

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND GUIDANCE

**A model Policy for
consideration and use by
Fire Brigades**

This policy and guidance document was developed and produced in line with the CACFOA/FBU Fire Safety Protocol, with the assistance and support of the following organisations:

**Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate
CACFOA
FBU
Fire Services Youth Training Association
National Community Fire Safety Centre**

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The *insert name* Fire Authority recognises that the protection and safety of children and young people (hereafter referred to as children) is everyone's responsibility. This Policy the related Procedural Instructions and Good Practice Information Guide establishes the roles and responsibilities of staff¹ in relation to the protection of children, with whom they come into contact through their work.
- 1.2 The Principal Management Team, the Fire Brigades Union and all representatives endorse this policy. This document also recognises and supports the CACFOA / FBU joint protocol on Community Fire Safety. *This paragraph should be included when such agreement is reached*
- 1.3 In relation to child protection the approach *insert brigade name* will take is based on, and reflects the principles of both UK legislation, guidance and other relevant *insert brigade name* instructions². It also draws upon procedures and advice issued in the Local Authority's Child Protection Guidelines which should be consulted in conjunction with this document when further guidance on child protection issues is required.
- 1.4 Enshrined in this policy are two key principles:
- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
 - All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of every manager within the Fire Authority to make sure that all staff for whom they are responsible are aware of and understand the importance of this Policy and the related documents. They must also make sure that any contractors, agents or other representatives whom they engage to undertake duties on their behalf, which may involve them in contact with children, understand and comply with them, as appropriate.
- 1.6 An important element of good practice begins with the recruitment, selection, transfer and posting of staff to positions affording substantial access to children. This includes carrying out appropriate 'statutory' checks and taking references, which refer to the candidates' suitability to have substantial access to children. The requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act will be observed throughout by the Fire Authority in carrying out this process.

¹ Within this document, the term staff refers to any employee of *insert brigade name* whether paid or voluntary.

²The Children Act 1989

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000

The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department of Health 1999

Caring for the Young and Vulnerable, Home Office, 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

Keeping Children Safe – Government response to Victoria Climbié inquiry report

Every child matters – Government Green Paper 2003

Brigade Equal Opps Policy

Brigade Racial and Equality Scheme

Internal Helpline [if applicable](#)

1.7 No employee will be disadvantaged for not accepting or undertaking a specific task or post affording substantial access to children. It is recognised that some individuals may not be suited to or wish to undertake this particular area of activity.

1.8 In posts that involve substantial access to children, personnel will be required to undergo a mandatory Criminal Records Bureau check to obtain a Standard Disclosure to ensure their suitability for work involving substantial access to children. Checks will also be required for volunteers acting on behalf of the *insert brigade name*.

All personal information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality in line with the brigade's normal procedures.

1.9 Designated officer(s) with a supervisory role over youth work activities would be checked to the enhanced level of Disclosure, it is anticipated that other personnel involved in these activities would be subject to the standard level of Disclosure.

Note: the designated officer(s) in this context are seen as being the person(s) responsible to the Chief Fire Officer for the delivery of this area of activity within the brigade.

Designated officers are also responsible for supervising, reviewing and recording the results of the review of all activities involving substantial access to children.

1.10 Substantial access to children can be simplified as situations where:

- An individual has regular contact over a period of time with the same children during an activity or series of activities, e.g. Juvenile Firesetter Schemes, Young Firefighter Schemes.
- The opportunity exists to develop a relationship with a child over a period of time.

Single visits to different school classes, groups of children, or children making single visits to fire stations would not be defined as affording substantial access to children. A simple definition in these circumstances would be that of 'coming into contact' with children. The presence of an independent responsible person at all times whilst the activity takes place, e.g. a supervising teacher, may also support a conclusion that substantial access has not occurred. In all instances the guidance document on best practice must still be adhered to.

1.11 All activities that involve working with children will be designed so as to eliminate unnecessary substantial access to children.

1.12 It is not expected that staff will act as child protection workers or that they will be trained to intervene in cases of suspected child abuse (see also 3.15). It is, however, expected that staff will always act on any suspected or potential case of child abuse. In such instances it must be reported directly and without delay to one of the Service's designated persons. Designated persons in the *insert brigade name* comprise *insert designations*

1.13 It is acknowledged that reporting concerns regarding the possibility of abuse can be difficult. Saying or doing nothing, however, is not an option. All staff are expected to follow the child protection procedures contained within this policy. It must be

recognised that this policy applies to all persons working for or with the fire and rescue service. The management of *insert brigade name* will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse, even if those concerns prove to be unfounded.

