


Services covered by this policy:	General Pre-school Children's Service	The Hamlet at Home Adult Services
Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:	Senior Manager Children's Service	Operational Manager Adults Service
Date approved:	26 th February 2025	
Approved by:	Jayne Buckingham	
Signed:		
To be reviewed:	February 2027	

A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

The objective of The Hamlet is to have a coordinated approach to child protection and safeguarding and to ensure that the procedures at The Hamlet dovetail with policies and procedures published by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership whose contact details are appended to this policy. The Hamlet also wants to ensure that the voice of the child is heard and that a child-centred approach is taken.

B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it

The purpose of a Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedure is to ensure that appropriate action is taken when a young person, up to the age of 18 years, is suspected of either being abused or at risk of harm from parents, guardians, carers, adult visitors, gangs, groups, online connections, other responsible adults or other young people.

- **Safeguarding Children** - What we do to prevent harm
- **Child Protection** - The way in which we respond to harm

The Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedure at The Hamlet recognises that the safeguarding and protection of children is paramount and has priority over all other interests. The purpose of this policy is to protect any children or young adults from harm who receive our services or whom we may come in to contact with during our daily work. It also includes the children or child relatives of adults who may be receiving our services. We recognise that everyone working with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe and we have a statutory duty to ensure that robust procedures are in place.

This policy refers to all children up to 18 years of age (including the unborn), regardless of nationality, culture, or religion. If the child has 'learning disabilities' or is a care leaver, their needs may extend to their 21st birthday (Section 9 Children Act 2004). The term 'children' will be used throughout this policy to refer to children and young people.

C. Scope of this policy

- The Hamlet Users
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff
- The Hamlet Volunteers
- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

D. Policy

Statement of Intent

The Hamlet recognises the vulnerability of children and believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse or harm of any kind.

It wholly supports the principle that the welfare of the child is paramount and accepts the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

The Hamlet understands that children can be under threat, at **risk of harm** and/or abused by parents/family, other children and young people, carers, staff, and others and that everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe.

The Hamlet will ensure that it works in partnership with other agencies, children and their families so that they receive the right help, at the right time and with everyone who comes into contact with them, understanding that they all have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Additionally, The Hamlet believes that all children, regardless of ethnicity, gender, culture, sexual orientation, disability, faith, or religious belief, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

The Hamlet recognises that deaf and disabled children and those with complex health needs are at increased risk of abuse or harm . Furthermore, it understands that some children have increased vulnerability because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, their communication needs, or other

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issues; and that threats can take a variety of different forms including sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

All necessary steps will be taken to ensure that the rights of all children are respected and that opportunities for abuse or harm to occur are minimised.

The Hamlet will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Empowering children, listening, respecting, and responding in a compassionate but effective way
- Ensuring a child-centred approach to service planning and delivery and keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives
- Ensuring that all staff read and understand this policy
- Providing safeguarding children and child protection training to staff to enable them to recognise signs of abuse and follow appropriate procedures when dealing with child protection concerns
- Adopting safe staff recruitment, selection and vetting procedures
- Sharing information about safeguarding children, child protection and good practice with staff, volunteers, parents, care staff and relevant agencies
- Requiring all staff to follow the reporting and recording procedures in every case of suspected harm, abuse or disclosed abuse/harm
- Ensuring that all staff with responsibility for, or contact with children, will be provided with appropriate policies, guidance, training and support to enable them to implement this policy
- Providing effective management and support systems for all staff so that staff know who to contact within The Hamlet in the event of safeguarding children and/or child protection concerns arising
- Working within the relevant Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership' guidance and procedures
- Ensuring that policy and practice remains current and up to date and dovetails with local procedures

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Effective communication is essential for any organisation. In The Hamlet, every effort will be made to assure individuals that have concerns, that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management team to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between, all those involved in this organisation and its activities.

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Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. The Hamlet will act to ensure that they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints, and anxieties.

