SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

ADOPTED :	JAN 2020
LAST UPDATED :	JUN 2026
NEXT REVIEW :	JUL 2027

Guidance and Model Policy Please

note: This policy template remains current and in line with the statutory guidance contained within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Northumberland Safeguarding Children Policy, Practice and Guidance as of August 2019

Introduction

Safeguarding is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as health and safety, bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, Academy security, drugs and substance misuse, positive behaviour etc. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area or population.

This policy draws upon DfE Guidance Working Together To Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe In Education 2021.

We recognise that safeguarding is more than a contribution to Child Protection matters and we will use the curriculum to ensure our children and young people recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate. Children will be encouraged to make use of internal systems, including talking to their key worker , teaching and pastoral staff.

As part of the PSHCE curriculum we cover all elements of child protection highlighted in this policy. This is delivered to appropriate key stages, for example bullying in key stage 3, FGM and radicalisation in key stage 4.

We recognise and accept that children have a right to be heard, this includes facilitating their views within regular surveys, feedback and forums. Additionally, we will work in partnership with parents and carers and will encourage parents to comment on and contribute to the evolution of our policies by consulting through parent forums and questionnaires.

Children with SEND are recognised as particularly being vulnerable to abuse, this is because children with disabilities have additional needs related to physical, sensory, cognitive and or communication requirements.

In liaising with parents and carers we will ensure that they are reminded that Maximize has a duty to report concerns that we may have over the safety or well-being of any child as part of our statutory duties to protect them from significant harm and/or neglect. Parents and carers will also be reminded that, where appropriate, any referral will be discussed with parents and carers before the referral is made, however parents and carers will not be contacted nor will the referral be discussed where it is felt that to do so will place the child at an increased risk

of harm. In any event, parents and carers will be reminded that all referrals are made in the best interest of the child.

All staff will have read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Child Protection

All staff at maximize education Ltd recognise and accept that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. In upholding this fundamental right we recognise that there are four definitions of child abuse, including neglect.

Abuse; a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The four categories of child abuse are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

Physical Abuse

May include: Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including the deliberate fabrication or causation of illness in a child.

May be recognised by: Physical injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, fractures but also by aggressive behaviour or learning difficulties due to neurological damage. It may also be an indicator of concern where a parent gives an explanation inconsistent with the injury or gives several different explanations for the injury.

It is not appropriate for any member of staff to undress, photograph or body map any child in an attempt to see physical injury, this is the role of investigating agencies.

Emotional Abuse

May include: The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. This may be caused by conveying to pupils that they are worthless, unloved or not valued or by developmentally inappropriate expectations being made or by causing children to frequently feel frightened or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may involve not giving them the opportunities to express their views, silencing them or ridiculing of what they say or how they communicate, this includes cyber bullying.

May be recognised by: developmental delay, attachment issues, aggressive behaviour, appeasing behaviour, watchfulness or stillness, low self-esteem, withdrawn or a loner, or having difficulty in forming relationships.

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Signs of emotional abuse may be associated or similar to other forms of abuse so presence of emotional abuse may indicate other abuse is prevalent as well.

Sexual Abuse

May Include: involving or forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Such activities may involve sexual acts (penetrative or non-penetrative) or may include involving children in watching or taking part in pornographic material or to encourage children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse and may not necessarily involve a high level of violence i.e. kissing, rubbing or touching.

May be recognised by: inappropriate sexualised conduct, age inappropriate sexualised play or conversation, sexually harmful behaviour - contact or non-contact, self-harm, eating disorders, continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation, anxiousness or unwillingness to remove clothes - sports / PE etc, pain or itching in genital area, blood on underclothes, bruising in genital region and / or inner thighs etc.

A sexually abused child may also be recognised by disturbed behaviour such as sadness, depression or loss of self-esteem. Disclosure of sexual abuse must be taken seriously as it is recognised that pupils are frequently scared to disclose due to guilt or fear.

Sexual abuse is perpetrated by both males and females. Children can also commit acts of abuse.