- 1.14 Copies of the Policy, Procedures and Guidance will be maintained in an accessible location at all *insert brigade name* premises.

In addition individual copies will be held by:

- All staff who have substantial access to children.
- All staff who have responsibility for administering Child Protection Procedures.

- 1.15 Basic written guidance will be issued to parents or guardians of children who take part in Fire and Rescue Service activities where substantial access to children occurs. This guidance will explain the Service commitment to Child Protection issues and also explain the nature and extent of the activities that will be undertaken.

- 1.16 This Policy/Guidance Document will be reviewed in (*insert date, which will not be more than three years after publication of the Policy*)

- 1.17 The *insert roles* have been appointed to act as the Service Child Protection advisor.

Child Protection Procedures

The *insert brigade name* policy statement establishes the position and expectations of the Authority in relation to the protection of all children that staff come into contact with, or have substantial access to in the course of their duties.

These instructions set out the actions that must be taken to safeguard children. The instructions apply to all staff.

Health and Safety

The overall welfare and safety of the child will be the paramount consideration.

- 2.1 All activities undertaken involving any risk to children must be properly risk assessed and appropriate control measures recorded and implemented.
- 2.2 The value of activities undertaken must always be proportionate to any degree of risk caused.

Child Abuse

A Good Practice Information Guide has also been developed to provide you with guidance which will not only help to protect children, but will also help staff to identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted. The Service Youth Development Officer (*insert relevant designated officer as applicable*) can additionally provide advice, if needed, on these or other general Child Protection issues. It is recognised that a percentage of the children that staff work with or come into contact with will, through the nature of their experiences, demonstrate behaviours to which might be indicators of child abuse. Many factors associated with disadvantage can also result in a child's behaviour being affected, thereby making the identification of abuse even more difficult than usual. Part 3 of the Good Practice Information Guide provides information to aid your understanding of those indicators that may cause you to become concerned. It is important to remember however, that the overwhelming majority of children will experience a perfectly safe and happy childhood.

It must be clearly understood that this Policy is not a substitute for an approved/appropriate training course. Training courses will be arranged as appropriate in consultation with the Service Youth Development Officer (*insert relevant designated officer as applicable*) in conjunction with the Local Authority's Child Protection Guidelines

- 2.3 You may become aware of the possibility of abuse through any number of means. Staff who for any reason become concerned that a child may be at risk, is being or has been abused either by:

- a member of staff;
- a member of their family;
- any other person, including another child;
- themselves - self abuse;
- or is told by a child that they are being, or have been abused;

must report that concern to a designated person at the earliest opportunity.

A flow chart summarising the correct reporting procedure is provided in Appendix 2

Note:

Should the situation require an immediate response, eg. the child be in need of urgent medical treatment or in the case of on-going violence, or the threat of violence, Police assistance being required, the necessary actions should be taken without delay and these instructions then followed. The police will be informed whenever an emergency intervention has occurred by the person making the emergency intervention. The conflict that may exist as regards to Fire and Rescue Service neutrality are secondary to the well being and safety of the child

2.4 The *insert brigade name* designated persons consist of the *insert designations*. They can be reached during office hours at Service Headquarters on *insert contact numbers*, or out of hours via Fire and Rescue Service Control. Staff making a referral in either instance should initially request to speak to the designated officer on a “child protection matter.” Such a referral will always be treated within the Service as a priority issue. The designated person’s role will be to give advice and determine the appropriate follow-up action to be taken. This is seen as a filter to ensure that any action taken are appropriate according to the nature of the concerns raised. If any doubt exists regarding the actual or potential harming of a child, that action will include the notification of the relevant Social Services Department (contact numbers are listed in appendix 1). This procedure applies irrespective of whether that harm is perceived to come from a member of their family, another person including another child, or from a member of staff. Where those concerns relate to a member of *insert brigade name* staff the designated person will also ensure that the relevant internal procedures are initiated.

2.5 When making the referral the following information should be provided where known:

- Your own details ie. name, designation, contact number.
- Information about the child such as their name, date of birth, gender, ethnic origin, religion and any disability.
- The name of the school the child attends where appropriate.
- The names of the primary carers of the child if known.
- Any other names the child or family may be known by.
- Their address and any previous known addresses where the child or family may have lived.
- The name of the child’s GP where known/appropriate.
- Details of the concern (if an incident, the time, place and any persons present).
- The source of the information.
- Whether the child/family are aware of the referral, and if they were made aware their response to the concerns.

2.6 Before ending this conversation the social worker should be asked to clarify:

- What actions, if any, will be taken and by whom.
- What the person seeking advice should do if there are further concerns.

