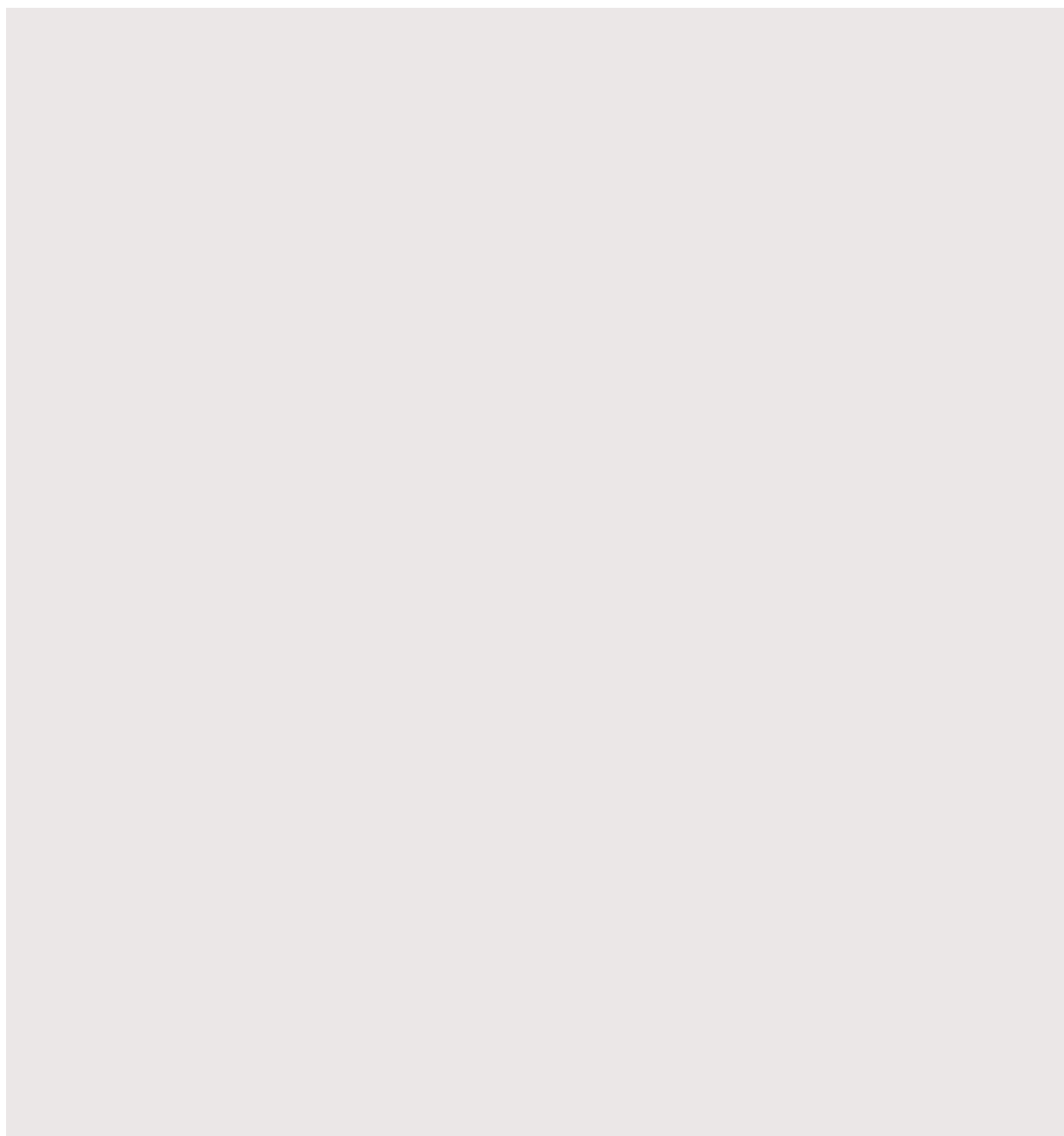
Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.6 Presentation and Behaviour

Record any relevant observations about the child's presentation or behaviour.

For example: visibly upset, crying, unusually quiet, frightened, shaking, angry, withdrawn, distressed or apparently calm.

Do not interpret behaviour as proof of what has or has not happened.