When sharing information, staff will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility of the people with whom they are sharing.

We understand that some information is confidential and will only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis. The Hamlet will ensure that staff follow the guidelines: [Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) (July 2018).

The Hamlet will ensure that staff understand that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and Human Rights Legislation are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

Safe Recruitment

The Hamlet will adopt a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable and do not pose a risk to children/young people. This includes ensuring that safe recruitment and selection procedures are adopted which deter, reject or identify people who might harm/abuse children or are otherwise unsuitable to work with them. The Hamlet will not sub-contract to any organisation which has not been part of a safe recruitment process.

The Hamlet will ensure that correct DBS(Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are made before commencing employment as per the [Disclosure and Barring Service Checking Policy](#), and each employee provides a minimum of 2 satisfactory references

Allegations Against a Hamlet employee, volunteer, or placement

The Hamlet will act appropriately towards allegations against people in positions of trust and will follow procedure relating to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Best Practice

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The Hamlet will adhere to HM Government's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)' and will follow, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, NICE guidance NG76 and CG89 in addition to other best practice documents cited in this policy and procedure.

Accountabilities and Responsibilities

Individual staff have a responsibility to report and record any concerns, not to make decisions as to whether abuse has or has not occurred. An investigation into child abuse can only be undertaken by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership. Doing nothing is not an option. If we know or suspect that a child is being harmed or abused, we will do something about it and ensure that our work is properly recorded.

The Management Team at The Hamlet will:

- Be responsible for the effectiveness of this policy and related procedures and for ensuring that sufficient resources are available to support its implementation
- Appoint a nominated individual to ensure that this policy is agreed, implemented, and reviewed within the clinical governance framework
- Delegate responsibility for ensuring that this policy is integrated into the governance structure of The Hamlet and regularly reviewed
- Appoint Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) to undertake a lead role for safeguarding, including being involved in Serious Case Reviews with Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership and agreeing action plans for shortfalls or improvements in process and working with the local operational team
- The Safeguarding Lead will review concerns identified, standardise process and learning and report to the committee responsible for reviewing safeguarding incidents, ensuring that the CQC is informed

The management team will:

- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead, if it is someone other than themselves, of any safeguarding concerns
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the outcome of any safeguarding meetings not attended by the Lead
- Ensure that they remain up to date on child protection processes in their own locality
- Notify the CQC in line with CQC notification reporting requirements
- Contact DBS in line with statutory reporting requirements

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All managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in accordance with this policy and associated documents
- Monitoring compliance with this policy within their area of responsibility
- Providing support to staff involved in any children welfare incidents
- Ensuring that staff complete approved safeguarding training
- Ensuring that the services provided are compliant with The Hamlet safeguarding and child protection processes as well as Norfolk County Council processes
- Notifying The Senior Management Team of any safeguarding concerns

E. Procedures and monitoring

Recognising Children who May Need Early Help

The Hamlet will ensure that staff understand that they must be alert to the potential need for early help as stated in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023) for a child who:

- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care (EHC) Plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has a parent or carer in custody
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is a privately fostered child

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Additionally, staff must be aware of any new or emerging threats which include online abuse, grooming, sexual exploitation and radicalisation as well as having the ability to identify symptoms and triggers of abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding Children with Physical and or Learning Disabilities

Research suggests that children with disabilities are at increased risk of harm/abuse, and that the presence of multiple disabilities appears to increase the risk of both harm, abuse and neglect. A child could be considered to be disabled if they have significant problems with communication, comprehension, vision, hearing or physical functioning. A failure to recognise disabled children's human rights can lead to abusive situations and harmful practices. Organisational culture and 'custom and practice' can contribute to institutional abuse or harm.