Neglect

May include: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development (growth and intellect) such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter (including keeping pupils safe), clothing, or neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

May be recognised by: a child being constantly hungry, constantly tired, have a poor state of clothing, be emaciated, having untreated medical problems, frequently being late or having poor or nonattendance at the Academy, have low self-esteem, display neurotic behaviour and/or have poor social relationships, have poor personal hygiene. A neglected child may also be apathetic, fail to thrive, or be left with or in the care of adults under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse.

Additional areas of potential abuse;

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

County Lines This is a form of exploiting children or vulnerable adults and the typical feature is criminal activity, drug networks or gangs groom children's and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas including market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying episodes may be children going missing, exploitation must be considered even if activity appears consensual.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a so called Honour Based Violence (HBV) crime; Female Genital Mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for nonmedical reasons. This practice is illegal in the UK. Other examples are forced marriage and or chest ironing. Staff should be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of, or already having suffered FGM and of all students at risk of 'honour based' violence. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Risks factors.

- Low level of integration into UK society
- Mother or sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls withdrawn from PSHCE
- Being taken on holiday to country of origin
- Talk about a 'special' procedure

Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

The serious crime act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals to notify police when they discover FGM appears to have been carried out. This should be from disclosure; under no circumstances should the child be examined.

Bullying is a specific form of abuse and is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves. The extent of bullying can include emotional and / or physical harm to such a degree that it constitutes significant harm due to the extent to which it affects the health or development of the child subjected to the bullying behaviour. Bullying may also be within digital or ICT based environments, sometimes known as 'cyber- bullying' which must be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying. Bullying may also constitute criminal behaviour. (Please refer to our separate Anti-Bullying Policy). Staff should also monitor and track attendance following the Maximize Education Ltd strategy as any absence from school may indicate that there is a safeguarding issue. Peer on Peer abuse should never be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up' , this can manifest itself in many ways.

Staff should be vigilant and report concerns including 'sexting', sexual touching and initiation type violence including upskirting which is also a criminal offence.

What is upskirting?

Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear). Upskirting is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing without their permission for their own gratification or that of others if distributed. It can also be used to cause alarm or distress to the person who's picture has been taken. It is now a specific criminal offence in England and Wales.

The new law will capture instances where the purpose of the behaviour is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone, and any gender, can be a victim and this behaviour is completely unacceptable.

Upskirting has not gone unpunished in England and Wales - depending on the circumstances it has already prosecuted under the common law offence of outraging public decency. However, following concerns expressed by victims, a review of the law found that the existing criminal law may not have been able to capture all instances.

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which was commonly known as the Upskirting Bill, was introduced on 21 June 2018. It came into force on 12 April 2019.

Domestic Violence Staff should report any incidents or information relating to controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or above regardless of gender or sexuality and at home or within the school , children can be victims and perpetrators.

Preventing Radicalisation The Counter-terrorism and Security Act came into force in February 2015, this places a duty on staff to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (The Prevent Duty) the Local Authority has Channel procedures in place. (See separate policy).

Private Fostering This is an arrangement that is made privately (without the involvement of the local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (18 if disabled), by someone other than a parent or close relative when it is expected to last longer than 28 days. Staff should notify the Safeguarding Lead who has a duty to inform the Local Authority.

Peer on Peer Abuse All children are capable of abusing their peers. This can manifest itself in a whole spectrum of behaviours including:

• Bullying including cyber bullying

• Sexual violence and harassment

• Physical abuse

• Sexting

• Upskirting (now a criminal offence and has reporting requirements) • Initiation/hazing type violence rituals.

Responsibility and Immediate Action

All adults working within Maximize Education Ltd (including visiting staff, volunteers, contractors and children on placement) are required to report immediately any instances of actual or suspected child abuse, neglect, CSE, FGM, domestic violence, terrorism, peer on peer abuse or any other concern that may indicate that a child may be at risk, to the Safeguarding Lead.