This information passed and the name and designation of the social worker to which the details have been passed should always be taken and recorded. The referral must be confirmed in writing by the person making the referral within 48 hours to the Social Services Department.

- 2.7 The initial reporting person must always record details of all information given/received in writing. (Form *insert relevant form N^o* may be used for this purpose). Where applicable the child's own words should always be noted. Any notes taken must be signed and dated. The report must be sent in a sealed envelope by hand clearly marked "*Urgent Confidential Child Protection*" to the designated officer dealing with the matter within 24 hours of the initial referral being made. Receipt of this information should be confirmed to the reporting person.
- 2.8 Where there are concerns but doubt exists as to whether a child is suffering, likely to suffer significant harm or whether behaviour may be abusive and it is uncertain whether a full referral could be made, the Social Services Duty Officer can be contacted via the designated person as outlined above to seek advice.
- 2.9 If concerns are raised by something staff become aware of while in a school, through a school related activity undertaken in the course of their work, or whilst interacting with another agency or body they must immediately ask for and inform the schools or organisations Child Protection 'designated teacher'/person, and then follow the instructions as outlined above. A letter will be sent to the school/organisation by the *insert brigade name* designated person, confirming that concerns have been passed to the appropriate person within that school/organisation.
- 2.10 It is recognised that fire and rescue service staff do, on occasions, visit, or assist in schools or other youth organisations in their own time for other purposes. These instructions therefore cannot necessarily apply to non-fire and rescue service or external voluntary activities. However, it is strongly recommended, that you ensure that the organisation is aware of the the need for a Child Protection Policy and that where one exists you work within its parameters at all times.

If no Child Protection Policy exists then the principles contained within this Policy should be followed.

Best practice in protecting children does not depend on whether or not you are acting in an official capacity. Nor does the lack of a policy allow best practice to be ignored.

Criminal Records Disclosure

- 2.11 All staff who are involved in activities involving substantial access to children are required to undergo a mandatory Criminal Records Bureau check to ensure their suitability for working with children. Any fees incurred in obtaining a disclosure will be met by the *insert brigade name*.
- 2.12 Personal confidentiality must be respected throughout the entire process.
- 2.13 Heads of Departments and Area/Divisional Commanders are responsible for identifying all personnel within their own Department/Command who have substantial access to children and who will therefore need to apply for Disclosure (see also paragraph 1.8). Notification should be made to the *insert relevant Officer* who will arrange for an individually numbered disclosure form to be sent to the person concerned.

- 2.14 Individuals who believe that they may fall within the category of having substantial access to children should raise the issue with their supervisory officer/head of department. In these circumstances it may be that the individual is undertaking activities that were not recognised as being required when the programme was being developed, or it may simply be that the individual is carrying out activities which are not required for the programme to be successful.
- 2.15 Once completed by the applicant it will be necessary for proof of identity to be verified and for the document to be countersigned. This should be done in person by production of the appropriate proofs of identity to either the relevant Area/Divisional Commander, the Youth Development Officer or the Personnel Officer. The form should then be sent to the *insert relevant Officer* for forwarding to the Fire Services Youth Training Association (FSYTA) who act as the Disclosure registered body for the insert brigade name. In all cases the applicant will automatically receive the completed Disclosure Certificate direct from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Note: If FSYTA do not act in this capacity for the brigade, relevant procedures should be inserted.

Following their receipt of the Disclosure Certificate a letter will be sent from the FSYTA to the applicant which will contain a reply slip authorising disclosure of any necessary information to the Personnel Officer, Human Resources Department, or confirmation that the applicant no longer wishes to proceed with the application. This slip should then be returned directly by the applicant to the FSYTA.

On receipt of the reply slip from the applicant indicating that Disclosure can be made the FSYTA will contact the *insert relevant officer* with confirmation of the Disclosure findings. However, no details of any offences that do not have a significant bearing on child safety issues will be passed onto the Fire Service.

There is a process which allows the individual the opportunity to appeal to the FSYTA should the applicant feel that items which have been considered or are to be disclosed have no relevance in being allowed substantial access to children. The appeal process will be kept confidential between the applicant and the FSYTA.

The example shown in this specimen policy identifies the FSYTA as the Disclosure registered body, however brigades may consider it more suitable to utilise the services of the Local Authority Youth Services or a similar body.

In either case, brigades should consider utilising such external registering bodies to promote impartiality and confidence in the processes.

Should the applicant decide that they no longer wish to proceed, only confirmation of the withdrawal of the application will be forwarded to the Service. No details of the Disclosure will be forwarded. No adverse inference will be drawn by the withdrawal of an application.

