

Pippa's Guardians Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Academic Year 2026–2027

Key safeguarding contacts

Role	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Rose Vigers-Belgeonne – 07731 997732 safeguarding@pippasguardians.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Michelle Edwards – 07802 421472 – safeguarding@pippasguardians.co.uk
24/7 Duty Phone	07721 372865
Worcestershire LADO	Jon Hancock – 01905 846221 – lado@worcschildrensfirst.org.uk
Prevent Lead	Imogen Trevethan – 01684 252757 / 07593 443685 – imogen@pippasguardians.co.uk

Policy statement

Pippa's Guardians is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff, host family members, chaperones, volunteers, and contractors who come into contact with children have a duty to act in the best interests of the child and to take appropriate action where concerns arise.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, Pippa's Guardians will ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are sought, listened to, and taken into account in all decisions and actions affecting them, in a manner that is appropriate to their age, maturity, understanding, and communication needs. While the child's views will be given due consideration, Pippa's Guardians will always act in the child's best interests and take any necessary action to safeguard their welfare.

This policy applies to all Pippa's Guardians staff, host family members, volunteers, contractors, students, parents, guardians, and partner organisations. It should be read alongside the organisation's [Missing Student](#), [Online Safety](#), [Prevent](#), [Whistleblowing](#), [Staff Handbook](#), and [Safer Recruitment](#) policies.

Pippa's Guardians recognises that children missing from education may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other safeguarding concerns.

All staff and host families should be aware that children may not feel ready, or may not know how, to disclose that they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, or neglect. Children may also be unable to recognise that what they are experiencing is harmful or abusive. This should not prevent staff or host families from maintaining professional curiosity, remaining vigilant to signs and indicators of harm, and sharing any concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

No concern should be considered too small, and all safeguarding concerns must be reported as detailed below in the section titled **Responding to a disclosure or concern**.

Aims of the policy

- Protect all children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm.
- Promote and protect children's physical, emotional, and mental health, wellbeing, and development.
- Ensure that all children receive safe, effective, and appropriate care while under the responsibility of Pippa's Guardians.
- Respond promptly and effectively to safeguarding concerns, working in partnership with schools, parents, host families, and relevant agencies.
- Enable all children to thrive, achieve positive outcomes, and reach their full potential in a safe and supportive environment.
- Provide clear procedures for recognising, reporting, recording, and responding to safeguarding concerns.

Statutory framework

This policy is based on the principles and requirements of:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) 2026](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.](#)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- Education Act 2002.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within Pippa's Guardians.

The DSL will:

- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Receive and review safeguarding reports from staff, host families, students, parents, and any external agencies.
- Make referrals to children's social care, the police, Channel, or other appropriate agencies where required.
- Liaise with schools, local authorities, and safeguarding partners where required.
- Maintain secure safeguarding records and monitor patterns of concern.

- Provide advice, support, and safeguarding training to staff and host families.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed annually and updated in line with statutory guidance.

Staff, host family members and chaperones

All staff, host family members and chaperones must:

- Do everything reasonable within the definition of your job role to keep children safe.
- Be aware of Pippa's Guardians Safeguarding Policy and follow advice and procedures contained within this policy.
- All staff are required to read, understand and comply with [Part One of KCSIE](#) - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Safeguarding Information for All Staff, as part of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Report any matters of concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as is practically possible.
- Keep a comprehensive and concise record of any significant complaint, conversation or event and written reports and all correspondence should be shared with the appropriate DSL or DDSL so that this information can be filed correctly.
- Each staff member and host family must undertake appropriate safeguarding training, including refresher training, at regular intervals. Current AEGIS minimum guidelines suggest this is refreshed every three years.
- Understand that safeguarding concerns may arise both offline and online.

Host Family Responsibilities

Host families must:

- provide a safe home environment
- supervise students appropriately
- immediately report safeguarding concerns to their Area Manager, the DSL or the 24 hr Duty Phone depending on timings and circumstances
- cooperate with any investigations
- maintain confidentiality
- complete AEGIS safeguarding training
- notify Pippa's Guardians of any changes in their household composition
- notify Pippa's Guardians of police involvement with their family
- notify Pippa's Guardians if anyone in the home is arrested
- notify Pippa's Guardians of significant medical or mental health concerns affecting the household that could impact on a student stay
- follow the Host Family Agreement and the advice and guidelines given in the Host Family Handbook.