In circumstances where a child has a suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the Child Protection referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency assistance. If a child is thought to be at immediate risk (because of parental violence or intoxication, for example) urgent police intervention will be requested. Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to Social Care (and confirmed in writing). In all cases of injury to a child consideration will always be given as to whether an urgent paediatric medical assessment is required to document injuries or to protect any forensic evidence.

Where it is suspected that a child may be at further risk of significant harm, if the parent is spoken to, nothing will be said to the child's parent/carer without first discussing the matter with the Safeguarding Lead.

Staff should be aware of and be able to identify children who would benefit from 'Early Help' concerns should be raised to the Safeguarding Lead who will complete a MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form) for action.

The Designated Safeguard Lead Are responsible for:

- ensuring that the policy is operational and that the monitoring of it is undertaken.

● ensuring all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in line with whistleblowing procedures

● ensuring that pupil welfare and safety is addressed through the curriculum

● overseeing and monitoring the implementation of this policy and the associated procedures;

● ensuring systems are in place for the criminal background of applicants for vacant posts are checked

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead for Maximize Education Ltd is Emma Watson.

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Christine Jamieson

The Safeguarding Lead is the focus person and local 'expert' for Maximize Education staff, and others, who have concerns about an individual child's safety or well-being and is the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection investigations. They will also co-ordinate the Maximize Education Ltd representation at Child Protection conferences and the submission of written reports for conferences (a meeting of all relevant agencies).

The Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all pupil records are kept separately from children's pastoral records and are stored securely using the Safeguard system - CPOMS, ensuring that any paper records are secured in a locked cabinet with restricted access. They will have oversight of the delivery of Maximize Education recommendations within Child Protection Plans.

The Safeguarding Lead will usually be first point of contact and will lead on most occasions.

The Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

● coordinate all referrals within Maximize Education Ltd in relation to Safeguarding/Early Help

● liaise with other agencies on suspected cases of abuse, taking advice where necessary from the Safeguarding and Compliance Director, Children's Services or the NSPCC;

● act as a source of support, advice and expertise within Maximize Education Ltd when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;

● contribute to training;

● monitor pupils who have been identified as being at risk

● notify the local Children's Services team if Maximize Education Ltd has to exclude a pupil on the child protection register either for a fixed term or permanently or if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration (or one day following a weekend);

● work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial case conferences, core groups and child protection review conferences

● be the first point of call for parents and children;

● liaise with other agencies on suspected cases of abuse

● coordinate Maximize Education Ltd staff training;

● monitor children who have been identified as being at risk or targeted;

● keep in a secure place clear and confidential records of child's progress, records of concerns (noting the date, event and action taken) and provide information to other professionals, reports for case conferences;

● Ensure the Safeguarding Lead responsibility will not be delegated.

All staff

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility; All Maximize Education staff are responsible for protecting children from abuse and from inappropriate and inadequate care.

They have a responsibility to be vigilant in identifying signs of child abuse. In the event of a member of staff having a child protection or welfare concern, they must immediately report that concern to a Safeguarding Lead if possible using the electronic Safeguard system.

The member of staff will be asked to document the events which have given rise to the concern. In the absence of a Safeguarding Lead information should be passed without delay to their deputy or a senior member of staff. This also applies to out of hours activities and school trips.

Contact details are at the end of this policy. Failure to follow guidelines of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Company Director

In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' the Company Director, Christine Jamieson will challenge Maximize Education staff on the delivery of this policy and monitor its effectiveness. The Company Director will review this policy every year and may amend and adopt it in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or in light of their quality assurance of the delivery of this policy.

Training

Training will be facilitated for staff at least annually, updates will be given as and when necessary. Staff are required to complete annual Safeguarding training provided by HIGH SPEED TRAINING via an online platform. Safeguarding Leads will attend training courses as necessary and the appropriate inter-agency training organised by organisations such as the

Local Safeguarding Partnership at least every two years. All staff must read 'Keeping children safe in education' Part 1 and Appendix A

PEOPLE	TRAINING
All children and parents through yearly publication of policy. All visitors/subcontractors who will have supervised access with pupils	Policy and information available on Website Information provided by the person Inviting the visitor onto the site.
All new staff during their first half term on site	SAFEGUARD Online training and overview from Safeguarding Lead plus information pack
All permanent and long term temporary staff	SAFEGUARD online training annually and/or Session delivered by Safeguarding Lead plus information pack.
Safeguarding Leads	Multi agency and roles and responsibilities additional training as required at least every two years

Recruitment

All staff will be subject to reference and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

A single central record will be kept of all vetting checks, which will also include verification of identity, any relevant qualifications Volunteers/subcontractors will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of Maximize Education Ltd.