- 2.16 The *insert relevant officer* on receipt of Disclosure confirmation from the FSYTA will inform both the applicant and the Area/Divisional Commander or Department Head of the applicants suitability. It is essential and important to understand that only those applicants found suitable will be allowed to undertake any fire and rescue service activity involving substantial access to children.

- 2.17 Exceptionally and in accordance with the principle that the overall safety of the child will always be the paramount consideration, then should the Disclosure reveal that a significant risk to children exists, an immediate and full Disclosure will be made to a Senior Manager within the brigade's Human Resources Section by the FSYTA. There will be no procedure in these circumstances for the individual to appeal to the FSYTA to stop the information obtained during the CRB check being forwarded to the Service.
- 2.18 The brigade's Human Resources Section will be responsible for maintaining a record of all staff that have completed a Disclosure check and are considered suitable for work involving substantial access to children. Staff who are already engaged in activities involving substantial access should be submitted for Disclosure without delay. Any staff not currently having substantial access must have completed a satisfactory check prior to commencing any activity involving substantial access to children. Staff who attend to observe activities for instance those considering whether they wish to undertake work that involves substantial access to children, will not be allowed substantial access to children whether under supervision or otherwise (see also 1.10).

A flow chart illustrating the process is included in Appendix 3.

Training

- 2.19 All staff involved in working with children will receive appropriate instruction/training. Their role and degree of access to children will determine the level of this training/instruction. Those staff and volunteers who undertake activities which involve substantial access to children will undertake refresher training at no less than three yearly intervals.
- A brief outline of the proposed levels of training is included as an Appendix to this policy/guidance note.
- All Child Protection training/instruction needs will be determined and delivered in consultation with the Local Authority Child Protection Committee.
- As part of this process all new staff entering the *insert brigade name* who will be involved with working with children will receive Child Protection training as part of their induction course.

GOOD PRACTICE INFORMATION GUIDE

This guide provides advice which will help to identify and implement good practices when working with, or coming into contact with children and young people. It has been developed to protect children and all members of the Fire and Rescue Service in their involvement in this valuable work. It is based on the principle of the Fire and Rescue Service being open and transparent in all of its dealings. As such, it follows advice received from childcare professional bodies with the aim that this should be applied utilising practical common sense.

PART 1 GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE

- 3.1 Remember at all times to provide an example you wish others to follow. Always treat everyone with respect and try to develop a culture in which everyone feels comfortable enough to point out inappropriate attitudes and behaviour to each other.
- 3.2 The principles of Risk Assessment should be applied to all activities undertaken to ensure that a satisfactory balance is achieved between the value of the activity undertaken and the risk involved.
- 3.3 There may be other considerations that have to be taken into account, for example, when undertaking 'adventure' type activities. Full consideration should be given to any additional measures that may be required depending upon the type of activity to be undertaken. For example, activities involving overnight accommodation will need special considerations relating to sleeping and washing facilities, additional to those same activities undertaken during a normal daytime training session.
- 3.4 Do not permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying) to take place. Do not engage in or allow physical contact games with young people or make suggestive remarks or gestures and never show favouritism to any individual. Personal favouritism or special treatment, for instance rewards, and in particular 'known in advance' reward schemes should be avoided. Rewards must never be used to gain an individual's or groups confidence or trust.
- 3.5 Always respect a young persons right to personal privacy. Never enter a room where a child may be changing their clothes or not be fully dressed. Adequate provision must also be made to ensure that children cannot enter areas where adults are changing/showering etc.
- 3.6 There should be a process for young people to talk about any concerns they may have. Recognise that caution is required particularly in sensitive moments of support, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

Always be mindful that:

- You may not be the appropriate person to deal with the situation.
- You should never promise to keep what a child tells you completely confidential, as you may need to take it further.

Young people undertaking Fire Service activities i.e. Young Firefighter schemes etc, should be informed of any alternative counselling advice available to them via the Fire Service.

- 3.7 Plan to always work with a minimum of two adults present (see also 1.11). Consideration must be given to ensuring mixed gender teams as appropriate. Always avoid unobserved situations of one-to-one contact with a child. If it is unavoidable, keep a door open and ensure you are within the hearing of others. Alternatively, consider using open spaces i.e. drill yards where you are in clear view of others, but a degree of privacy from being overheard can still be achieved. Wherever possible work in pairs utilising 'other' professional people or responsible adults where necessary.
- 3.8 Never transport or offer to transport children alone, in your car or a Fire Service vehicle.
- 3.9 Never allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour.
- 3.10 Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- 3.11 Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues and never let allegations by a child go unreported, including any made against you.