Staff-student, host family-student and chaperone-student contact

- staff, host families and chaperones should avoid physical contact with the student to and should consider the following guidelines: These guidelines are covered in the Host Family Handbook which is given to all host families on completion of the successful application to Pippa's Guardians.
- the physical integrity of the students must be respected at all times. Staff and host family members must not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind.
- under no circumstances may a staff, host family member or chaperone give tobacco or non prescribed drugs to students. Alcohol may only ever be given, in moderation, at times specified by and with permission from parents or guardians and in accordance with UK law restricting the sale, supply and consumption of alcohol.
- Staff, host family members and chaperones **MUST** prudently avoid situations in which they are alone with students in rooms or areas which are locked or made inaccessible to others.
- a student's bedroom must always be regarded as private space and staff, host family members and chaperones should never visit a student in his or her bedroom alone except when exercising specific responsibilities or as a duty of care. In this case, doors should be left ajar or another host family member made aware of the course of action being followed. Staff or Host Family members should knock, announce their presence, and seek permission before entering.
- Staff, host family members and chaperones involved in transporting students must exercise prudence if transporting students individually and where possible, it is sensible to ask the student to travel in the back seat of the car.

Signs of abuse

Government advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) gives the following examples as potential indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty and/or with consistently poor hygiene;
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- Children who fail to reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, with no medical reason;
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education;
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school;
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up;
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- Children who talk about running away and/or children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Types of abuse and safeguarding concerns

Pippa's Guardians recognises that abuse may be perpetrated by adults or by other children and may occur in person or online. Concerns may include, but are not limited to:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate use of force that causes, or could cause, injury or harm to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that affects their emotional development, self-esteem, or mental wellbeing. It may include intimidation, humiliation, rejection, isolation, or exposure to constant criticism.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It includes both contact and non-contact abuse, including online abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is

likely to result in serious harm to their health or development. This may include failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, education, or medical care.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where a child is manipulated, coerced, or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for something they need or want, or for the benefit of another person. It can happen in person or online.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), including County Lines

Child criminal exploitation occurs when a child is coerced, controlled, manipulated, or deceived into committing criminal activities for the benefit of others. County lines is a form of CCE where children are exploited to transport or sell drugs across different areas.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour between people aged 16 or over who are personally connected. Children who witness or experience domestic abuse are also victims and may suffer significant harm.

Honour-Based Abuse (including Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing)

Honour-based abuse is violence or abuse committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community. It includes practices such as forced marriage and breast ironing, which are forms of abuse and are illegal or harmful.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation is the deliberate alteration or removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is a form of child abuse, is illegal in the UK, and can have serious lifelong physical and emotional consequences.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation is the process by which a person is encouraged to adopt extremist views that may lead them to support or engage in terrorism or extremist activities. Children can be vulnerable to radicalisation both online and offline.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when one child abuses another. It can include bullying, physical abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, sharing nude or semi-nude images, online abuse, and other forms of abusive behaviour. Such behaviour should never be dismissed as normal or part of growing up.

Serious Violence and Weapon-Related Crime

Children may be at risk of serious violence through involvement in gangs, organised crime, or carrying weapons. Indicators may include unexplained injuries, possession of weapons, changes in behaviour, or association with individuals involved in criminal activity.

Supporting International Students with Mental Health Concerns

Mental health concerns are not always, in themselves, a safeguarding issue. However, changes in a child's mental health or behaviour may be an indicator that they have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation, or trauma. Equally, abuse and neglect can have a significant impact on a child's mental health and wellbeing.

Pippa's Guardians recognises that positive mental health is essential to a child's wellbeing, safety and ability to learn. International students may face additional challenges, including being away from their families, cultural adjustment, language barriers, academic pressures, homesickness and social isolation. These factors may increase their vulnerability to mental health difficulties.

All staff and host families should be alert to changes in a student's behaviour, mood or presentation that may indicate they are experiencing mental health difficulties. Where concerns arise, staff must respond with sensitivity and report them promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.

Pippa's Guardians will work closely with the student, their school or college, host family, parents (where appropriate), and relevant health or support services to ensure that the student receives suitable support. Where there is an immediate risk to the student's safety or the safety of others, emergency procedures will be followed without delay.

