

DANCE ACTION ZONE LEEDS (DAZL)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy is based on the belief that the child's interest and safety is paramount and is based on the United Nations Charter for Children's Right.

We are committed to working on a multi-agency basis.

Dance Action Zone Leeds (DAZL) believes that a child has the right to be:

- Protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation and to be safe
- To have the opportunity to achieve their full potential
- To have their needs determined and met
- To be listened to, be believed and have their views be given careful consideration
- To be respected and understood in the context of their own cultural, religious and ethnic origin

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is a general term used about situations where the child may experience ill treatment or impairment of development. This may occur in a number of different settings including the home. It may include both actions and omissions on the part of parents and carer, but other close family members or friends may be involved.

Child abuse is normally defined under one or more of the following headings: -

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

It is important to recognise that abuse is a multi-faceted concept and many children who have been abused will have experienced more than one form of abuse.

Child Protection is the term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or stop children being abused or ill treated.

Recognition of abuse or neglect

Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act on any concerns or suspicions, whether major or minor, about the safety and welfare of a child.

Any concerns should be discussed with the responsible person (see below) as soon as possible and a written record made of the concerns.

The extent of concern, may depend on whether the child is injured and needs immediate medical treatment or whether the abuse is part of an emerging pattern or whether this is the first incident.

Consideration in each case must be given to how to share concerns with the parent or carer in a sensitive manner. There will exist situations where it may not be possible or reasonable in terms of the child's safety and welfare to share concerns with carers.

If staff or volunteers suspect a child is being abused, the responsible person must ensure that Social Services are notified.

See attached table in Appendix 1 for example of child protection concerns.

The responsible person is Jan Burkhardt Director of Dance Action Zone Leeds (DAZL). All staff and/or volunteers will inform the responsible person of their concerns. Contact will be made on: 0113 2706903 or evenings on 07790 266557.

It is the responsible person who will make the decision whether the information should go outside the organisation. This person will make contact with Social Services when it is necessary. It is not the responsibility of individual staff members to contact Social Services.

- The Responsible person will take advice from the NSPCC National Child Protection Help-line on 0808 800 5000
- The Director will ensure that the allegation is reported to Social Services if appropriate.

Contact Numbers:

NSPCC National Child Protection Help-line on 0808 800 5000

Social Services:

Leeds Referral hotline 0113 3984702

See flow-chart Appendix 2 for procedures to be followed.