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

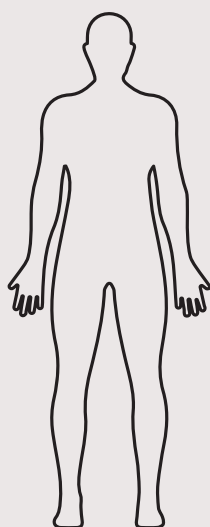
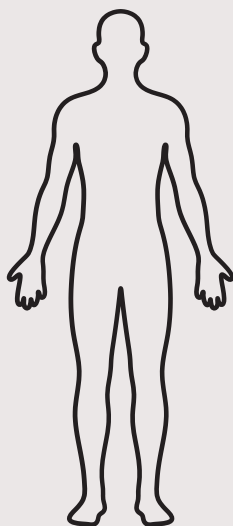
A2.7 Injuries or Physical Signs

Were any injuries or physical signs observed?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

If yes, describe only what was visible and relevant.

Include the location, approximate size and appearance where this can be recorded without examining the child.



Do not ask a child to remove clothing or conduct a physical examination for safeguarding recording purposes.



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.8 Immediate Safety

Were any injuries or physical signs observed?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

If yes, describe only what was visible and relevant.

Include the location, approximate size and appearance where this can be recorded without examining the child.

Was the child believed to be in immediate danger?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

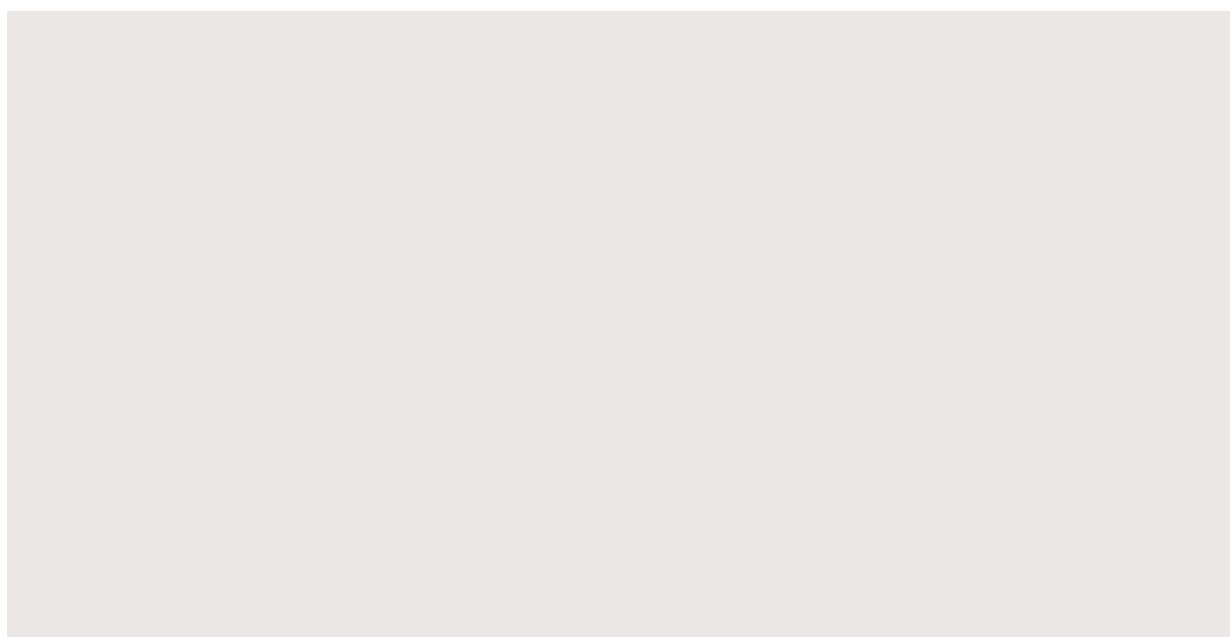
Was anybody else believed to be in immediate danger?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

Was emergency action taken?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

If yes, record what action was taken, by whom and when:



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.8 Immediate Safety

Emergency services contacted?