If a school decides that a student should be temporarily or permanently removed from school due to concerns relating to their mental health, behaviour or welfare, Pippa's Guardians will work with the school, parents and other relevant agencies to ensure the student's immediate safety and wellbeing. This may include arranging appropriate accommodation, increased supervision, access to medical or mental health services, travel arrangements where necessary, and ongoing welfare support until a longer-term plan has been agreed.

No student may be removed from school until [the Student Mental Health Removal Form](#) has been completed and reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or an authorised senior manager, who must be satisfied that the proposed action is appropriate and, in the student's, best interests

Online safety

Pippa's Guardians recognises that safeguarding concerns can arise both offline and online. Online safety is a key component of safeguarding and includes risks such as:

- Online grooming and child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Coercion, blackmail, and sextortion.
- The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- Cyberbullying and online harassment.
- Exposure to harmful or extremist content.
- Abuse facilitated through digital platforms, including AI-generated or manipulated sexual imagery.

- financially motivated sexual extortion ("sextortion")
- AI-generated abuse
- deepfakes
- online coercion

All staff and host family members should consider online safety as part of their wider safeguarding responsibilities and report concerns in the same way as offline concerns.

Missing Student Policy

Any unexplained absence, failure to return to agreed accommodation, or inability to contact a student will be treated as a safeguarding concern and escalated promptly in accordance with the Missing Student Policy.

Responding to a disclosure or concern

A student may share something they have witnessed, been told about, or feel uncomfortable about, even when it does not directly involve them. A Pippa's staff member or Host Family may have become a trusted adult, and a student may be testing whether it feels safe to share more.

A Pippa's staff member or Host Family should not promise to keep safeguarding information secret. Where appropriate, they should explain that they will respect the student's privacy but may need to share information if there is a concern about the student's safety or the safety of someone else. The student should be reassured that information will only be shared with the appropriate people and will be handled sensitively and professionally.

Not every disclosure will require immediate escalation. Some concerns may require pastoral support and monitoring, while others may require further safeguarding action. Each situation should be considered individually, based on the circumstances and the information available.

Any member of staff or host family member who receives a disclosure or has a safeguarding concern should:

- Listen carefully and take the child seriously.
- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Avoid asking leading questions or investigating the matter.
- Explain that the information may need to be shared with appropriate safeguarding professionals.
- Make a factual written record as soon as possible, including the date, time, place, and exact words used where possible.
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL or DDSL.
- If a child is in immediate danger, contact the police or emergency services and inform the DSL as soon as possible.

The reporting form can be found [here](#)