Maximize Education Ltd will provide volunteers with appropriate induction.

Volunteers/subcontractors will be inducted by the Safeguarding Lead, this will include the provision of the policies and procedures and who to go to if unsure or have concerns.

Staff Code of Conduct (See separate Staff Code of Conduct Document)

All staff (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with children and their families. Children will be treated with respect and any rewards and sanctions should follow those detailed in our Behaviour Management Policy.

Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff should avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Where incidents occur that might otherwise be misconstrued or where it becomes necessary to physically restrain or use force to control a

child, for their own or others' safety, to prevent a criminal act or to maintain good order, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Lead and parents.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils.

Staff should be alert to the possible risks that might arise from contact with children outside Maximize Education, including contact when using digital technologies, staff must not be ‘friends’ with children on any Social Media site.

The Safeguard Lead must always be made aware of any such contact. If any member of staff is concerned about a child’s welfare when they are not at work, parent’s (if known), Police or Children’s Services via One Call should be informed of the concern and ASAP. Safeguard should be updated at your earliest convenience.

First Aid

First Aid should only be administered by qualified first aiders and, if it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for this treatment, there should be, wherever possible, another adult present. This should be documented.

Complaints/Allegations made against Staff

Maximize Education Ltd takes seriously all allegations made against members of staff. Mechanisms are in place for children, parents/carers and staff to share any concerns that they might have about the actions of any member of our staff. All such allegations will be dealt with in line with our 'Allegations against Staff Policy' and must be brought immediately to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is made against the Safeguarding Lead then the deputy Safeguard Lead must be informed who will consult with the Local Authority’s Designated Officer (LADO) in order that the appropriate procedures may be followed. Parents should also be advised of their independent right to make a formal complaint to the policy.

Any staff member who is subject to any allegation will be discussed with the LADO and staff who are formally disciplined for any abuse of children (or who resign before disciplinary action can be instigated) will also be notified to the LADO and the Disclosure and Barring Service, for possible inclusion on their list of persons barred from working with children and young people. The LADO must be informed of all allegations against staff before being investigated (See separate allegations against staff policy).

Records

Accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents of Child Protection or welfare concerns relating to individual children. These will be kept on an electronic system provided by CPOMS

or the child's targeted pupil file, held separately from pastoral files. If staff have a concern they should inform the Safeguarding Lead immediately using CPOMS or a (Child Protection Information Sharing sheet).

If they are not available, concerns should be passed to the company director. Child Protection records are not available to the public, general staff or parents/families. Child Protection records are kept by the Safeguarding Lead and can only be accessed by them and the company director.

Behaviour and Learning mentors may have access to certain information on a need to know basis as appropriate. Upon receipt of any request regarding direct access to Maximize Education Ltd documentation appropriate steps should be taken to adopt the procedure of not allowing such access without the order of a court if appropriate and following our GDPR guidelines, all requests should be directed to Safeguarding Lead.

Where a child moves from Maximize Education Ltd any Child Protection records or targeted files will be forwarded (securely) to the receiving organisation. The confidential file will be sent separately from the pastoral file and a copy kept for archiving in line with the prevailing timescales for keeping such records.

Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review

This policy has been considered and adopted in line with an overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils as set out at Chapter 2 of the DfE guidance 'Safeguarding Pupils and in line with the statutory guidance contained within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Northumberland Safeguarding Children Policy, Practice and Guidance as of August 2019.

KCSIE 2021 was republished as of September 2021 and is now statutory.

Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request.