- The Hamlet will not underestimate how poor practice can become pervasive in influencing staff to behave inappropriately
- The staff will be given the opportunity to reflect on their practice and promote a positive risk-taking culture to enhance the quality of life for young people
- The Hamlet will ensure that its services will readily seek the views of young people, parents and other professionals in reviewing their practice
Particular attention will be paid to promoting a high level of awareness of the risks of harm, to high standards of practice, and to strengthening the ability of children and families to help themselves.
- Make it common practice to enable disabled children to make their wishes and feelings known in respect of their care and treatment
- **Ensure that disabled children receive appropriate guidance on personal safety, privacy, consent and autonomy.**
- Make sure that all disabled children know how to raise concerns and give them access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate. This could mean using interpreters or staff that are skilled in using the child's preferred method of communication
- Ensure that there is an explicit commitment to, and an understanding of, disabled children's safety and welfare amongst all Hamlet services used by disabled children
- Develop the safe support services that families want, and a culture of openness and joint working with parents and carers on the part of services
- Provide guidelines and training for staff detailed in the [Professional Development and Training Policy](#)
- Where a child is unable to tell someone of the harm/abuse, they may convey anxiety or distress in some other way, e.g. behaviour or symptoms, and staff must be alert to this
- Under new legislation, children are victims in their own right

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Responding When a Child Discloses Harm/Abuse

Keep the following considerations in mind when talking to a child who is disclosing abuse:

- Help the child feel comfortable
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault. Let them know that they have not done anything wrong
- Do not react with shock, anger, disgust. Be calm
- Do not force a child to talk. Give the child time. Let them talk to you at their own pace
- Do not force a child to show injuries
- Use terms and language that the child can understand
- Do not 'interview' the child
- Ask appropriate questions
- Do not ask 'why' questions
- Do not teach the child new terms or words. This is important in relation to the court and law
- Find out what the child wants from you
- Be honest with the child
- Confirm the child's feelings. Be supportive
- Remember that the safety of the child is most important. Keep in mind that a child might be further harmed/abused if they report that they have spoken to someone about the harm/abuse. **If you feel that the child is in danger, you must act immediately**
- Record anything the child has said in their own words and report to the Safeguarding Lead on duty as soon as possible

Reporting Concerns

- If the child requires immediate medical attention call an ambulance and inform the control room staff that there is a child protection concern
- Call 999 if in immediate danger
- Report incidents/concerns to the relevant line manager who will support you to complete a report form. Refer to the [Accident and Incident Reporting Policy](#)
- Follow the flow chart in this policy to select the correct reporting method/recipient

Management of Allegations Against People in Positions of Trust (PiPoT)

The Hamlet, when working with children and families, must have clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. The Hamlet will make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care

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or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children

If an allegation arises it will:

- Be reported immediately to a Senior Manager within The Hamlet
- Be addressed as quickly as possible with a consistent and a fair and thorough investigation. Where it appears that a criminal offence may have been committed, the Police will be contacted immediately by the appropriate Senior Manager
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Norfolk County Council Children's Social Care Team must be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the attention of The Hamlet or that are made to the Police regarding an employee or someone in a position of trust working with, or on behalf of, or who is known to The Hamlet who may have caused harm to a child. It is the responsibility of The management team to ensure that the LADO at Norfolk County Council Children's Social Care Team is notified

Referral to DBS

If The Hamlet removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work in regulated activity with children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, it must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service to consider whether to add the individual to the barred list. Where an individual is a registered practitioner such as a Registered Nurse, they will also be referred to their Registered Body, such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, irrespective of whether they were working as a registered practitioner for The Hamlet. For further information see [Disclosure and Barring Service Policy](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

As a result of nationwide cases CSE has become a national priority for health and social care. Staff have a significant contribution to make in identifying children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation. Where there are concerns about the welfare of a child, The Hamlet will:

- Remember the child or young person's welfare is of paramount importance
- Make sure the staff team is alert to the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation

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- The Staff team will seek immediate advice from their manager, and The Hamlet will refer to Children's Social Care or the Police if there is a suspicion that a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger
- The Hamlet will ensure that staff know and understand the organisational and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and processes
- Information must be shared on a need-to-know basis

Domestic Violence and Abuse

There is a strong link between domestic abuse and all types of significant harm to children and young people. Witnessing domestic violence is a form of emotional abuse to a child/young person which may result in long-lasting implications for their future wellbeing.