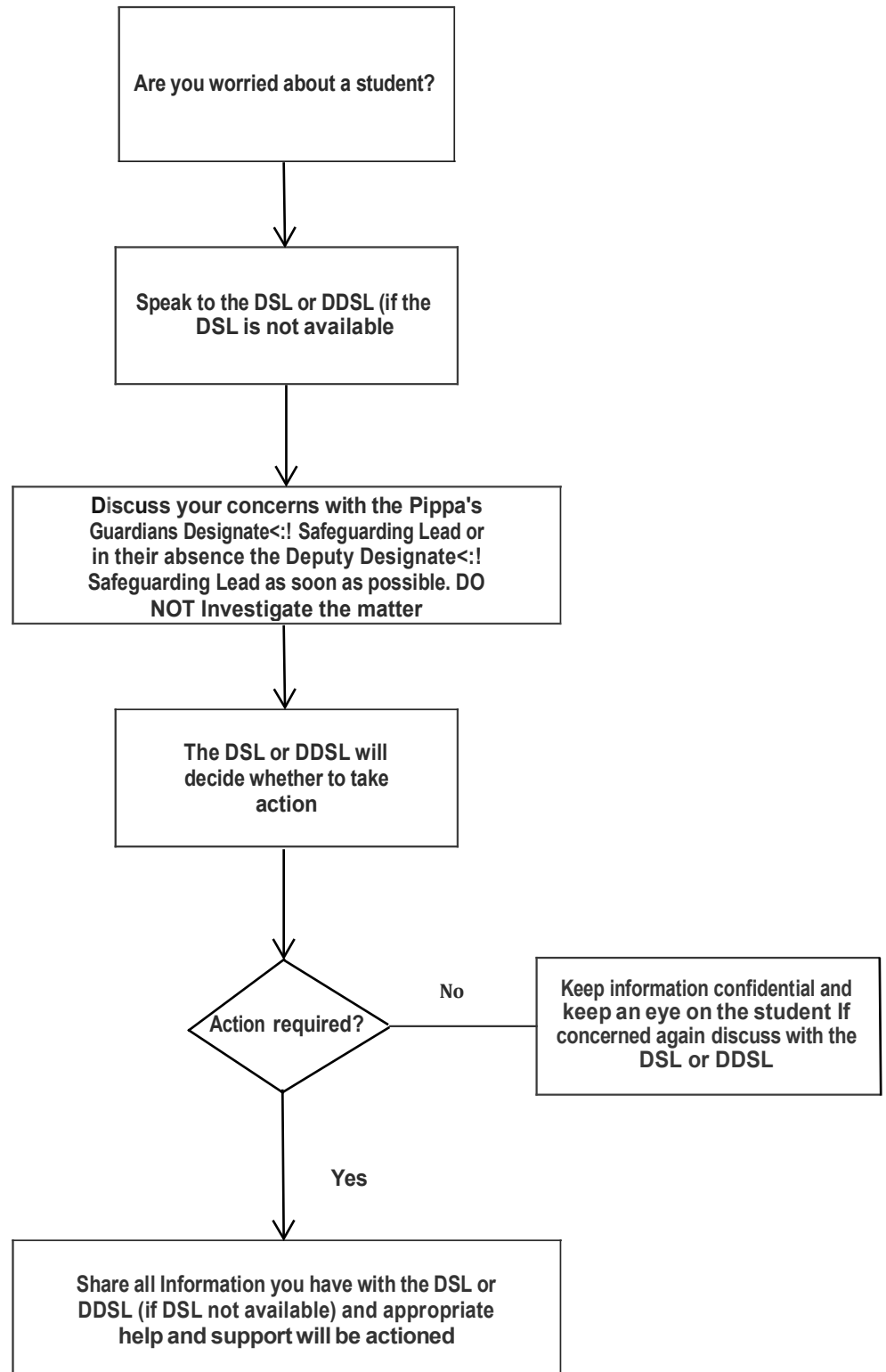
Making referrals

The DSL will decide, in consultation with relevant agencies where appropriate, whether a referral should be made to children's social care, the police, Channel, or another safeguarding body.

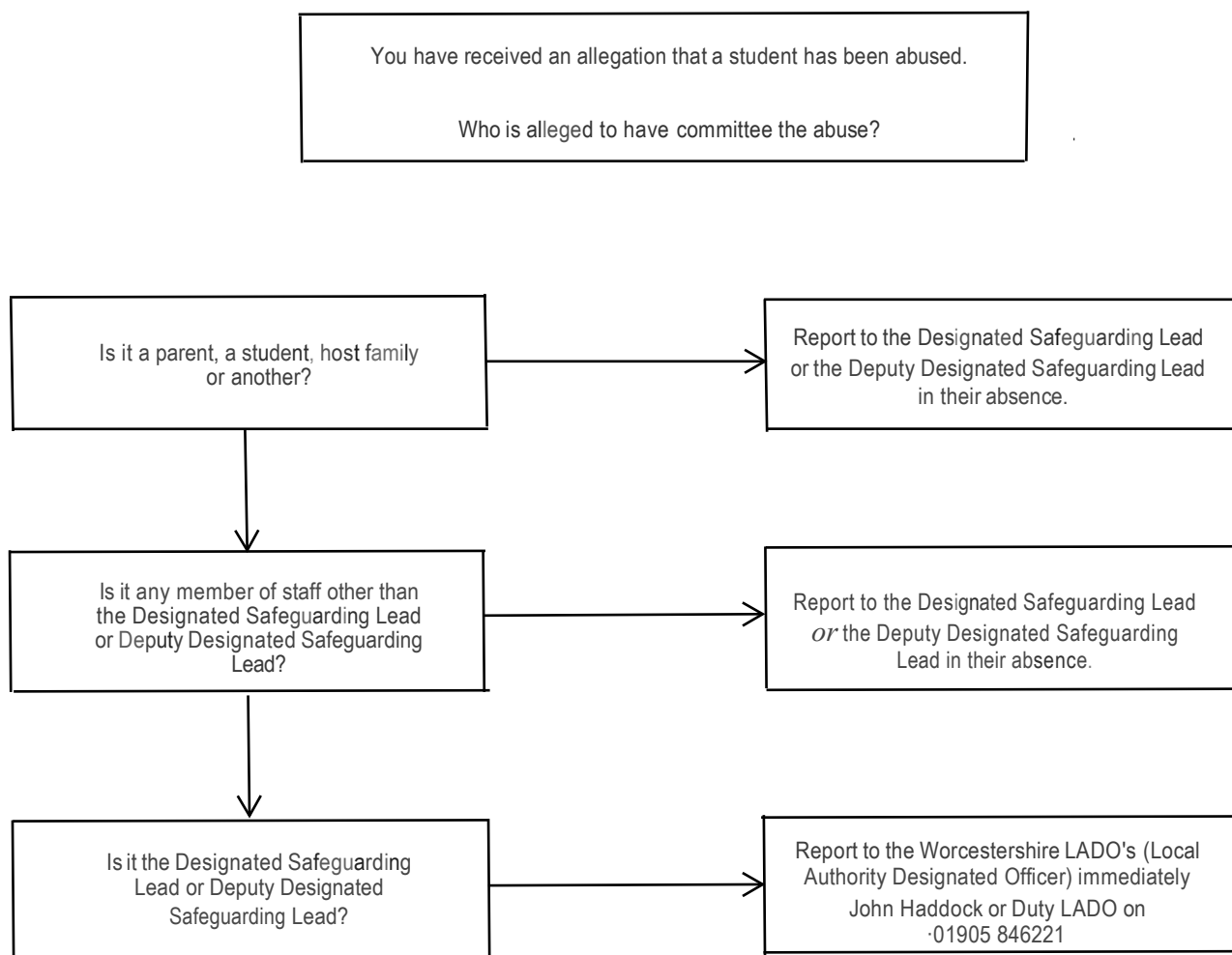
Referrals will be made without delay where a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