The Safeguarding Lead and Company Director will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring staff group's understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard children. This may include monitoring the appropriateness of cases referred internally to the Safeguarding Lead and whether those cases referred to the Local Authority met their threshold and were taken forward.

NSPCC whistleblowing Helpline 0800 0280285

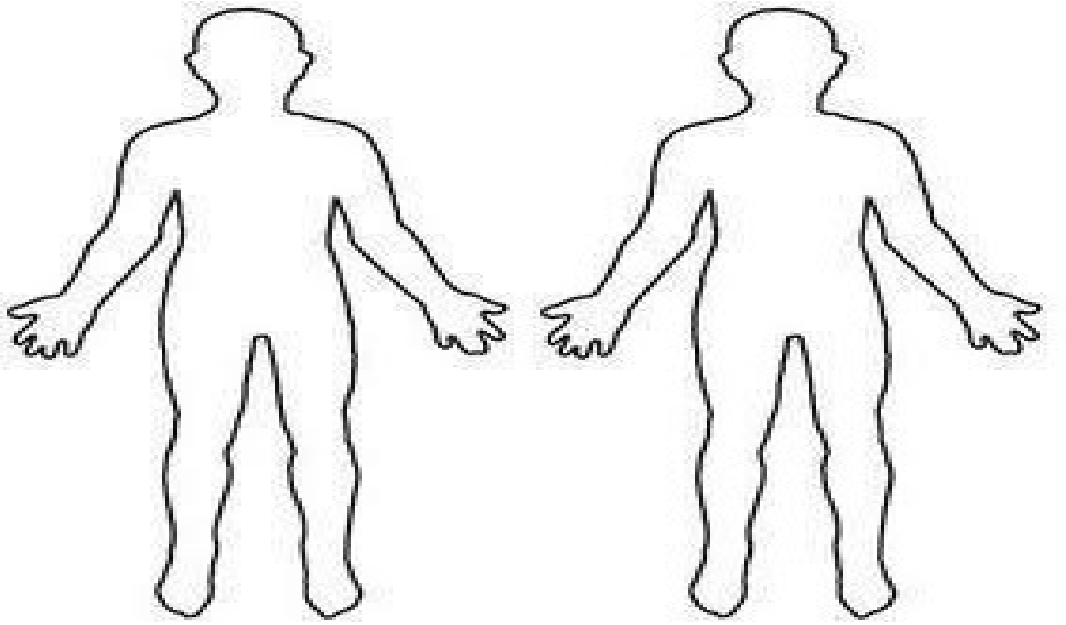
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01670 623979 One Call, including Out of hours Children’s Services 01670 536400

- Appendix A Reporting Sheet
- Appendix B Flow Chart- Safeguarding
- Appendix C MARF procedure

Appendix A

Child Concern Information Sharing Sheet (IF NO ACCESS TO SAFEGUARD)

Name of Child:	**Reported to:**
Year/Class:	**Date:** **Time:**
Concerns and or Injuries seen;	
Front	**Back**



Please label the location of the injury providing details where and if appropriate

Signed……(staff)