The Staff team must follow local child protection reporting procedures if they are concerned that a child is witnessing domestic violence, is at risk of being harmed or is being harmed as a result of domestic violence or abuse.

Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse/Violence

Children and young people can be subjected to domestic abuses perpetrated in order to force them into marriage or to 'punish' them for 'bringing dishonour on the family'. Whilst honour-based violence can culminate in the death of the victim, this is not always the case. The child or young person may be subjected, over a long period, to a variety of different abusive and controlling behaviours ranging in severity. The abuse is often carried out by several members of a family including mothers and female relatives/community members and may, therefore, increase the child's sense of powerlessness and be harder for professionals to identify and respond to. No religion condones honour-based abuse. Cultural beliefs are not reason enough to excuse criminal behaviour and the violation of human rights as an individual. Forced marriages of children must be regarded as a child protection issue. The Hamlet must not contact the parents in this situation and must make a referral direct to the Safeguarding Team and follow local reporting procedures. Further advice can be obtained from the [Forced Marriage Unit here: www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage](https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage).

If Staff Know Someone is at Risk

If staff know someone who has been taken abroad to be forced into marriage, they should contact the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) and give as many details as possible, for example:

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- Where the person has gone
- When they were due back
- When they last heard from them

The FMU will contact the relevant Embassy. If the person is a British National, the Embassy will try to contact the person and help them get back to the UK, if that is what they want.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is an illegal practice which affects a girl's genital area, and which can impact on their emotional or physical wellbeing. FGM is a criminal offence and carries a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment.

- If a Staff team is aware of any Hamlet User who has had FGM or of any female children who are at risk of FGM, they must discuss this with their manager or the Norfolk County Council Safeguarding Team
- If there is an immediate risk the police must be contacted
- Staff must understand their responsibilities to report concerns. Free E-Learning training is available through the Home Office

Prevent

The Hamlet will ensure that staff training includes Prevent. The Hamlet will ensure that staff understand that, as well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to harm, abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. Training must highlight that extremist groups make use of the Internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism must also be considered and The Hamlet will ensure that staff know how to refer any concerns to Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership and that they have an understanding of Prevent referrals and processes.

Confidentiality

The Hamlet will ensure that staff working with children and young people have read and understand the 'Information sharing - Advice for practitioners

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providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2023)' and understand that UK GDPR must not be a barrier to sharing information. The Hamlet will ensure that staff follow the 7 Golden Rules for information sharing as outlined in the document.

Whistleblowing

Safeguarding children is complex and can frequently be under review. It is important to remember that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and a culture must be promoted where staff are able to raise concerns and whistle blow without fear. For further information see [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Training

Safeguarding Children and Young People should be included within the mandatory induction and include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and the procedures to be followed should anyone have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. Training will be delivered to the level specified in the 'Safeguarding children and young people: roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff Intercollegiate Document' and be in line with any contractual requirements.

Consent

Where The Hamlet needs to share special category personal data, The Hamlet will be aware that the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent.

Information can be shared legally without consent if The Hamlet is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk.

F. Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references

- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Police Act 1997
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- United Nations Convention Rights of the Child 1989
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Digital Economy Act 2017

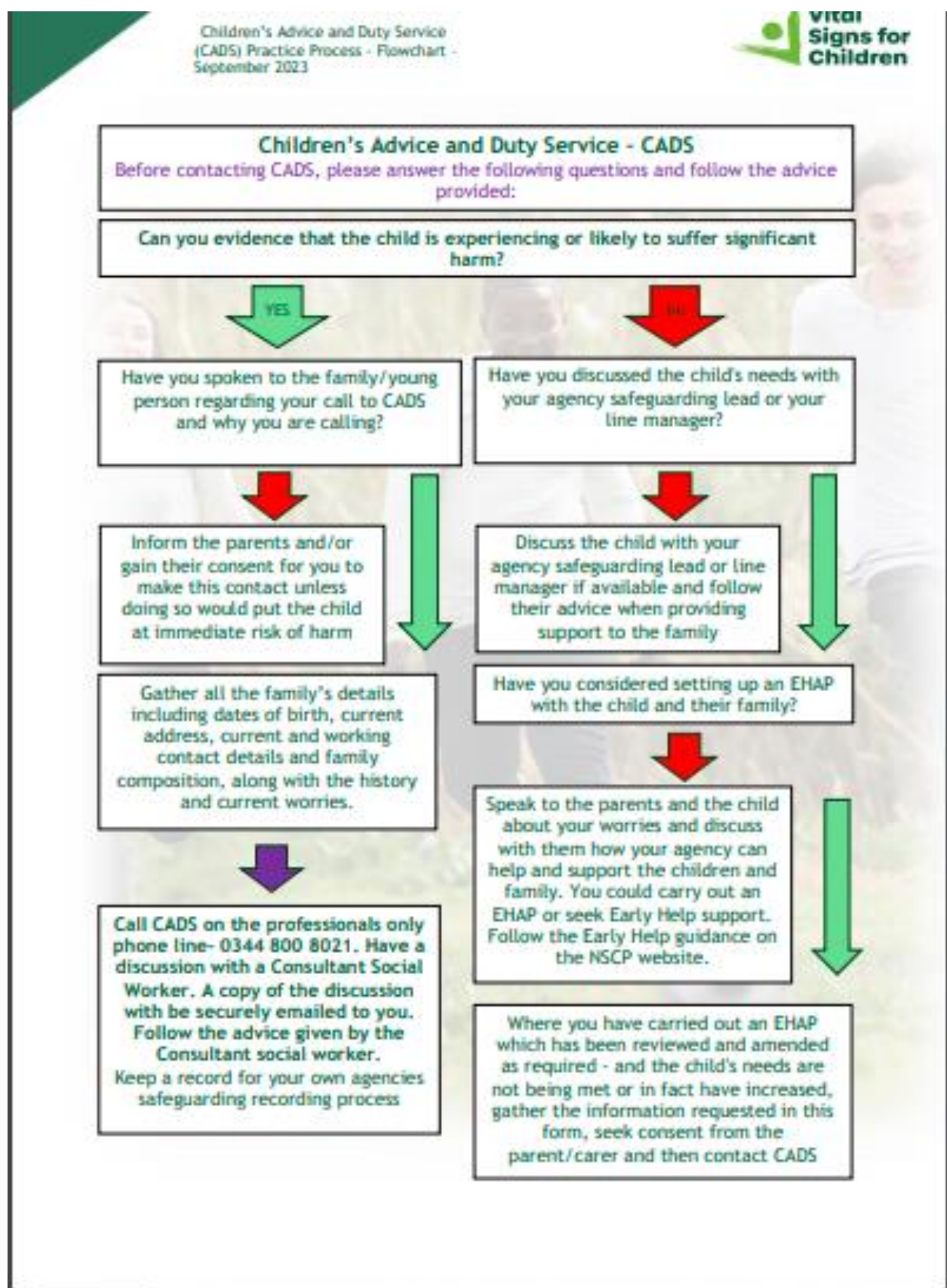
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- Adoption and Children's Act 2002
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009
- Children and Young Persons Act 1933
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (CSDPA) 1970
- The Young Carers' (Need Assessment) Regulations 2015
- Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- The Care Act 2014
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR

This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.