PART 2 ADVICE ON PHYSICAL CONTACT

- 3.12 Staff are likely to come into physical contact with young people from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include showing a young person how to use a piece of apparatus, equipment or demonstrating a move or exercise during an activity. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.
- It is unacceptable to use repeated touching as a style of working or as a way of relating to individuals.
 - Any form of physical punishment of young people is unlawful.
- 3.13 In certain circumstances a young person's behaviour or their actions may endanger themselves or other people. If such an incident were to occur the following procedure must be followed:
- Draw the attention of the young person to their behaviour and make it clear that this needs to stop.
 - If this is unsuccessful the activity must be stopped immediately, taking into account safety requirements.
 - Physical intervention should not normally be carried out by Fire and Rescue Service personnel.
 - However, Fire and Rescue Service personnel are allowed to physically intervene in such emergency situations where, if they were not to intervene, there would be real and actual risk to person/s. Such intervention must only be sufficient and appropriate to contain the situation and prevent further injury or damage. All instances of physical intervention must be reported to the designated responsible person. Personnel undertaking work with persons where the risk assessment prior to the activity reveals the possibility exists of conflict, will undertake appropriate and where necessary specialised training in conflict resolution or a similar training programme, before undertaking the activity.

PART 3 INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON CHILD ABUSE

The Main Forms of Abuse

- 3.14 It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from “Working Together to Safeguard Children.” (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999).

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or the threat of physical abuse.
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. Physical abuse as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening.
- Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people, and by people from all different walks of life.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child home alone or the failure to ensure a child gets appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Note:

Bullying is not an official category of child abuse but is damaging, harmful and oppressive.

Please also note that children from minority ethnic groups, children with a disability and children with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

The Signs and Indicators of Abuse

- 3.15 Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. It must be recognised that you are not an expert or professional in the areas of child protection or social work. It is important that you do not assume this role.

For those with a supervisory role, it is important to regularly review the levels of involvement of personnel in individual cases, and the outcomes of each individual case will be recorded and be confidentially maintained.

The following information will help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical Abuse

- Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins.
- However, some children will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

Sexual Abuse

- Adults, who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.
- Usually in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

Neglect

- Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children. Physical signs of neglect can include inappropriate dress for the conditions, changes in behaviour which indicate neglect can be mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised.

3.16 If a child tells you they are being abused

- Children will occasionally disclose abuse to an adult they have come to feel they can trust. This happens for many reasons, but the important thing to remember is that if they do tell you they are doing so in the hope that you will act to stop it happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information. Tell them that you will have to inform the designated person and that the statutory childcare authorities will also have to be informed.
- They may feel as if they are betraying someone they are close to and whom they love. It is not unusual for a child to love the abuser but want the abuse to stop, especially when that person is a parent or carer. Equally it may be someone they fear, e.g. an adult whom they perceive to be able to influence decisions concerning their future. Either way, it takes great courage for a child to talk to an adult about abuse and your response can be crucial.
- If a child discloses abuse to you in the course of your work it is important to react appropriately.

Do: Remain calm and receptive.
Listen without interrupting; only ask questions of clarification if you are unclear what the child is saying.
Make it clear you take them seriously.
Acknowledge their courage in telling you.
Tell them they are not responsible for the abuse.
Let them know you will do what you can to help them.

Do not: Allow your shock or distaste to show.
Probe for more information/ask other questions.
Make assumptions or speculate.
Make negative comments about the abuser.
Make promises you cannot keep.
Agree to keep the information secret.

- It is important to remember too that it can be more difficult for some children to tell than for others. Children who have experienced prejudice and discrimination through racism may well believe that people from other ethnic groups or backgrounds don't really care about them. They may have little reason to trust those they see as authority figures and may wonder whether you will be any different.
- Children with a disability may also have to overcome additional barriers before disclosing abuse. They may well rely on the abuser for their daily care and have no knowledge of alternative sources. They may have come to believe they are of little worth and simply comply with the instructions of adults.
- Therefore, it is essential that everything possible is done to protect the children who place their trust in us.
- If a child tells you that they are being or have been abused you must:

- Make an immediate record of what the child has said, if possible using their own words.
- Follow the instructions for reporting to a designated person.
- Follow the flowchart procedure for a child protection referral

AIDE MEMOIRE – REFERRAL PROCEDURE CHILD PROTECTION PROTOCOL

The brigade's Child Protection Policy "Designated Person" is the *insert relevant officer*.

