

Procedure for responding to concerns or allegations of abuse

Whenever a child, young person and/or adult reports that they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or are causing harm to others, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully to the child, young person and/or adult. If someone makes a disclosure this might be the only time they will tell someone about what is happening.

Respond

Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/manager/nominated safeguarding officer/DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Record the date, time, place and the actual words used.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.

- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

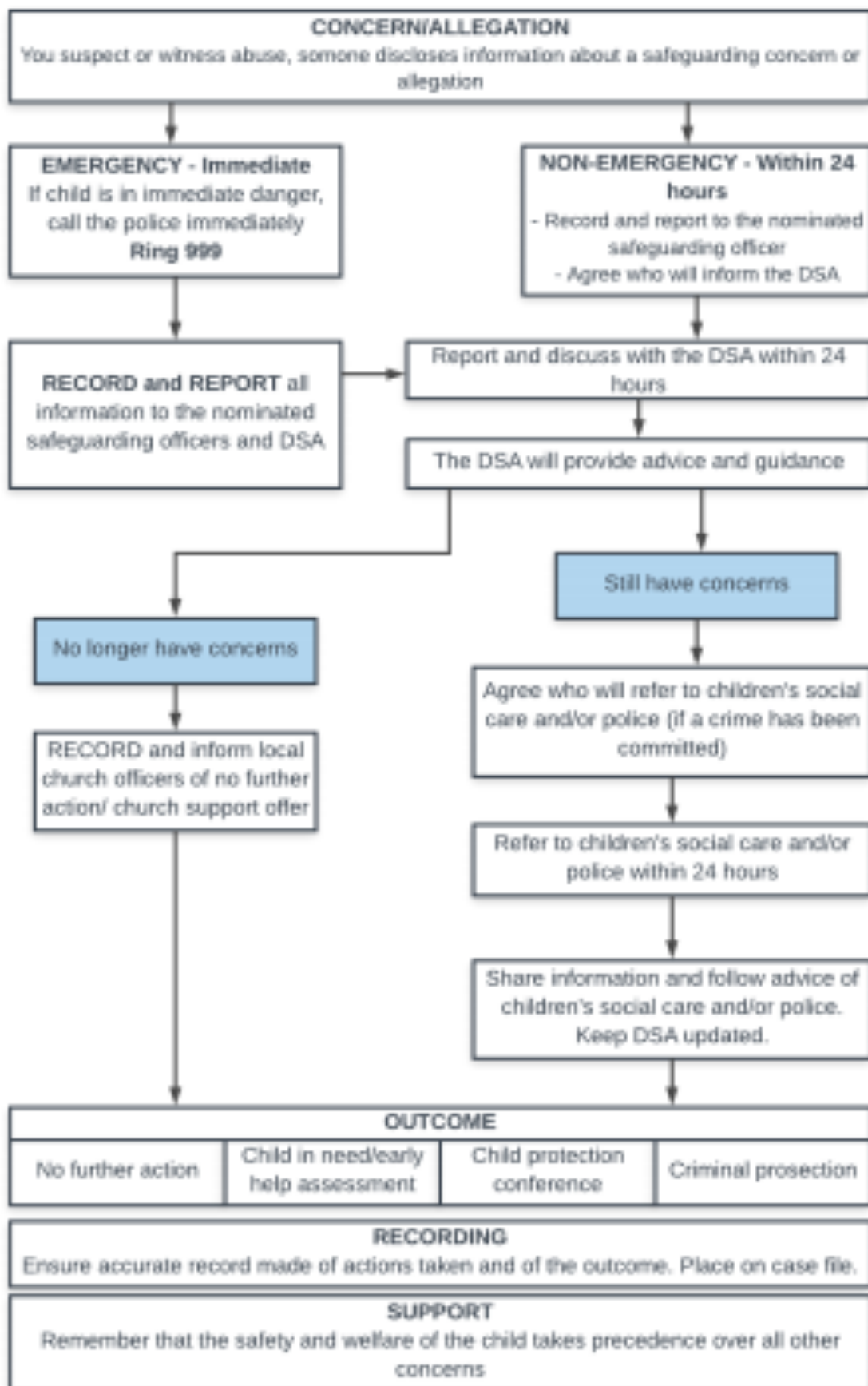
Report

- If there is immediate danger to a child/adult, contact the police. Ring 999.
- Otherwise avoid delay and take action: talk immediately, within 24 hours, to your activity leader/manager/nominated safeguarding officer and share any concerns.
 - Within 24 hours, the nominated safeguarding officer reports the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to child/adult social care and/or the police). This must be done within 24 hours. If in any doubt seek advice from child/adult social care and/or the police.

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern or Allegation About a Child or Young Person

This is the procedure that church officers and bodies must follow if they have a safeguarding concern or allegation about a child or young person. Please see the next page for the procedure flow chart.

Quick Guide



Reporting a Safeguarding Concern or Allegation About an Adult

This is the procedure that church officers and bodies must follow if they have a safeguarding concern or allegation about an adult.

Quick guide

Please note, if an adult is at risk of immediate harm, take yourself out of danger and call the police. Ring 999.