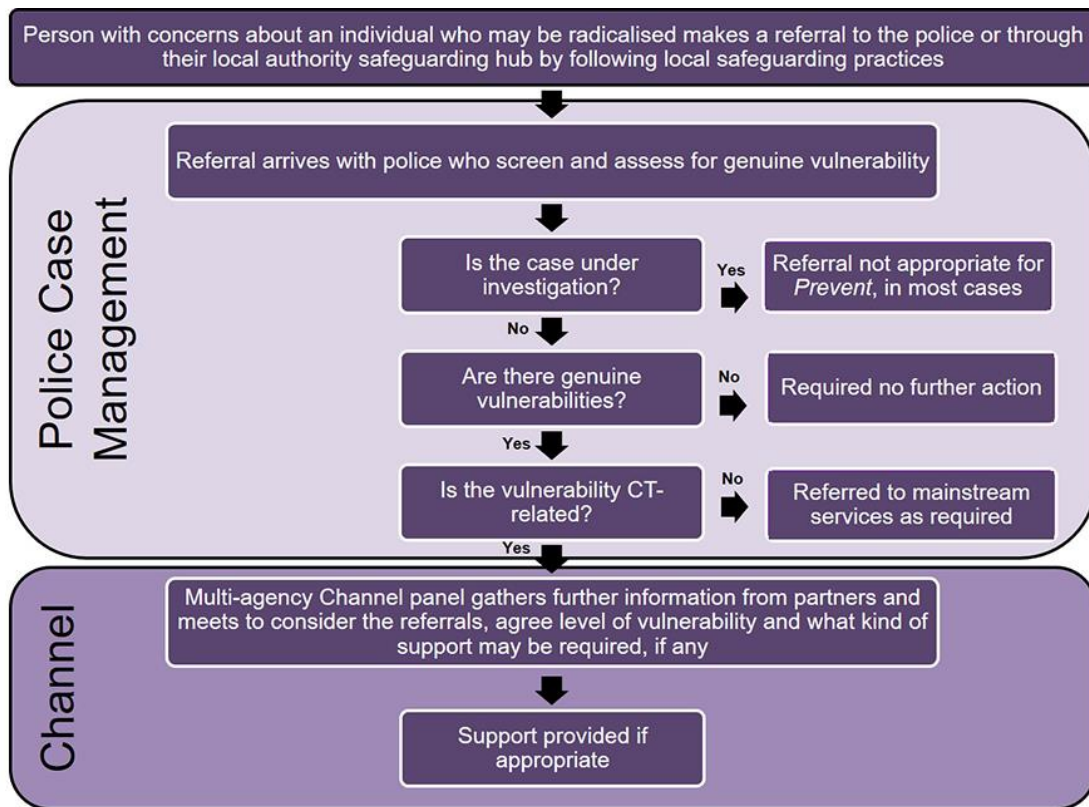
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Appendix 1 – CADS referral flow chart