If a member of staff or host family believes a referral should be made and the DSL or DDSL is unavailable, they must take appropriate action in the short term to protect the child and seek advice from children's social care or the police.

Flow chart for a member of staff worried about a student



Allegations Flowchart



• The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) must be contacted

Child-on-child abuse

Pippa's Guardians recognises that children can abuse other children. Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", or harmless behaviour. Concerns may include:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Physical abuse or assault.
- Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- Initiation or hazing-type violence.
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships.

All concerns will be taken seriously, recorded, and referred to the DSL. Appropriate support will be provided to both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and referrals will be made to external agencies where required.

Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct.
- Raises professional curiosity.
- Does not meet the harm threshold but may indicate a pattern of concerning behaviour.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed by the DSL to identify patterns of behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, or where a concern may meet the harm threshold, the matter will be considered for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Self Reporting

All staff, host families, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of Pippa's Guardians have a responsibility to immediately report any incident, action or circumstance that could compromise, or be perceived to compromise, the safety or welfare of a child. This includes any behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional, that could be misconstrued, misinterpreted or give rise to concerns or allegations. Examples may include being alone with a child in unexpected circumstances, accidental physical contact, inappropriate communication, or any situation that falls outside normal professional boundaries.

Prompt self-reporting is not an admission of wrongdoing. Rather, it demonstrates openness, transparency and a commitment to safeguarding. Early reporting enables Pippa's Guardians to assess the circumstances, provide appropriate support, maintain accurate records and, where necessary, take steps to protect both the child and the individual concerned. Failure to report such incidents may be treated as a breach of safeguarding responsibilities.

Self-reporting should be carried out as follows:

1. Report the incident immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL. If neither is available and there is an immediate risk to a child, take appropriate action to protect the child and contact the emergency services if necessary.
2. Provide a factual written account as soon as possible, including:
 - the date, time and location of the incident;
 - who was present;
 - a clear, factual description of what happened;
 - any action you took at the time; and
 - whether anyone else witnessed the incident.
3. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know, unless instructed to do so by the DSL. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
4. Co-operate fully with any enquiries or safeguarding processes that follow and provide any additional information requested.

Allegations against adults

Allegations against staff, host family members, volunteers, contractors, or other adults working with children will be managed in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and local safeguarding procedures.