Confidentiality

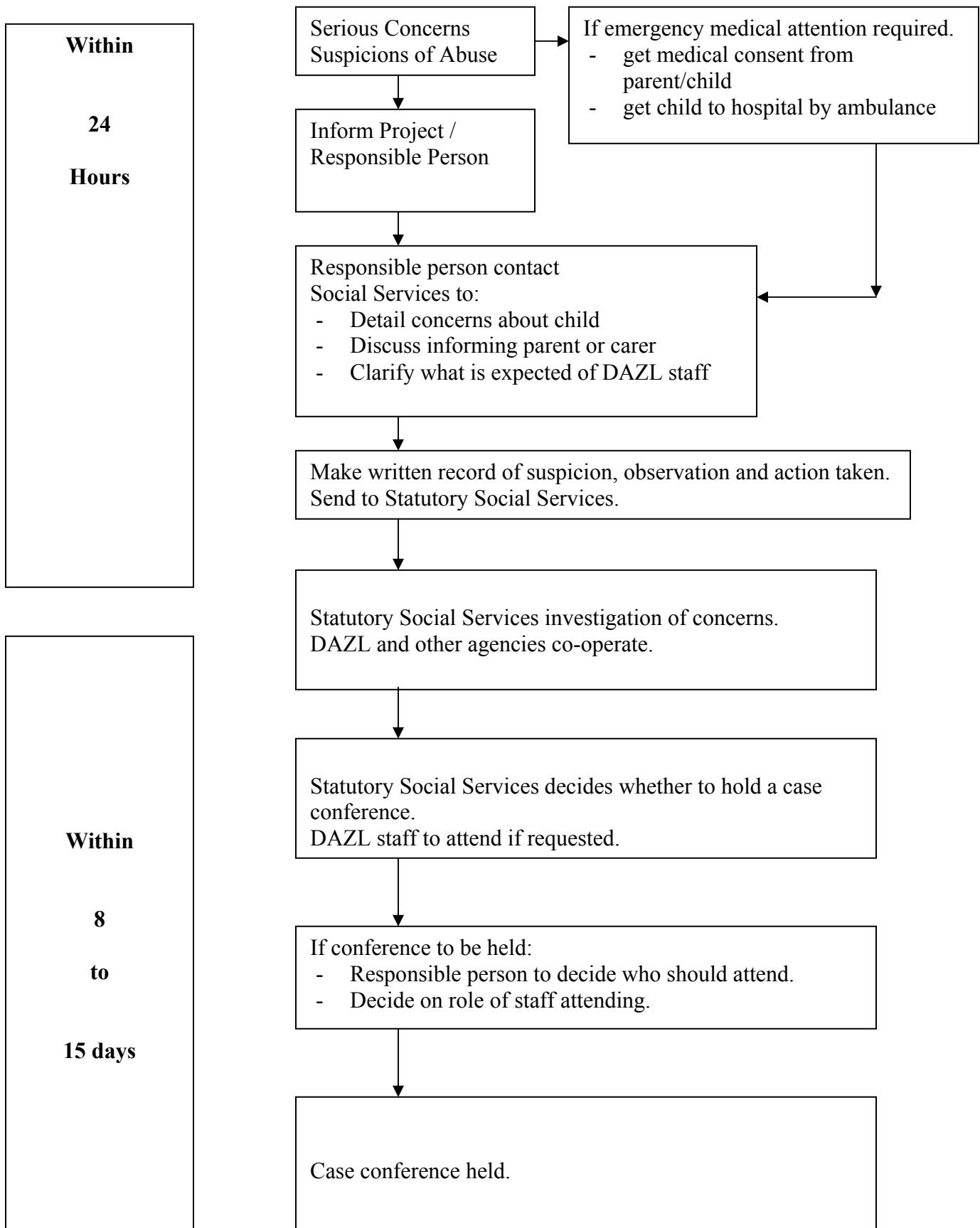
- Children and young people need to be informed and understand DAZL's confidentiality policy when they indicate that they may disclose abuse.
- The identity of any child or young person and details of the concern shall be given to the minimum number of people necessary. Within the organisation this will be the responsible person and the staff member or volunteer who has raised the concern. Consideration may need to be given to the sharing of the concern with a parent or carer as outlined above.
- If the responsible person deems that maintenance of confidentiality may endanger any young person or member of staff, then information may be released in order to protect against this.
- It may be necessary to inform other workers to ensure that the area of concern is not exacerbated by lack of information. Only the minimum information necessary will be released.

Support for staff or volunteers

Dance Action Zone Leeds (DAZL) will provide support for staff & volunteers during and at the end of any Child Protection issue.

All staff & volunteers will receive training on Child Protection issues.

APPENDIX 1. PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD PROTECTION



APPENDIX 2. GUIDELINES – WHAT TO DO FOLLOWING A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE BY A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

Whatever information a child/young person shares with you listen carefully and do not ask leading questions or do anything which could be interpreted as putting words into any child or young person's mouth.

As soon as is practically possible write down an account of what you have been told. Note the actual words of the child or young person. Do not ask children or young people to repeat what they have disclosed.

- If a child or young person says they have something to tell you and it must be kept a secret, they then must be made aware in language appropriate to their age that you may not be able to keep it secret if the information affects their safety.
- If the child decides not to tell you must respect their wishes and monitor the situation. Seek support and advice from the responsible person.
- If a child or a young person discloses information which may (or is already) placing them in danger, without any warning or indication of the nature of the information they are going to give you, you may not have a chance to warn them that you can not keep it confidential. You must tell them as soon as possible. This may make them retract their statement.

Unfortunately, you are still obliged to pass on the information to the responsible person.

If you have any concerns about a young person or child and want to discuss it with someone please contact the responsible person.