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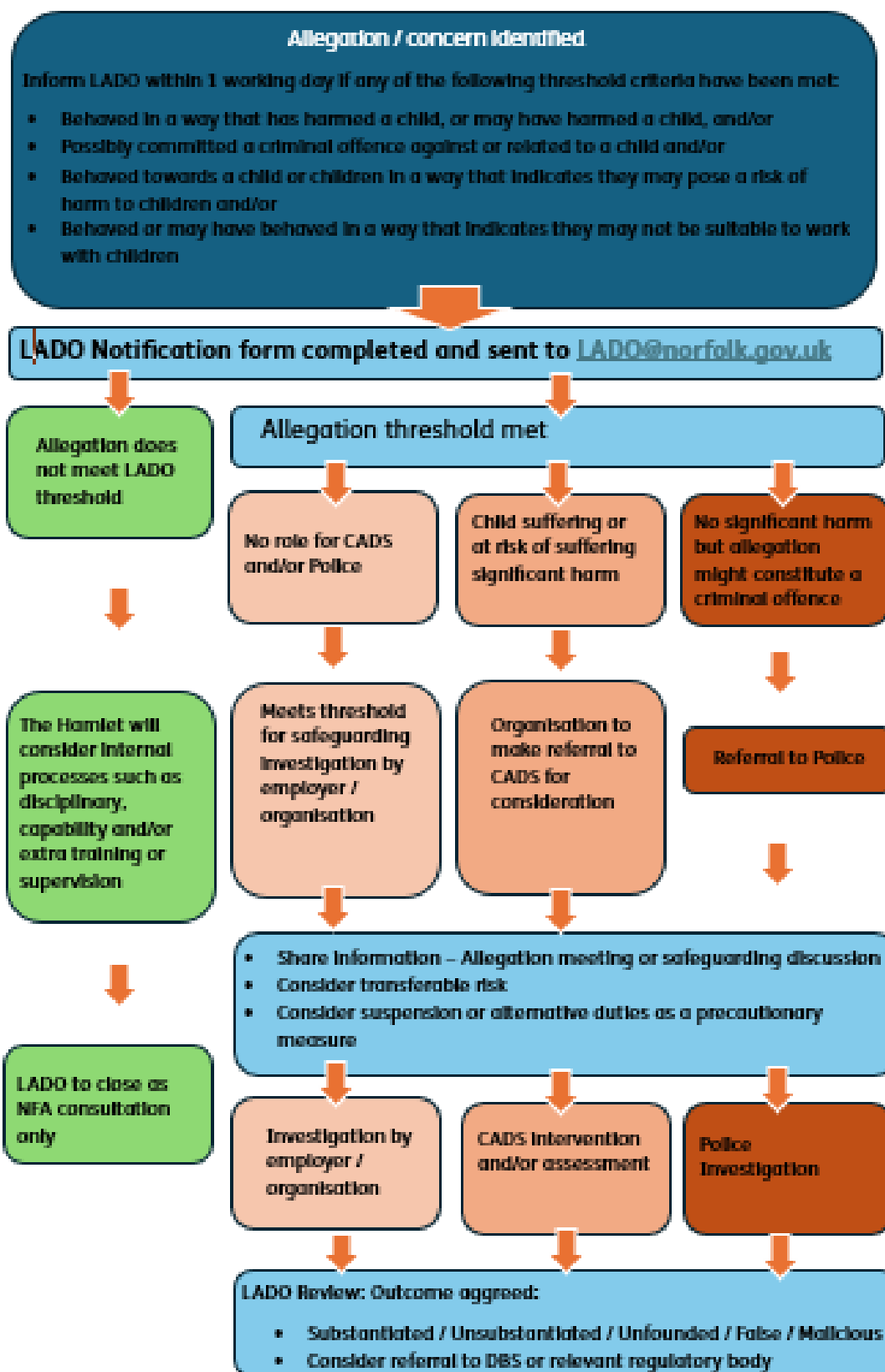
Appendix 2 – Prevent Referral



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Appendix 3 – LADO flow chart

Allegations against those who work or volunteer with children



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Appendix 4 – Safeguarding Leads and Safeguarding Contact details

Safeguarding Lead

Name	Main Base	Contact Details
Jayne Buckingham	Children's Service, Johnson Place, Norwich, NR2 1SJ	Jayne.buckingham@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 766566
Lorraine Ewing	Adult Services, Ella Road, Norwich NR1 4BN	Lorraine.ewing@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 616094
Jane Crane	Children's Service, Johnson Place, Norwich, NR2 1SJ	Jane.crane@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 766566
Shannon Holmes	Children's Service, Johnson Place, Norwich, NR2 1SJ	Shannon.holmes@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 766566
Lauren Cochrane	Children's Service, Johnson Place, Norwich, NR2 1SJ	Lauren.cochrane@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 766566
Jade Wright	Children's Service, Johnson Place, Norwich, NR2 1SJ	Jade.wright@thehamletcharity.org.uk 01603 766566

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