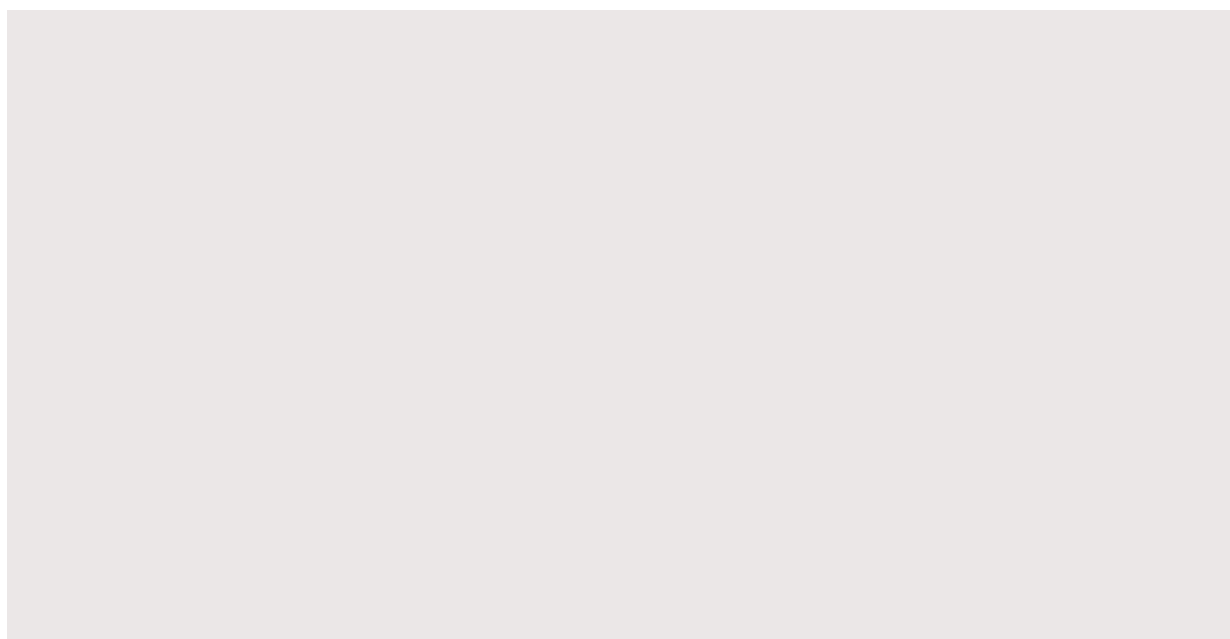
- ☐ No
- ☐ Police
- ☐ Ambulance
- ☐ Other:

Time contacted:

Reference number, if provided:

A2.9 What Was Said to the Child?

Briefly record any significant response or reassurance given to the child.



Do not promise confidentiality or tell the child that the information will remain secret.



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.10 Reporting to the DSL

Reported to DSL?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No – immediate external safeguarding action was required
- ☐ No – concern relates to the DSL
- ☐ Other:

Name of person informed:

Date:

Time:

How was the concern reported?

- ☐ In person
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Secure electronic communication
- ☐ Other:

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

DSL ACTION AND DECISION RECORD

To be completed by the DSL or appropriate person managing the safeguarding response.

A2.11 Initial Safeguarding Decision

Following consideration of the information:

- ☐ Immediate emergency action required
- ☐ Children's Social Services referral required
- ☐ Police referral/contact required
- ☐ LADO / Designated Officer advice or referral required
- ☐ Safeguarding advice sought
- ☐ Parent/carers to be contacted
- ☐ Further internal safeguarding monitoring required
- ☐ No external referral at this stage
- ☐ Other action required

Decision and rationale:



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.12 External Safeguarding Contact

Organisation/authority contacted:

Name/role of person spoken to, if available:

Telephone/email/contact route:

Date:

Time:

Information provided / advice received:

Reference number:

Written confirmation required?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

If yes, date completed:



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.13 Parent or Carer

Parent/carers informed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Date/time:

Who made contact?

Summary of information provided:

If the parent/carers was not informed, record the reason:



Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.14 Follow-Up Actions

Record any actions required, person responsible and completion date.

Action	Responsible Person	Due Date	Completed

A2.14 Follow-Up Actions

Record relevant subsequent information, safeguarding decisions or outcomes.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Concern and Disclosure Record

A2.16 Record Completion

Record completed/reviewed by:

Role:

Date:

Signature, where using a paper record:

Confidentiality

This is a confidential safeguarding record.

It must be stored securely and separately from ordinary teaching, coaching, guidance, attendance or programme records, with access restricted to those who require the information for legitimate safeguarding purposes.

Do not retain informal duplicate copies of this record on personal devices, personal email accounts or unsecured messaging services.