- Allegations against staff or host family members should be reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL.
- Allegations against the DSL or DDSL should be reported directly to the Worcestershire LADO.
- The safety and welfare of the child will be the primary consideration.
- Suspension will not be an automatic response; all options will be considered based on risk assessment.
- Where required, referrals will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Safer Recruitment

Pippa's Guardians is committed to safer recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and host family members are suitable to work with children. This includes:

- Enhanced DBS checks where appropriate.
- Verification of identity and right to work.
- References and suitability checks.
- Appropriate checks for all adults in host family households.
- Safeguarding training and updates for staff and host families
- Verification of qualifications and employment history.

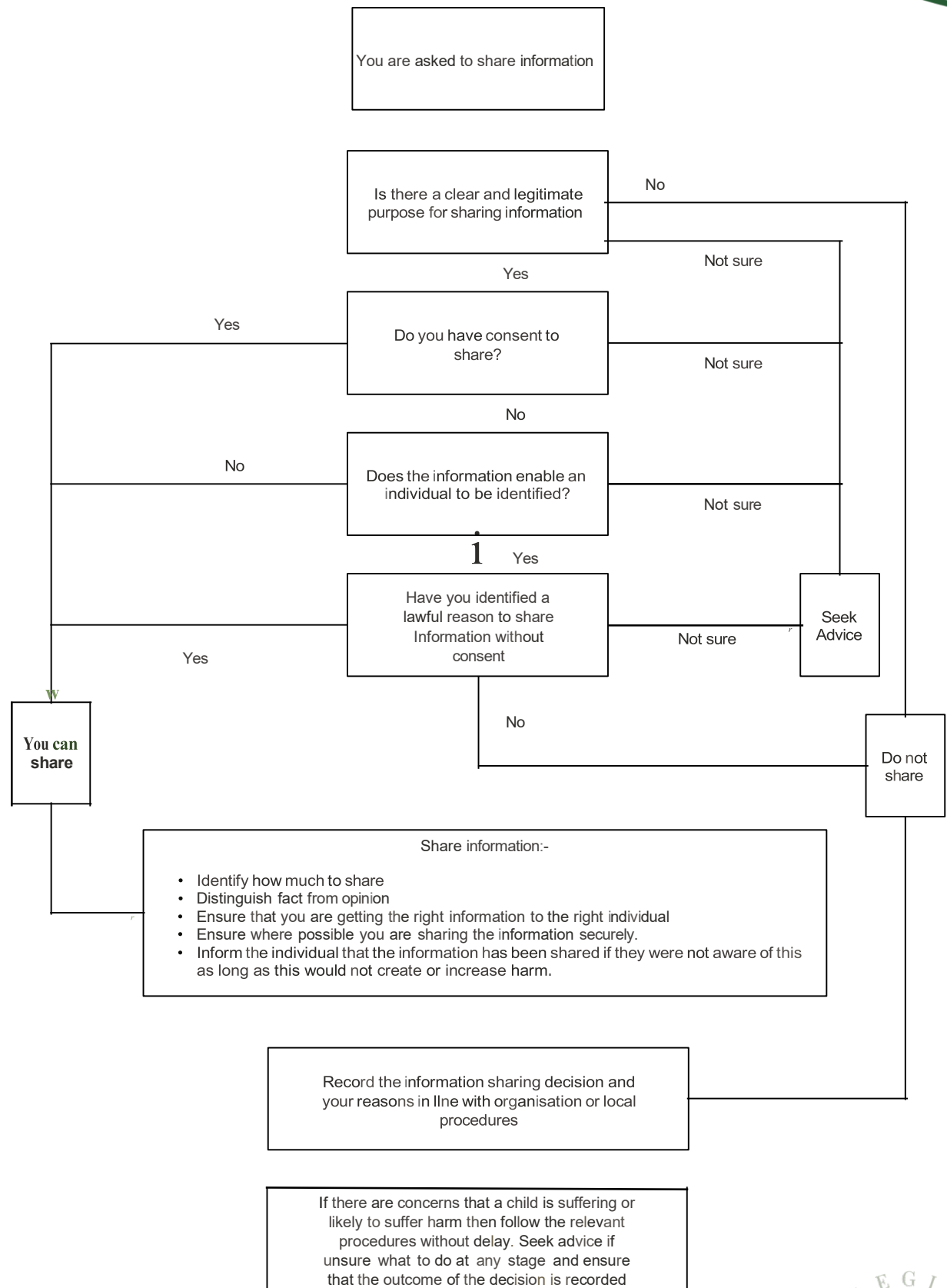
Information sharing and confidentiality

Pippa's Guardians will keep safeguarding records confidential and secure. Information will be shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

Information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so, particularly where sharing is necessary to protect a child from harm. Decisions about information sharing will be recorded in line with organisational procedures and UK GDPR requirements.