Signed…… Safeguarding Lead/Deputy/Senior Staff

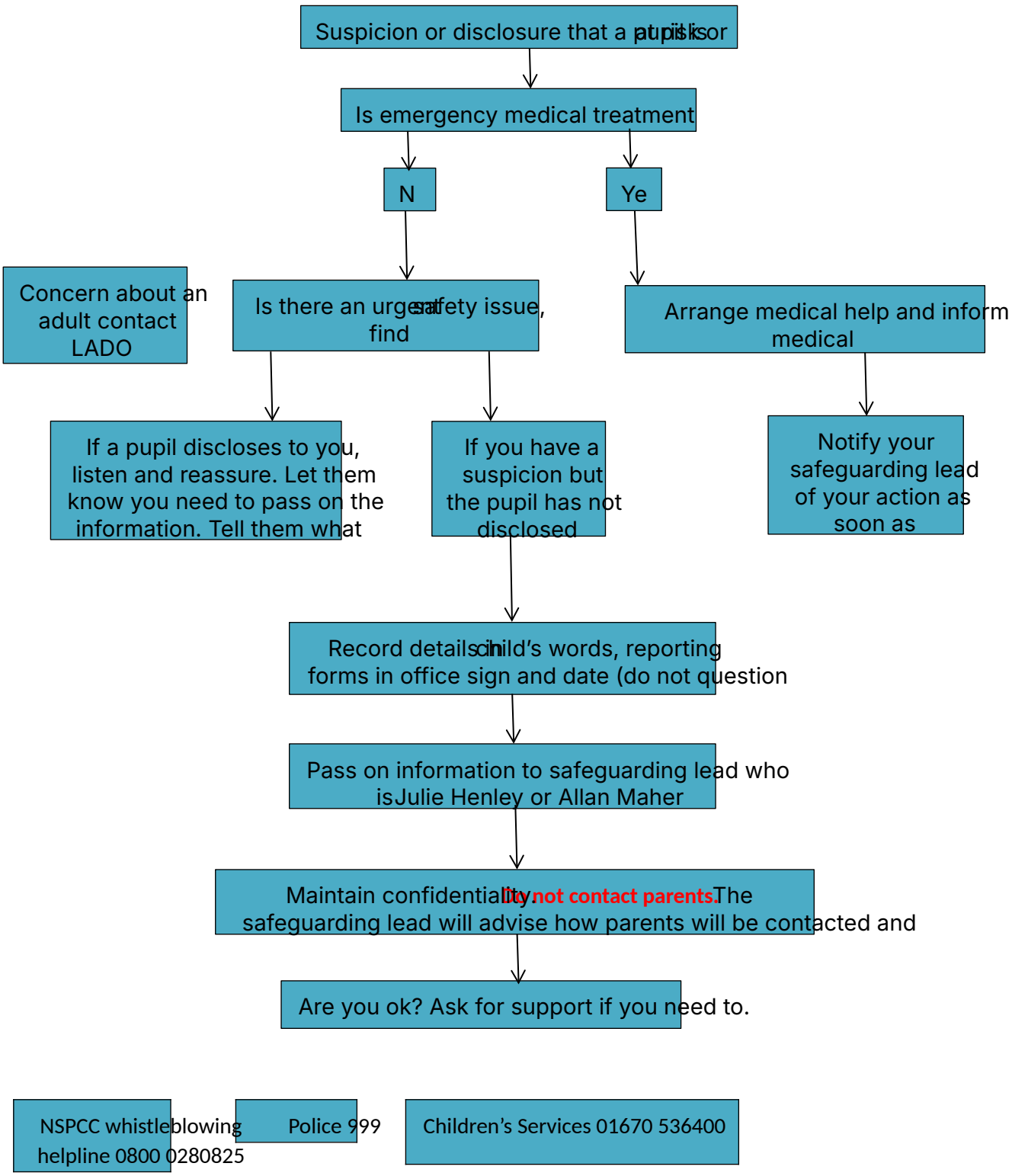
Safeguarding Lead use only

Referral to Children's services? YES NO (circle as appropriate)

Additional information/ Internal Referral/Update ……
……

Appendix B

Maximize Education Ltd– Safeguarding/Child Protection Concern


Suspicion or disclosure that a pupil is at risk or
Is emergency medical treatment
N
Ye
Concern about an adult contact LADO
Is there an urgent safety issue, find
Arrange medical help and inform medical
If a pupil discloses to you, listen and reassure. Let them know you need to pass on the information. Tell them what
If you have a suspicion but the pupil has not disclosed
Notify your safeguarding lead of your action as soon as
Record details in child's words, reporting forms in office sign and date (do not question
Pass on information to safeguarding lead who is Julie Henley or Allan Maher
Maintain confidentiality. Do not contact parents. The safeguarding lead will advise how parents will be contacted and
Are you ok? Ask for support if you need to.
NSPCC whistleblowing helpline 0800 0280825
Police 999
Children's Services 01670 536400

Appendix C

Maximize Education Ltd– Concern for a Learners Welfare