The role of the "Designated Person" is to:

1. Act as an official contact with Social Services and any other involved Statutory Authority in the matter of a Child Protection referral.
2. To instigate any internal actions that may be necessary following a referral being made.

The referral procedure set down requires members of staff in the case of a referral to contact the Service's designated person. This is done directly in office hours, and out of office hours via *insert relevant process* using the statement - "This is a child protection matter".

Where available set information should be provided by the member of staff to the *insert designated officer*. A check proforma, copy included overleaf, is provided for ease of use.

The designated person's role will be to give initial advice and determine the appropriate follow-up action to be taken. **If any doubt exists regarding the actual or potential harming of a child, that follow-up action will always include the notification of the relevant Social Services Department** (contact numbers are listed below). This procedure applies irrespective of whether that harm is perceived to come from a member of their family, another person, including another child, or from a member of staff.

It is not strictly necessary for the designated person to make the referral themselves. It is, however, their responsibility to ensure the referral is made without delay whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality. It must also be ensured that:

- The relevant Social Worker receiving the call clarifies what actions, if any, will be taken and what the person seeking advice should do if there are further concerns.
- The nature of the information passed and the name and designation of the Social Worker to whom the details have been passed is taken and recorded.

Telephone contact numbers are:

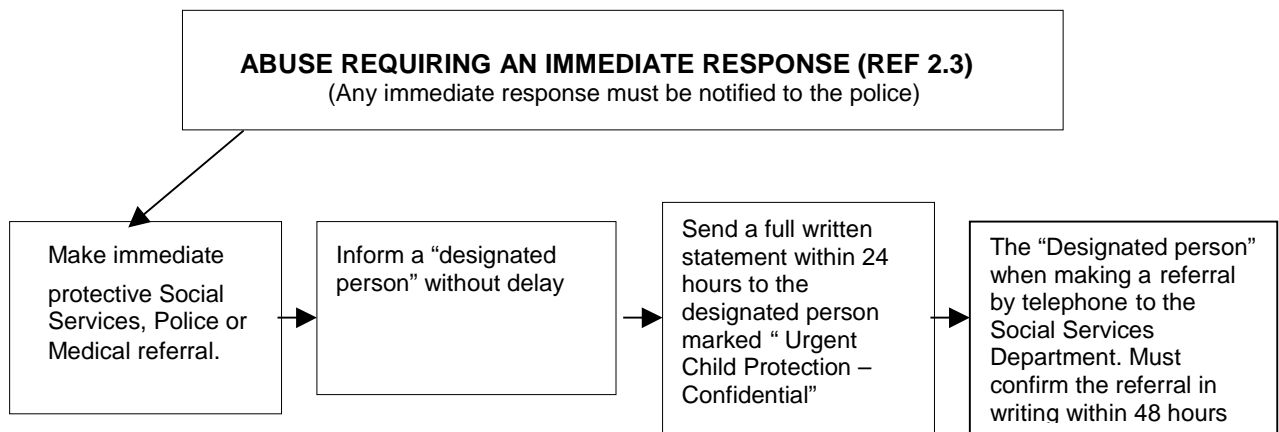
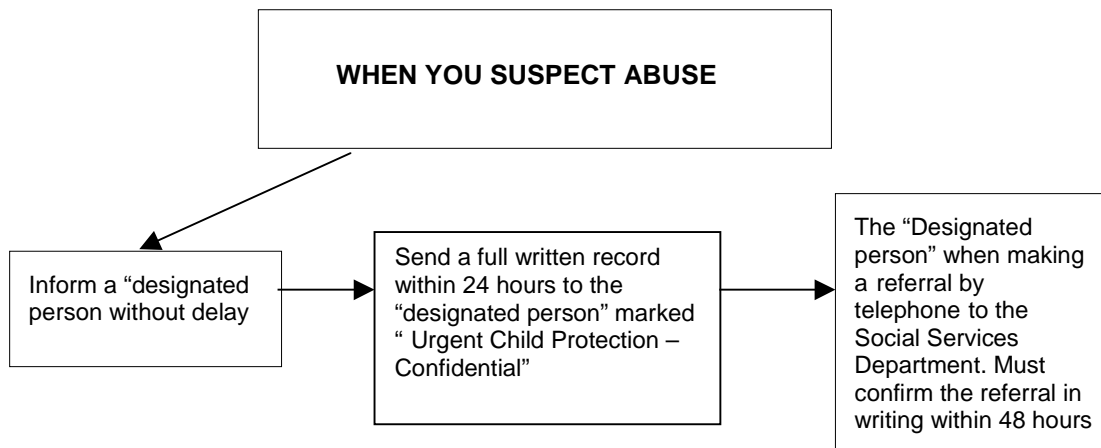
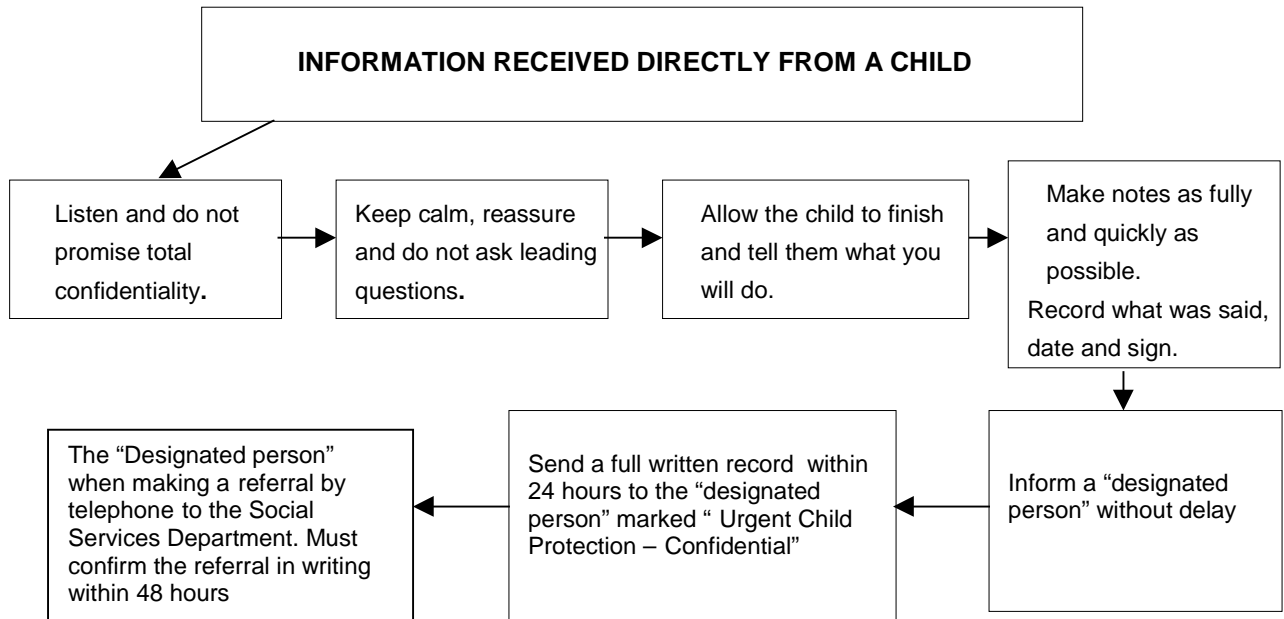
09:00 hrs – 17:30 hrs: Social Services at