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance and organisational record retention procedures.

13 Flowchart of when and how to share Information



Training

- All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and regular updates thereafter.
- The DSL and DDSL will undertake appropriate DSL training and refresher training in line with statutory guidance.
- Host family members will receive safeguarding information, training, and updates appropriate to their role.
- Training will include recognising signs of abuse, responding to disclosures, online safety, Prevent duties, and reporting procedures.

Whistleblowing

Pippa's Guardians encourages a culture of openness and accountability. Staff, host family members, volunteers, and contractors should raise concerns about safeguarding practice or the behaviour of colleagues in good faith.

No retribution or disciplinary action will be taken against a person who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith. Concerns may be raised through the [Pippa's Guardians Whistleblowing Policy](#) or where appropriate, through the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

Telephone: **0800 028 0285**

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Definitions of commonly used Safeguarding terms

Abuse

Abuse is any form of maltreatment of a child and covers every form of abuse, including sexual, emotional, psychological, material, financial, physical, discriminatory or organisational abuse.

Assessment

An assessment is a process that identifies the needs of an individual, whether those needs are being met, and how their wellbeing and day-to-day life are being affected.

Child Protection

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to the action taken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

Consent

Consent refers to an individual's voluntary and ongoing permission for an intervention. The individual must have sufficient understanding of the reason, nature, likely consequences and risks of that intervention.

CPS (Crown Prosecution Service)

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is the government department responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police in England and Wales.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is the government body responsible for helping employers make safer recruitment decisions by carrying out criminal record checks.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the individual within an organisation who has lead responsibility for safeguarding, including managing, overseeing and coordinating responses where safeguarding concerns or allegations arise.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse refers to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members.

Enhanced DBS Check

An Enhanced DBS Check is a higher level of Disclosure and Barring Service check, which may include a check of the children's barred list where appropriate.

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulation, which governs the protection and privacy of personal data.

Harm

Harm refers to ill-treatment, including sexual abuse and non-physical ill-treatment, or the avoidable impairment of a person's physical or mental health, or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Hate Crime

A hate crime is a criminal offence motivated by hostility or prejudice based on characteristics such as race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

Host Family

A host family is an individual, couple or household approved by Pippa's Guardians to provide accommodation, care and support for students during their stay in the UK.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person through force, coercion, deception or abuse of vulnerability for the purpose of exploitation.

LSP (Local Safeguarding Partnership)

A Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) brings together key agencies, including the local authority, health services and the police, to coordinate safeguarding arrangements and protect children.

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) brings together organisations such as the police, local authority, health services and other agencies to share information and coordinate safeguarding responses quickly and effectively.

PREVENT

PREVENT is a UK Government strategy launched in 2007 to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It forms part of the Government's wider counter-terrorism strategy.

Regulated Activity

Regulated activity refers to certain types of work with children that require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including a children's barred list check where applicable under current legislation. Pippa's Guardians ensures that all individuals undertaking regulated activity are appropriately vetted before beginning their role.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action taken to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, while promoting their health, wellbeing and development so they can grow up safely.

Self-Neglect

Self-neglect is the intentional or unintentional inability to maintain a socially and culturally acceptable standard of self-care, resulting in serious consequences for an individual's health and wellbeing.

Significant Harm

Significant harm refers to ill-treatment, including sexual abuse and non-physical ill-treatment, that has resulted in the impairment of a child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Staff

For the purposes of this policy, "staff" includes all employees, agency workers, consultants, contractors and any other individuals working on behalf of Pippa's Guardians who have contact with children.

Age-Appropriate Safeguarding

Modified Safeguarding information has been created to be read by our students and has been incorporated into the Student Handbook which is provided to all new students upon joining Pippa's Guardians.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated promptly in response to changes in statutory safeguarding guidance, including any revisions to Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children. The DSL and Head of Compliance will ensure that any further amendments required following the publication of KCSIE 2026 are incorporated without delay.

Policy Information	
Policy Version	V10
Date of Policy	28.7.26
Date of Policy Review	28.7.27
Responsibility for review	Imogen Trevethan/Rose Vigers-Belgeonne/Michelle Edwards
Policy approved by	Pippa's Guardians Senior Leadership Team