Out of office hours:

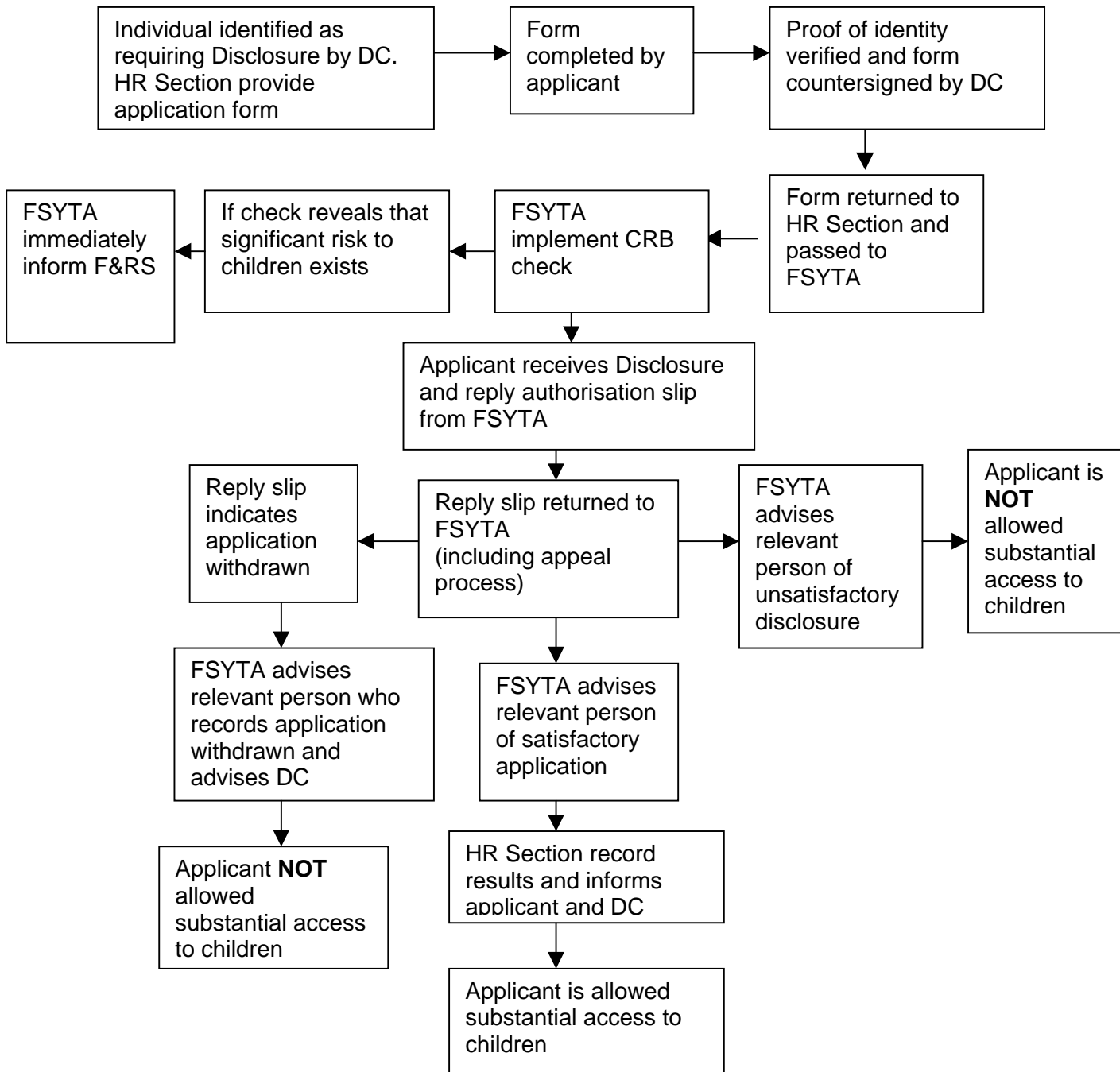
insert relevant location and telephone numbers

Please state initially that you wish to make a referral.

PROCEDURE FOR A CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL



PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING CRIMINAL RECORDS DISCLOSURE



In the event of any concern being felt as to the acceptability of a Disclosure advice of the Local Authority Child Protection will be sought whilst maintaining the applicants right to

FSYTA - Fire Services Youth Training Organisation
DC - Area/Divisional Commander or as appropriate see (2.13)

CHILD PROTECTION PROFORMA FOR REFERRAL TO SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Information supplied by *insert brigade name* employee to Social Services Department
 Designated Person (Principle Duty Officer)

NAME OF REPORTING PERSON

DESIGNATION **CONTACT NUMBER**

Child's name
Child's address &/or previous address if known
Date of birth	Gender
Ethnic origin	Disability (if any)
Any other name child/family known by	
Name of primary carer(s)	
Child's GP (if known)	

DETAILS OF CONCERN
SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Is child aware of referral	YES/NO	Is family/carer aware of referral	YES/NO
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Name of Social Worker
Action to be taken

Referral made	YES/NO	By (Name)
Signature	Date	Time

TRAINING

INDUCTION LEVEL

This will be aimed at all staff and the training will include basic knowledge of the Policy primarily focussing on 'what is abuse', 'how to recognise abuse' and how to report any concerns. All new entrants into (*insert brigade name*) will receive training at induction level.

FOUNDATION LEVEL

At this level those personnel who can be classified as having substantial access to children will be trained to a more advanced level. Staff delivering interventions such as the Juvenile Fire Setter Schemes will be trained to this level. This would include 'how we protect' and 'how to build protections into the development of an activity'.

ADVANCED LEVEL

This will include those personnel who have a specific reference of working with children, in particular those persons in charge of schemes such as Fire Cadets, Fire Break, Phoenix Project etc. The nature and type of training for this activity will be determined by the nature of the duties undertaken.

Subjects such as 'managing aggressive behaviour' and 'conflict resolution' will be included in the training.

MANAGEMENT LEVEL

This will be based on a functional knowledge of the reporting procedure and includes those making referrals to other Services. The supervisory level includes staff who monitor the delivery of Schemes involving substantial access to children and builds upon the earlier training identified above.

Note: The need to undertake Induction, Foundation and Advanced level training, as relevant, applies as equally to volunteers working with the fire and rescue service as it does to employees of the service.